AUTHORING SHAKA MODELS, METAPHORS AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

CA HAMILTON

Authoring Shaka

Models, Metaphors and Historiography

by

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A dissertation submitted to The Johns Hopkins University

in conformity with the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Baltimore, Maryland

1993

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For N.G.M.

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Abstract

Authoring Shaka: Models, Metaphors and Historiography.

Through an examination of key aspects of the historical processes of the making of the image of the early nineteenth-century Zulu king, Shaka, this study offers a new perspective on the potency of the symbol of Shaka in South Africa today. Three historical developments emerge as central to the making of the image: the incorporation of aspects of indigenous discourses on Shaka into the writings and practices of early nineteenth-century European traders, and the colonial officials who followed them; the appropriation of Shaka and Shakan times as a model for the Natal Native Administration; and the subsequent transformation of the image of Shaka and Shakan times into metaphors for contemporary politics. Where previous studies have focused on the manipulation of Shaka and Zulu history in the service of immediate political interests, investigation of the three historical developments draws attention to the limits on the acts of "inventing" and "imagining" of Shaka and Shakan times which prevailed in the past, and the way in which the history of the image itself constrains manipulations of Shaka in the present. The study assesses the capacity of the oral traditions recorded by James Stuart to provide material on

indigenous discourses and practices, and traces the development of the idea of the special "expertise" of native administrators, linking it to the origins of anthropology in South Africa.

Preface

In South Africa today, the image of Shaka--the founder of the nineteenth-century Zulu kingdom--is a powerful and insistent presence. The *Vrye Weekblad* newspaper announces that the "Spirit of Shaka Relives." It lives in countless forms and multiple locations: in the press, politics, the academy, popular culture, novels, household items and high art.

This is a study of key aspects of the historical processes that have invested the symbol of Shaka with such potency. It examines the way in which the content and the form of indigenous historical discourses were incorporated into colonial discourses and practices, and continue today to infuse consciousness of the Shakan past. It is written against the background of political violence in South Africa, and the particular character given to that violence by the mobilization of "Zuluism" and perceptions of the legacy of the military heritage of Shaka. In part, the study is driven by the pressing need to gain insight into these historically-linked elements of contemporary ethnic politics.

This study is also written in another context, the crisis over sources which seems to face historians of

precolonial southern Africa. A major historiographical development of the late 1980s and early 1990s in southern Africa, has been the debate over the "mfecane," the name given to a period of turmoil, generally attributed to the rise of the Zulu power under Shaka, which prevailed across much of southern Africa in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Suggesting that the idea of Shakan agency was a fraudulent settler alibi to mask the illegal procurement of Africans' land and labor, the initiators of the debate have called into question the status of most of the sources of early nineteenth-century southern African history. Taken together with currently influential literatures on the invention of tradition, the "West's" definition of the colonial "Other," and the construction of knowledge, these developments pose a serious challenge to historians seeking to reconstruct the history of Shakan times, particularly those scholars interested in recovering something of the substance of precolonial African discourses and practices.

In response to this challenge, the study examines the moment of first contact between the early Port Natal traders and the Zulu kingdom under Shaka, and shows how then existent African ideas about Shaka influenced the traders' perceptions and representations of the Zulu king. It goes on to trace the way in which the Secretary

for Native Affairs in Natal, Theophilus Shepstone, likewise drew on conceptions of sovereignty, and images of Shaka and Shakan rule, available within African society to provide a model for the Natal Native Administration. Much previous scholarship divides into works which deal with representations of the Zulu, and historical reconstructions of events and processes in Natal and the Zulu kingdom in the nineteenth century, such as the development of native policy. This study, in contrast, tries to bring together these previously distinct domains.

The primary source for African versions of the history of Shakan times is the papers of the colonial official, James Stuart. Between 1897 and 1924, Stuart collected the testimonies of nearly two hundred informants on topics concerning the history of Zulu and neighboring peoples. I examine Stuart in the context of his times, as well as through an intimate biographical lens, establishing in the process something of his location in, and his sense of distance from, colonial society in Natal. I trace the legacy of Shepstone in Stuart's approach to the topic of Shaka, and through a close examination of Stuart's motivations and working methods, assess the extent of his presence in the recorded testimonies about Shaka. Detailed historical

investigation reveals that Stuart was no mere inventor of Zulu history, and that his collection warrants, and bears, the close scrutiny of historians seeking to recover African views of Shakan times. The extent of Stuart's commitment to the recording of detailed historical material in the words of his African informants, raises questions about the development of "expertise" in "native affairs." The focus on Stuart offers a perspective on the shaping of that expertise by its close coupling with the demands of native administration, and the manner of its professionalization and transformation into the academic "sciences" of Anthropology and Bantu Studies.

I pay considerable attention to Stuart's work in developing a standardized orthography for the Zulu language. I argue that debates over the various forms of orthography reveal the attitudes of the protagonists to questions of form in translating ideas from the world of the colonized to that of the colonizers, and vice-versa. Accordingly, throughout the study, I have retained the original orthography of written Zulu quotations. I have likewise kept in quotations all the original spellings of words, such as "Chaka," "Tshaka" and even "t'Chaka."

Finally, a historical perspective on the making the making of the image of Shaka facilitates cogent readings of two expensive contemporary productions of Shaka: the television series, *Shaka Zulu*, and the holiday resort, **Shakaland**. The strength of the historical perspective lies in its capacity to explain why and how Shaka and Shakan times have become potent metaphors for contemporary South African politics, as exemplified in these two settings.

This study suggests that the power of the image of Shaka lies not, as most previous commentators have suggested, in its openness to manipulation, to invention and to imaginative reworkings, but in their very opposite, the historical limits and constraints attached to the possible depictions of Shaka and to Shakan historiography. Historiography here is broadly construed to include sites of the production of history outside of the canon of historiography. In filling in the limits and constraints on the acts of inventing and imagining, the historian brings to a terrain currently dominated by anthropologists and literary theorists a crucial complementary method and perspective.

Acknowledgements

I have been particularly privileged to benefit from the guidance of Professor Philip Curtin and the insights of my fellow students in African History at The Johns Hopkins University, Jonathon Sadowsky, Monica van Beusekom and Garrie Dennie, and deserving of very special mention, Tim Burke, who has read many of these chapters repeatedly and offered wonderful and imaginative suggestions for their improvement. Professor David William Cohen arranged a stimulating stay for me at the Institute for Advanced Study and Research in the African Humanities, Northwestern University. His thoughtful comments on my work, and the visit as a whole, enriched enormously the content of this dissertation. I am further grateful to Gay Seidman, John Wright and JoAnne Brown for stimulating intellectual companionship and their ongoing interest in, and generous contributions to, my work.

Ran Greenstein and David Hammond-Tooke each read a draft of the dissertation from cover to cover and offered thoughtful, often tough-minded, criticisms and comments which were invaluable. The final stages of the production of this manuscript would not have been possible without the generous and meticulous assistance

of Ronette Engela, Graeme Rodgers, Caroline Jeannerat, Marcus Darwell, Laura Cloete and Geoff Blundell. I thank them as much for their contributions in bringing life to the corridors of Central Block as their unstinting technical help. Special acknowledgement is also due to Michael Westcott for a similar combination of moral and practical support. It has been a great pleasure to work with Rose Anne Mark and Linda Kerr at the Program of African Studies, Northwestern University, and Anne Radcliffe of the Wits Anthropology Department. I owe Anne special thanks for her help in organizing the Mfecane Aftermath Colloquium. I am also indebted to Professor David Hammond-Tooke for his support of the Colloquium. The staff of the Killie Campbell Africana Library, and Bobby Eldridge in particular, have gone out of their way on countless occasions to satisfy my information requests. Acknowledgements are also due to the staff of the Africana Library at the University of the Witwatersrand for their expert support. Finally, I am particularly grateful to Professor Elizabeth Rankin who, in her position as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, advised me on how to arrange the logistics of completing my degree requirements, supported me in planning workshops and in hosting academic visitors, and otherwise inducted me into life in the academy.

Christina Smith and Keith Shear opened their home to me, and supported me through the final weeks of manuscript production. I appreciate greatly their generosity, and value their friendship. Jeff Rice discovered that the Federal Express office in Skokie stays open a half hour later, and helped me to make the crazy dash to meet that deadline. My thanks to him for eleventh hour assistance and on-going companionship. I am also grateful to Karen Jacobsen and Tom Maguire, Jill Arnott, Annatjie Esterhysen, and JoAnne Brown for their warmth and hospitality. My greatest thanks are due to Neil Morrison who obliged me to take myself less seriously and helped to create the time and space for me to pursue this study in full seriousness.

I am grateful to the History Department of The Johns Hopkins University, the Program of African Studies, Northwestern University, and the University of the Witwatersrand Senate Research Committee for financial support.

List of abbreviations

ANC:	African National Congress
APS:	Aborigines' Protection Society
BPP:	British Parliamentary Papers
CO:	Colonial Office Papers
CODESA:	Conference for a Democratic South Africa
COSATU:	Congress of South African Trade Unions
GH:	Government House Papers
IFP:	Inkatha Freedom Party
JSA:	James Stuart Archive
KCAL:	Killie Campbell Africana Library
NAD:	Natal Archives Depot
NNC:	Natal Native Congress
SABC:	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SNA:	Secretary for Native Affairs
Sh.P:	Shepstone Papers
SP:	Stuart Papers
UDF:	United Democratic Front

Glossary

isiBhalo: forced labor.

ukuBonga: to declaim praises.

imBongi (izimbongi): praise singer.

isiBongo (iziBongo): 1.clan name; 2.(pl. only) praises.

ukuButha: to form young men or women into age-grades.

iButho (amaButho): age-grade, with military and other functions.(*liButfo*: variation, *siSwati*)

iDlozi (amaDlozi): spirit of a dead person.

inDuna (izinDuna): civil or military official.

isiGodlo (iziGodlo): 1.king or chief's private enclosure at the upper end of his homestead, where the huts of his household are situated; women of the king's establishment; women presented to the king as tribute or selected from the housholds of his subjects and, as his "daughters," disposable by him in marriage.

ka: prefix indicating parentage, eg. Ndhlovu kaTimuni, Ndhlovu, born of Timuni.

iKhanda (amaKhanda): major military establishment.

inKatha (izinKatha): woven grass coil containing potent body substances and symbolizing the unity of the nation.

iKohlo: the left-hand house of clan or family which is excluded from producing the heir.

iKholwa (amaKholwa): Christian; literally "a believer."

umKhosi (imiKhosi): the annual "first fruits" ceremony held at the Great Place of the king or the chief in the December-January period, a festival at which the king or chief is ritually strengthened, the ancestral spirits praised, and the allegiance of the people renewed.

inKosi (amaKhosi): king; paramount; chief.

amaLala: collective appellation for the clans of the southern reaches of the Zulu kingdom despised as outsiders.

ukuLobola: to formalize a marraige by the conveyance of cattle or other property from the man's family to the father or guardian of the woman.

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

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

ukuNgena: to impregnate the widow of a deceased brother.

iNsila (iziNsila): body servant, charged with the task of disposing of the bodily wastes of the king.

amaNtungwa: people of the up-country, collective appellation for the clans that constituted the elite core of the Zulu kingdom.

iNyanga (iziNyanga): healer, herbalist, diviner.

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

siSwati: the Swazi language.

isiVivane (iziVivane): cairn of stones placed next to a path by travellers.

umuZi (imiZi): 1.homestead, collection of huts under one headman; 2. the people belonging to a homestead.

isiZulu: the Zulu language.

Sections adapted from C. de B. Webb and J.B. Wright, (eds.), *The James Stuart Archive of Recorded Oral Evidence Relating to the History of the Zulu and Neighbouring Peoples*, vol.1, Pietermaritizburg and Durban, University of Natal Press and the Killie Campbell Africana Library, 1976, Glossary.

PART ONE

SHAKA AS HISTORY, MODEL AND METAPHOR

"Without the metaphor of memory and history, we cannot imagine what it is to be someone else. Metaphor is the reciprocal agent, the universalizing force: it makes possible the power to envision the stranger's heart."[1]

Part one of the study introduces Shaka in three domains: in the area of political discourse, in scholarly historical writings and in literature. It also looks at the meta-texts on Shaka in each area. A survey of the way in which the figure is handled in these areas raises fundamental questions about the nature of historiography as it is conventionally construed. This leads to the problem of how we might try to rethink the notion of historiography by understanding the impact on it of domains that are not usually recognized as historiography, namely literature and politics, as well as unwritten texts, models and metaphors.

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[1]C. Ozick, "Metaphor and Memory," in *Metaphor and Memory*, New York, Vintage, 1991, p.279.

Chapter One

Painted chests, academic body servants and visions of modern airlines: Shaka in many discourses

In 1992, in Johannesburg, a migrant worker selects a wooden chest at the Mai-Mai market located under the freeway and close to the hostel where he stays. The worker imagines the chest occupying pride of place in the front room of his home in the Transkei. There are two versions of the beautifully painted box. The first has an inset of the madonna and child in richly catholic colors of magenta, gold and emerald. The second is embellished with a picture of the Zulu kings surrounding a central oval featuring the first Zulu king, Shaka. Both versions are highly popular, the Shaka chest attracting as many non-Zulu-speaking buyers as Zulu speakers.[1]

A week later, billboards advertising the progressive Afrikaans newspaper, *Vrye Weekblad*, scream the headline, "Shaka se Gees Herleef" (Shaka's spirit relives.)[2] The

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[1]Interview with stall-holders, Mai-Mai market, 24 December, 1992. I am grateful to Sue Kramer for directing me to the Shaka chests.

[2]*Vrye Weekblad*, 2-15 October, 1992.

article to which the headlines refer depicts the present-day leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), Mangosuthu Buthelezi, as returning to the "tribal politics of the warrior nation" ("*Terug na die stampolitiek van die 'warrior nation'*")[3] and as following closely in the tracks of the founder of the Zulu kingdom, Shaka.

This is a view of Shaka, and of the relationship between the past and the present actively propagated by contemporary Zulu nationalist politicians like Gatsha Buthelezi. Claiming that his "role is ordained by history,"[4] Buthelezi constantly invokes the image of Shaka and of Shakan times to explain the present. While appeals to the past are a characteristic feature of the Zulu nationalist movement, even Zulu-speakers who distance themselves politically from Inkatha assert their pride in "the military exploits of the Zulu empire" and "the legend of Shaka."[5]

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[3]*Vrye Weekblad*, 2-15 October, 1992, p.5.

[4]Shaka Day Speech, Ngoye, 4 November, 1984

[5]See, for example, Mondli Makhanya's article, "I'm a Zulu--and I'm proud of it" in *Weekly Mail*, 3-9 April, 1992. I am grateful to John Wright for drawing my attention to this article. The quotes are from Makhanya. Also see Khaba Mkhize's call for "Viva Zulu positiveness" (*Echo*, 15 November, 1990) in which the author notes, "Zulus also have a lot of work to do to improve their image which has been built on tales of bravery and of Shaka the great warrior. The basis of this stereotype may be real but, as a Zulu with 'warrior blood running in my veins,' I humbly suggest that we work towards cultivating positive Zuluness." Not all Zulu-speakers, however, see Shaka as the ideal role model. See p.13 below. Also see the letter to the editor from N. Gumede on Shaka as the cause of black disunity, *Injula*, 3, 1990.

The 1980s saw an explosion of interest in Shaka in the media which began with the release in 1986 of the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC) multi-million rand television series, *Shaka Zulu*. The series reached an enormous audience at home and abroad, and received wide media coverage.[6] It was heralded by some critics as a much-needed revision of Zulu history, and slated by others for the use of a white narrator and a failure to escape the standard racist stereotypes. *Shaka Zulu* was followed closely by a second television series set in Shakan times, *John Ross: An African Adventure*, the story of a young Scot who was a member of the first party of Europeans to visit Shaka. This series, too, resulted in huge controversy, not least because author Stephen Gray published his novel, *John Ross: The True Story*, shortly afterwards. The novel, based on the published memoirs of Charles Rawden Maclean, alias John Ross, claimed to put forward "the true story" of John Ross and a new view of Shaka, versions of that period of history

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[6]See, for example, *Sunday Star*, 12 October, 1986; *The Star Weekend*, 4 October, 1986; R. West, *The Diamonds and the Necklace: A South African Journey*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1989, chapter six, "Pietermaritzburg: Strife among the Zulus...Shaka Zulu on Television"; while the journal of the Natal History Teachers' Association, *History News* 30, 1987, carried five articles on the series. For a fuller discussion of the controversy generated by *Shaka Zulu*, see chapter nine below.

suppressed in the television series and in earlier writings.[7]

At much the same time as Gray produced his alternative account of Shakan times, Natal journalist and outspoken critic of the *Shaka Zulu* television series, Louis du Buisson, published a popular account of Shakan times that also claimed to demythologize and reconstitute the history of this period.[8] This was followed by a third revision of Zulu history in popular form, Inkatha-linked academic Charles Ballard's *The House of Shaka*.[9] All three of these new texts were remarkable for their sharp, and self-conscious, reversal of the image of Shaka from villain to hero.[10]

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[7]On the controversy around the television series *John Ross*, and Gray's novel, see *Personality*, 16 September, 1987; *Sunday Tribune*, 13 September, 1987; *Weekly Mail*, 27 February-5 March, 1987; *Star Weekend*, 30 October, 1987. Also see S. Gray, "South African Fiction and a Case History Revisited: An Account of Research into Retellings of the John Ross Story of Early Natal," *Research in African Literatures*, 19, 4, 1988, pp.455-76.

[8]L. du Buisson, *The White Man Cometh*, Johannesburg, Jonathon Ball, 1987. For Du Buisson's criticisms of the television series and debates with other experts on the period see *Style*, February, 1987; *Leadership*, 5,3, 1986 and 5, 6, 1986; *Sunday Times Magazine*, 26 October, 1986.

[9]C. Ballard, *The House of Shaka: The Zulu Monarchy Illustrated*, Durban, Emoyeni Books, 1988.

[10]For a detailed discussion of the three texts see my published review article, "'An Appetite for the Past': The Re-Creation of Shaka and the Crisis in Popular Historical Consciousness," *South African Historical Journal*, 22, 1990, pp.141-57.

Shaka-the-villain has long been a popular topic for white novelists, notably in Ernst Ritter's popular novel, *Shaka Zulu*,[11] first published in 1955 and reissued in 1978 and 1985. Other titles of the time which focussed on Shaka were Phillipus van Coller's 1946 account, *Die Swart Attila--Verhale van Shaka* (The Black Attila--Stories of Shaka),[12] P.A. Stuart's *An African Attila*,[13] Nicki McMenemy's *Assegaai!*,[14] Pieter Fourie's *Tsjaka*,[15] P. Schoeman's *Phampatha: The beloved of King Shaka*,[16] and in 1961, Geoffrey Bond's *Chaka the Terrible*.[17] In South Africa Shaka has also been the subject of dramatic representation,[18] has merited passing reference in a number of poems as the quintessential symbol of

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[11]E.A. Ritter, *Shaka Zulu: the rise of the Zulu Empire*, first published London, Longmans, 1955, republished Middlesex, Penguin, 1978 and London, Viking, 1985.

[12]P.P.R. van Coller, *Die Swart Attila-Verhale van Shaka*, Pretoria, Afrikaans Pers Boekhandeling, 1946.

[13]P.A. Stuart, *An African Attila: Tales of the Zulu Reign of Terror*, London, T. Fischer Unwin, 1927. P.A. Stuart was a brother of James Stuart whose work on Shaka is discussed extensively in chapters 7 and 8.

[14]N. McMenemy, *Assegaai!*, New York, Saturday Review Press, 1973.

[15]P. Fourie, *Tsjaka*, Johannesburg, Perskor, 1976, translated as *Shaka*, by Shiela Gilham, Cape Town, Longmans, 1976.

[16]P.J. Schoeman, *Phampatha: The Beloved of King Shaka*, Cape Town, Howard Timms, 1983.

[17]G. Bond, *Chaka the Terrible*, London, Arco Publications, 1961, reissued as James Langa, *Shaka*, Longmans, Salisbury, 1982. See M.Z. Malaba, "Shaka as a literary theme," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, York University, 1986, pp.362-3 for an interesting discussion of the republication under an African alias.

[18]S. Goro-X, *Shaka--A Drama*, Johannesburg, Juta, 1940. See the discussion of this play as the work of a white South African author in Malaba, "Shaka as Literary Theme," p.344.

bloodthirsty African rule,[19] or symbol of racial pride and conquest,[20] and was the subject of at least two full-length poetic treatments, Mazizi Kunene's *Emperor Shaka the Great*,[21] and Stephen Gray and Cecil Skotnes's poetry and woodcut assemblage, *The Assassination of Shaka*.[22] Shaka is even present in the art galleries of Johannesburg.[23]

White South Africans do not only find Shakas on their television screens, in bookshops and art galleries; Shaka is firmly embedded in a unarticulated, private domain of their consciousness. This deeper awareness of the symbol of Shaka is revealed in a variety of ways. In 1989 in Ladysmith, Natal, a young white schoolboy held his classmates captive at gunpoint claiming to be Shaka

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[19]See for example, W. G. Scully, "Aceldama" in *Poems*, London, T. Fischer Unwin, 1892, p.131; E. Campbell, "Ricksha Boy," *Natal Verse*, n.p., 1921.

[20]See for example, R. Campbell, "The Flaming Terrapin," in G. Butler (ed.), *A Book of South African Verse*, Cape Town, Oxford University Press, first published in 1959, republished in 1963, pp.33, 34.

[21]M. Kunene, *Emperor Shaka the Great: A Zulu Epic*, London, Heineman, 1979.

[22]S. Gray and C. Skotnes, *The Assassination of Shaka*, Johannesburg, McGraw-Hill, 1974. The other substantial treatment in poetic form is D.J Darlow, *African heroes: Ntsikana, Tshaka, Khama and Moshoeshoe*, Lovedale, Lovedale Press, 1937.

[23]See, for example the sculptures by Jackson Hlongwane, "Shaka Zulu," "Shaka's shield with lovebird." See also his "Zulu boy" renamed "Son of Cain", Newtown Gallery, 1992.

incarnate.[24] In neighboring Namibia, a notice appeared in the local newspaper, advertising the arrival in Windhoek of Dr. Chaka, a "*wit Sangoma en twee van sy Swart Sangomas vanaf die Republic van South Africa* [sic]" (a white sangoma ["witchdoctor," healer] and two of his black sangomas from the Republic of South Africa.)[25]

The image of Shaka also has powerful resonances further afield. In Kenya, an African-American man is engaged in a court battle with the government to secure the rights of African-Americans to the citizenship of African countries in which they wish to live. "Our forefathers were Africans and because of the slave master's tricks got intermarried and lost their culture. So if any Black man from America wants to settle in Africa today why should he be denied the right to do so?" he asks.[26] In an effort to emphasize his African connections this ex-Houston sociology student changed his name, to "Shaka Zulu Assegai." He is by no means the

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[24]*Natal Witness*, 24 January, 1990. For accounts of white South Africans who don "traditional" Zulu garb and regard themselves as "white Zulus," see *The Guardian*, 14 November, 1992 (I am grateful to David Lazar for drawing my attention to this reference); *Weekly Mail*, 6-12 November, 1992 (Thanks to Graeme Rodgers for this clipping).

[25]*The Namibian*, 6 September, 1991. I am grateful to Jan Bart Gewald for this reference.

[26]*New African*, October, 1990, p.46. See also Louis Armstrong's composition and recording, *King of the Zulus*, cited in M. Gluckman, "The Individual in a Social Framework: The Rise of King Shaka of Zululand," *Journal of African Studies*, 1,2, 1974, pp.113-44.

only foreigner to favor this choice of name. A son of James Forman, the long-time American civil rights activist, likewise bears the name Shaka, while his brother is named Lumumba after yet another famous Africa leader.[27]

The choice of the name Shaka in these contexts is an invocation of heroic resonances. In some cases, however, it connotes specifically "black" power or force, as in the name of the African-American Minneapolis group, "Shaka's Zulu Warriors."[28] In the context of the violence in South Africa in 1992, the image of Shaka is ambiguous, at once fundamentally linked to that of Zulu militarism, and to notions of both order and chaos.

In a 1992 Shaka Day speech, the present Zulu king, while affirming commitment to a national peace process, made use of precisely this ambiguity by calling for discipline and order, and in the same breath using Shaka

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[27]Jean Boudin, pers. comm. 21 April, 1991. Also see film-maker Marlon Riggs' invocation of Shaka in *Affirmations*. I am grateful to Stephan Miescher for this reference. For a South African example of the choice of the name of Shaka to connote super powers--and there are many--see Soweto's super student, Joseph "Shaka" Mphele, *Sunday Times*, 10 January, 1993.

[28]Gluckman, "The Individual in a Social Framework." Gluckman also noted the existence of a Philadelphia gang called "the Zulu Nation." In this context it is interesting to note that a group of Birmingham soccer hooligans renowned for their uprooting of electricity poles favor the name "the Zulus." (M. Westcott, pers. comm., 10 January, 1993.)

as a metaphor for war. He also claimed for "Zulu valour" and unity the status of a philosophy.

> We are a people who come from warrior stock. We have descended from generations of warriors who displayed their bravery and daring. The strength of their valour was borne out of the support of the Zulu people, a unity that added purpose and encouragement to their daily lives, inspiring them in their daily battles against their foes. This was the philosophy of King Shaka, a philosophy passed on along the long line of illustrious Zulu kings who followed in his footsteps. It is this strength and courage in unity that flowed in the blood of the great warriors of King Shaka's armies, and that today flows in our blood--the great Zulu nation of Africa...We, as the Zulu people, are prepared to die for our principles today because that is the way we were founded. We share the convictions of King Shaka's great warriors who went forth to do battle, courageous men also prepared to die for their principles. Nobody could have won the great wars that Shaka won if his warriors did not believe in what they were doing. It is faith in their King, it was [sic] a belief in the Zulu people that drove them on to such heroic deeds as they accomplished in battle. And with the same unswerving confidence so too will we fight for what is ours.[29]

The Zulu nationalist organization, Inkatha, and its more recent party-political manifestation, the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), has made the figure of Shaka--the creator of the powerful nineteenth-century Zulu kingdom--into the centrepiece of its ideology. The glorification of Shaka, centered on the annual celebration of Shaka Day, is a key element in the creation of twentieth-

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[29]Shaka Day speech, King Zwelethini, KwaMashu, 27 September, 1992.

century Zulu nationalism. Shaka Day is an occasion for rallies in the Natal-Zululand area, and across the Reef. Shaka Day speeches by KwaZulu leaders typically extol Shaka in elevated terms:

> King Shaka rose like a colossus in his day and age to make KwaZulu a place of Zulus...He made one people out of many peoples and he established a unity of purpose which brought all manner of things together...King Shaka stood as a powerful funnel at the beginning of Zulu time. It was through him and what he did, that everything that was before him was funnelled through him. That great king, that great dispenser of human wisdom, that fount of deep veneration that passed all understanding, funnelled the experience of the people into the religion and the culture of the Zulus...King Shaka...was the greatest visionary of his time. It was his vision which made him set aside the whole of Durban Bay as a place where Whites could feel safe as they settled in his Kingdom. That great King, with his deep sense of vision, started something that we must finish. There is unfinished business in Zulus seeing to it that Black and White live together to bring the great advantages of the union that King Shaka saw at the beginning of the nineteenth century. King Shaka did not only have a vision of somehow Whites coming in to benefit his people, King Shaka was ahead of his time. He had a vision of the future nobody could understand. He himself was totally mystified by his vision of great iron birds flying through the air. That great man, who can be confined to no generation, or even century, had visions of modern airliners at a time when the most other men could dream of was the manufacture of some kind of wings he could flap with his arms.[30]

While the language in which these claims is made is overblown and the ideological manipulations transparent, the press has seized on the connections between Shaka and

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[30]Shaka Day Speech, King Zwelethini, Stanger, 26 September 1992.

modern leaders, between events then and events now, favored by Buthelezi and the king. Journalists constantly make the same connections, using both historical allusions to add flourish to their writings, and the metaphor of Shaka to do the work of making the complexity of present-day ethnic politics apparently simple and accessible for their readers.

In a *Weekly Mail* article on the bloody war between the African National Congress (ANC) communities of Natal and the supporters of the IFP, the journalist Mondli Makhanya--himself a Zulu-speaker who identifies with pride in the heritage of Shaka, but who does not support the IFP--ends his article with the thoughts of Ezimeleni squatter camp resident, Leonard Mshinga. Mshinga quoted the curse that Shaka was reputed to have uttered after being stabbed by assassins: "You will never rule this land. It will be ruled by the swallows from across the sea, the ones with the transparent ears," and Mshinga suggests that the present conflict shows that black South Africans will not rule the country: "Imagine what will happen when we have the country. We will wipe each other out."[31] Bra Mzala, in his column in *The Natal Mercury*, describes how male infants and toddlers are dressed up by their mothers as girls, "because certain elements are

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[31]*Weekly Mail*, November 6-12, 1992.

going around killing young boys because they will grow up to be comrades [ANC supporters]."[32] Mzala goes on to draw an analogy from history: "This is a horrific reminder of the times of Shaka Zulu, who ordered that all boys in opposing groups be killed." Invoking the notion of the "mfecane"--the period of violence across the sub-continent that is understood to have flowed from the expansion of the Zulu kingdom under Shaka--Buthelezi too uses images from Shakan times to discuss the current conflict: "We know the meaning of Mfecane and Difaqane. We know the consequences of mass violence..."[33] Likewise, Piet "Skiet" [Shoot] Rudolph, leader of the ultra right-wing organisation, Ordeboerevolk, predicted a modern-day mfecane as "violence between Zulu and Xhosa was one for control of power."[34]

Other commentators emphasize the ideas of discipline historically associated with Shaka. Barry Renfrew, bureau chief for the Associated Press in Johannesburg, said of a Zulu rally, "The discipline is extraordinary. I have heard three thousand of them *breathing* together.

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[32]*The Natal Mercury*, April 11, 1991.

[33]Speech, Ulundi, 20 August, 1983.

[34]*Weekly Mail*, 10-16 May, 1991.

It sounds like the purring of a giant cat."[35] Other reports amalgamate the two images, but all seem to find recourse to the metaphor of Shakan times irresistable as a means of explicating the present.[36]

Journalists frequently draw on the research of historians to bolster the authority of their analyses, and a number of newspapers carry articles commissioned from historians. In October, 1990, the British newspaper, *The Independent on Sunday*, carried a lavishly illustrated four-page article by the historian, R.W. Johnson, on the historical bases for contemporary Zulu militarism.[37] In the article Johnson first offered a short summary of Zulu history. He began with the figure of Shaka, "the inescapable central figure of Zulu history, perhaps even black history in South Africa" who

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[35]Quoted in "Percy's World," *The Star Tonight!*, 13 July, 1992. Also see Peregrine Worsthorne, "Could fascism solve S. Africa's race problem," in *Sunday Telegraph*, 14 December, 1986. I am grateful to David Lazar for the latter reference.

[36]See, for example, Peter Hawthorne's article in *Time*, 12 October, 1992, which he uses what has become a relatively standard procedure in the writing of articles on the conflict: he opens up with a potted history of the Zulu nation including a fulsome description of the power of Shaka. This is followed by a discussion of the latest developments in the conflict, and the article concludes with a reference back to Shaka: "When something like that [an escalation of the conflict] happened in the days of Shaka, the ground trembled. If it happens again, the road from Ixopo [renowned now for the number of ambushes which have occurred on it] could lead to ruin." For a more subtle treatment of the relationship between Shakan times and the present, see Michael Massing, "The Chief," *The New York Review of Books*, 12 February, 1987. I am grateful to Gay Seidman and David Lazar respectively for providing me with copies of these articles.

[37]*The Independent on Sunday*, 14 October, 1990.

"welded a disparate series of groups into a single unit by dint of ruthless wars of conquest" using "the awesome power of the Zulu impis--a force without parallel in Africa in their fearsome discipline and utter determination."[38] He emphasized that this resulted in "pride in a warrior tradition" coupled with "strength in the face of adversity and injustice."[39] For Johnson, conflict between Zulu and Xhosa is a "tragic inevitability" rooted in history--in the Xhosa being unceremoniously flung out of the Zulu kingdom by Shaka--and underpinned by the present power struggle between what he describes as the Xhosa-dominated ANC and the Zulu nationalist organisation, Inkatha.

Johnson's analysis drew a penetrating response from the doyenne of southern African history and author of leading publications on the emergence of Zulu nationalism, the Professor of Commonwealth History at the University of London, Shula Marks. Describing Johnson's article as a "travesty of Zulu history,"[40] Marks pointed out that the Xhosa were resident in country far south of the Zulu kingdom hundreds of years before Shaka's accession to power and were not pushed out of the Zulu

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[38]*The Independent on Sunday*, 14 October, 1990, pp.3-4.

[39]*The Independent on Sunday*, 14 October, 1990, p.4.

[40]*The Independent on Sunday*, 21 October, 1990.

territories by him. Marks criticized Johnson for an attempt to manipulate the historical evidence to suggest a "'traditional' and 'inevitable' enmity between the 'Zulu' and the 'Xhosa'." Marks went on to stress that many of the victims of Inkatha attacks have not been Xhosa-speakers, but fellow Zulu-speakers, while contemporary Zulu nationalism is itself not simply an inevitable legacy of the past, but was largely built on foundations laid in the 1920s by the Zulu royal family in alliance with conservative Christian Africans, white businessmen and the Natal Native Affairs Department.

In 1992, the Durban newspaper, the *Daily News* ran an editorial on Codesa (Conference for a Democratic South Africa, the primary negotiating forum for the transfer of power in South Africa). The editorial complained that the exclusion of the Zulu king from Codesa pointing out that he is the head of a royal family that goes back three hundred years.[41] It drew a sharp response from Durban anthropologist, Mary de Haas.[42] De Haas emphasized the limitations of Zulu rule under Shaka, and the constraints on the Zulu rulers' territorial authority. She further stressed the existence in Shakan times of widespread opposition to Zulu domination. De

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[41]*Daily News*, 12 May, 1992.

[42]*Daily News*, 21 May, 1992.

Too many "draws"

Haas was careful to cite historical research in support of her points, notably the recently published *Natal and Zululand: From Earliest Times to 1910*.[43] The kwaZulu Minister of Education and Culture, L.P.H. Mtshali responded.[44] Dismissing De Haas's version of Shakan times as "highly individualistic and eccentric," Mtshali offered his own version arguing for an expanded suzerainity, and citing, in turn, the work of historian Jeff Guy.[45]

In some instances the initiative to join in discussion and debate lay within the academy. In 1992, an opinion piece appeared in the Pietermaritzburg newspaper, the *Natal Witness*, written by John Wright, Professor of History at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.[46] Wright, who wrote a doctoral thesis on political developments in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in the Natal/Zulu kingdom

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[43]A. Duminy and B. Guest (eds.) *Natal and Zululand: From Earliest Times to 1910: A New History*, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press and Shuter and Shooter, 1989. This volume includes an essay co-authored by John Wright and Carolyn Hamilton on the Zulu kingdom under Shaka, "Traditions and Transformations: the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries," chapter three.

[44]*Daily News*, 27 May, 1992.

[45]Guy has published widely on Zulu history, notably his book, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, first published London, Longmans, 1979, republished Johannesburg, Ravan, 1982.

[46]*Natal Witness*, 6 April, 1992.

area,[47] and who has published widely on the history of Shakan times, commented on Inkatha's demand that the Zulu king be allowed to lead a delegation separate from that of Inkatha at Codesa. Noting that Inkatha's claims rested on "[s]haky historical claims," Wright argued that current research reveals that the Shakan kingdom was not as exceptional as has long been thought, that "it was not the only one of its kind, nor was it the first." Likewise, he suggested that the Zulu kingdom was "smaller and less united than commonly thought." He argued that the image of Shaka had been heavily mythologized and needed to be scaled down. In summary, he challenged the assumption that a Zulu kingdom continuous with that of Shaka still existed today, and that it had a unique place in South African history.

When the historians' work began to percolate through into publications with a grassroots readership in Natal, the debate escalated into open conflict. In 1989 the Zulu language publication promoting cultural debate, *Injula*, carried an article by a Zulu-speaking teacher. Depicting the Zulu king as an illegitimate usurper, and a hated tyrant "whose hands were full of his people's

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[47]J.B. Wright, "The Dynamics of Power and Conflict in the Thukela-Mzimkhulu Region in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries: A Critical Reconstruction," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1989.

blood," the writer queried whether Shaka really was the great unifier he had been made out to be, and a hero worthy of deep admiration.[48] The article drew angry responses from readers "sick and tired of this poppycock about King Shaka."[49] One reader, Otto B. Kunene, deplored the influence on the article writer of "certain white historians who pose to be the champions of our cause [and who] write a distorted history of our kings with the aim of denigrating them...so that we might disown them and feel ashamed of them." Another reader railed against the "minority of Zulus and others who usually feel pleased when the Zulu culture and heritage is turned upside down." Yet another, who began by drawing a comparison between research on Shaka and the question of the literal truth of the story of Jesus Christ, commented, "Even this blood-shed which is facing us currently should not surprize those who are so proud of Shaka, for it is but the restoration of the custom upheld by Shaka."[50]

In late 1990-early 1991 the *Natal Witness* supplement, the *Echo*, ran as part of its *Learn with Echo*

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[48]*Injula*, 1, 1989, reprinted in the *Natal Witness Echo* supplement, 2 February, 1989.

[49]*Injula*, 2, 1989, also see letter by Otto B. Kunene, *Echo*, 16 February, 1989.

[50]Letter from N. Gumede, *Injula*, 3, 1990.

section, a series entitled "The Making of our History."[51] The authors of the series, Wright and Natal Museum archaeologist, Aron Mazel, presented the latest scholarship on the history of the Natal-Zulu kingdom area in an accessible and effective format that expressly eschewed the biases typical of apartheid history. The series was generally well-received by the *Echo*'s largely African readership. With the publication of episodes concerning Shaka, however, controversy erupted.[52]

The authors noted, amongst other things, that some of Shaka's subjects viewed him as an "upstart," that the Zulu kingdom was never fully united, that it was smaller than people think, and that Zulu society under Shaka was highly stratifed.[53] These critical remarks drew the fire of the IFP's mouthpiece, the *Ilanga* newspaper. *Ilanga* launched its attack by describing Wright and Mazel as "academic body servants." "Body servants" in this context, is the English rendition of the Zulu term *izinsila* (singular: *insila*.) *Izinsila* were officers charged with the disposal of the potent bodily discharges of the royal Zulu. They enjoyed considerable influence because of their performance of this degrading but most

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[51]*Echo*, 13 September, 1990 to 4 April, 1991.

[52]*Echo*, 7 February, 1991.

[53]This last point was made in episode 22, *Echo*, 14 February, 1991.

important task. In its article, *Ilanga* first sought to establish connections between the designers of the *Echo* series and the IFP's political rivals, the ANC, by describing the authors as "first and foremost Marxists." The article went onto designate them "secondly...[as] what one might call ANC nsilas," and cited an unnamed historian as calling them "academic hyenas of the left with a mission to diminish the accomplishments of King Shaka, the founder of the Zulu kingdom." Next, the work of Wright and Mazel was dismissed as "historical pornography dressed up as revisionist history designed to indoctrinate youth to reject the contributions to statecraft achieved by King Shaka."[54] Finally Wright and Mazel were likened to monkeys on a barrel organ. "As long as the Marxist organ grinder cranks the handle" *Ilanga* concluded, "they will dance his tune." The substance of the *Ilanga* article challenged Wright and Mazel's version of Shakan times arguing that Shaka was not a usurper, that he enjoyed widespread support, that he established his rule over an enormous territory stretching from Mozambique in the north to the Drakensberg mountains in the west and as far south as the Mzimvubu River, that he was a "military and political genius who brought relative stability, peace and order to the period of intermittent warfare, chaos and misery that

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[54]*Ilanga*, February 14-16, 1991.

had been endemic among the disunited Nguni peoples before Shaka's consolidation efforts commenced in 1816." In support of these claims the *Ilanga* article cited as evidence the testimony of Zulu informants published in the *James Stuart Archive*, one of the editor's of which is the academic bodyservant, John Wright.[55]

The following week, *Ilanga* carried a letter from the managing editor of the *Echo* series demanding from *Ilanga* corrections of errors of fact and asserting the importance of publishing different views of Zulu history.[56] This drew yet another tirade from *Ilanga* against the "historical pornographers," in which *Ilanga* rejected a further feature of the original *Echo* series, the description therein of Shaka as a "warlord," this time citing a range of academic studies in support of the various historical points made. In particular, *Ilanga* objected strongly to the use by Wright and Mazel of a photograph of the statue of Shaka at Ulundi as an illustration for the *Echo* series. "The use of that statue in juxtaposition with the use of the term "warlord" is no coincidence," fulminated the *Ilanga*

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[55]C. de B. Webb and J.B. Wright (eds.), *The James Stuart Archive of Recorded Oral Evidence Relating to the History of the Zulu and Neighbouring Peoples*, Pietermaritzburg and Durban, University of Natal Press and Killie Campbell Africana Library, 1976-86, 4 vols., proceeding.

[56]*Ilanga*, 21-23 February, 1991.

writer. Wright and Mazel sucessfully sued *Ilanga* for defamation.

The attempt by ardent Zulu nationalists to remove the figure of Shaka from academic purview did not rest there. In a Shaka Day speech in 1991, Buthelezi attacked Professor Shula Marks "for what she had to say about our Zulu commitment to our unity and to our culture which we experience today."[57] Buthelezi was reacting to a British Broadcasting Corporation radio interview in which Professor Marks discussed the issue of Zulu identity today, and its embeddedness in particular conceptions of history. Specifically Buthelezi was stung by Marks' remarks that the present-day conflict was about what it means to be Zulu. In high temper Buthelezi went on to grumble about "the academic Anglo-Zulu war that is going on just now at most of the English Universities in South Africa, and which is backed by certain academics in the United Kingdom. There seems to be a campaign to scale down Zulus as Zulus, and concerted efforts to re-invent Zulu history. There is an effort to write what is now supposed to be a 'Proper History' of the Zulu people, which is no more than propaganda against the Zulu people

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[57]Shaka Day Speech, Stanger, 21 September, 1991.

in favour of certain political parties and organisations."[58]

The essentials of the dispute between the academics--Marks, De Haas, Wright and Mazel--and the Zulu nationalists like Buthelezi and *Ilanga*, concerned the question of the size and power of the Zulu kingdom, the nature of Shakan rule, and the legitimacy of Shaka's accession. A number of the self-same questions became the subject of an equally heated debate, although in a very different setting and between other protagonists. In 1991, the University of the Witwatersrand hosted a colloquium on the so-called mfecane debate. In very brief summary,[59] the mfecane debate concerns the issue of whether there really was an "mfecane," by which is generally meant a period of upheaval across the subcontinent in the early nineteenth century caused by

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[58]See Harries' discussion of Buthelezi's familiarity with the academic historiography and the pertinent sources, as well as his criticism of academic historians whose portrayal of Shaka differs from his own. (P. Harries, "Imagery, Symbolism and Tradition in a South African Bantustan: Gatsha Buthelezi, Inkatha and Zulu History," unpublished paper, Department of History, University of Cape Town, 1987, p.4); D. Golan, "Inkatha and its Use of the Zulu Past," *History in Africa*, 18, 1991, pp.113-26; and P. Forsyth, "The Past in Service of the Present: The Political Use of History by Chief A.N.M.G. Buthelezi, 1951-91," *South African Historical Journal*, 26, 1992, pp.74-92. On the objections of Inkatha leaders and ideologues to historians whose view of Shaka they disagree with see G.M. Buthelezi, "The Bias of Historical Analysis," opening address of the Anglo-Zulu War centenary, University of Natal, Durban, 7 February, 1979.; Oscar Dhlomo, Shaka Day Speech, Stanger, 1978; and S. Maphalala, "The Black Man's Interpretation of South African history," unpublished paper presented at the University of Stellenbosch, 14 October, 1981, published as Series B, no. 36, University of Zululand, 1983.

[59]The "mfecane debate" is more fully discussed in Chapter Three.

the rise of the Zulu kingdom under Shaka. The debate, widely covered at the time in the press,[60] continues at a great rate in various academic journals and other publications.[61]

A crucial aspect of the debate is that it demands a reassessment of the importance of the Shakan state. John Wright has focused on this component of the debate and makes a convincing argument for the scaling down of the kingdom, both geographically and in terms of its impact on the wider region.[62] This development is, as we have noted above, strongly resisted by Zulu nationalists.

The mfecane debate has also thrown a spotlight on the historiography of Shakan times. Julian Cobbing, the

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[60]*The Times Higher Education Supplement*, 1 November, 1991; *Weekly Mail*, 13-19 September, 1991; *Vrye Weekblad*, 25-31 October, 1991; also see J. Omer-Cooper, "The Mfecane Defended," *Southern African Review of Books*, July-October, 1991; N. Etherington, "Shrinking the Zulu," *Southern African Review of Books*, September-October, 1992; *The Guardian Weekly*, 21 June, 1992, letter by Mike Nichol; *The Guardian Weekly*, 19 July, 1992, letter by Paul Johns.

[61]For conference reports on developments at the colloquium see *South African Historical Journal*, 25, 1991, pp.154-76. The debate continues in the *Journal of African History*, see articles by E. Eldredge, "Sources of Conflict in Southern Africa, c.1800-1830: The 'Mfecane' Reconsidered," and C.A Hamilton, "'The Character and Objects of Chaka': A Reconsideration of the Making of Shaka as 'Mfecane' Motor," in 33, 1992, pp.1-36 and 37-63 respectively. Also see E. Eldredge and F. Morton (eds.) *The Spread of Slavery in South Africa*, Boulder, Westview Press, in preparation; and C.A. Hamilton, (ed.), *The Mfecane Aftermath*, Johannesburg and Pietermaritzburg, Witwatersrand University Press and Natal University Press, forthcoming.

[62]Wright, "Dynamics of Power and Conflict," chapters four, five and six. Also see his "Political Mythology and the Making of Natal's Mfecane," *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 23, 1989, pp.272-92.

initiator of the attack on the notion of the mfecane, argues that the same version of Zulu history in Shakan times has extended unchanged from the early settler historians, if not before, into the present.[63] He claims that all previous writers treated Zulu history, and the mfecane in particular, as something separate from the colonial history of South Africa, and presented the rise of the Zulu state as a self-generated internal revolution that caused disruption across the sub-continent. Cobbing's historiographical generalizations have since come under fire for failing to trace accurately earlier shifts in representations of Shaka and Zulu history.[64]

Cobbing's understanding of there being few significant differences between the accounts of the earliest travellers and contemporary views of Shaka is one view of the historiography of Shakan times. It is a view shared by a number of other scholars including William Worger,[65] Johannes Raum,[66] Dan Wylie[67] and

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[63]J. Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi: Thoughts on Dithakong and Mbolompo," *Journal of African History*, 29, 1988, pp.487-519.

[64]C. Saunders, "Cobbing and Mfecane Historiography," in Hamilton, *The Mfecane Aftermath*, forthcoming. Also see Hamilton, "'The Character and Objects of Chaka'."

[65]W. Worger, "Clothing Dry Bones: The Myth of Shaka," *Journal of African Studies*, 6, 3, 1979, pp.144-58.

[66]J. Raum, "Historical Concepts and the Evolutionary Interpretation of the Emergence of States: The case of the Zulu Reconsidered Yet Again," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 114, 1989, pp.125-38.

Malaba,[68] and focuses on the biography of Shaka, seeing its ingredients as largely unchanging from earliest accounts to the present. The second view presented by Saunders, Wright and Hamilton, and Daphna Golan,[69] amongst others, traces a significant shift in the historiography from a focus on the "Great Man" to a concern with wider social and economic changes. The different interpretations of the historiography of Shakan times lies at the heart of the mfecane debate, with the contending parties tracing the pedigree of the notion of mfecane in different ways. The debate thus draws our attention to problems in the notion of historiography itself.

The writing of history conceived of in disciplinary terms, that is, the production of professional history[70]-

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[67]D. Wylie, "Who's Afraid of Shaka Zulu," *Southern African Review of Books*, May/June, 1991, pp.8-9.

[68]"Shaka as a Literary Theme," pp.358-67.

[69]D. Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Hebrew University, 1988.

[70]The process of the professionalization of history in South Africa is a topic urgently in need of research. Christopher Saunders' study, *The Making of the South African Past* (Cape Town, David Philip, 1988) offers some insight into the process, but the development of the discipline is not a central concern of the study. My understanding of the process is informed by analyses of the professionalization of the discipline in other contexts. See for example, J. Higham *et al*, *History: The Development of Historical Studies in the United States*, Princeton, Prentice-Hill, 1965; P. Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988. The main works on South African historiography on which I have drawn in this section are Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*; K. Smith, *The Changing Past: Trends in South African Historical Writing*, Johannesburg,

-not necessarily by academy-trained historians or full-time historians, but by researchers who viewed their task as a scholarly and autonomous exercise--began in South Africa in the late nineteenth-century with the writings of George McCall Theal,[71] George Cory[72] and Eric Walker.[73] Largely concerned with the emergence of colonial society, these works treat African societies as peripheral to the colonial history.[74] Despite their relatively curtailed treatment of African history, the early settler historians were responsible for fixing in the historiography very particular and specific

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Southern Book Publishers, 1988; S. Marks, "The Historiography of South Africa: Recent Developments," in B. Jewsiewicki and D. Newbury (eds.), *African Historiographies: What History for Which Africa?*, Beverley Hills, London and New Delhi, Sage Publications, 1986, pp.165-76. Also H.M. Wright, *The Burden of the Present: Liberal-Radical Controversy over Southern African History*, Cape Town, David Philip, 1977; F.A. van Jaarsveld, *Omstrede Suid-Afrikaanse Verlede: Geskeidenisideologie en die Historieses Skuldvraagstuk*, Johannesburg and Cape Town, Struik, 1984; and his *The Afrikaner's Interpretation of South African History*, Cape Town, Simondium, 1964.

[71]G.M. Theal, *History of South Africa from 1795-1828*, London, Allen Unwin, 1903; *History of South Africa*, 11 vols., London, Allen Unwin, 1900; *The Republic of Natal*, Cape Town, Solomon, 1886; *South Africa*, London, Fischer and Unwin, 1894.

[72]G. Cory, *The Rise of South Africa*, 5 vols., London, Longmans, 1910-1930.

[73]E. Walker, *History of South Africa*, London, Longmans, 1928.

[74]A notable exception is G.W. Stow, *The Native Races of South Africa*, edited for publication by Theal after the author's death, first published London, Swann Sonneschien, 1905, reprinted Cape Town, Struik, 1964. Saunders argues convincingly that the the liberal historians W.M Macmillan (*Bantu, Boer and Briton*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1929) and his student, C.W. de Kiewit ("Government, Colonists, Missionaries, Natives on the North-Eastern Frontier and Beyond, 1832-46," unpublished MA thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1925; and *The Imperial Factor in South Africa; a Study in politics and Economics*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1937) were rather different in their treatment of African societies and should be distinguished from the more racist settler historians. (Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, part two.)

representations of African society. Christopher Saunders rightly insists, however, that there are important distinctions amongst these writers in their treatment of Shaka and Shakan times which resist their designation as typical "mfecane theorists," notably differences in their views of the causes and consequences of the mfecane, and in their treatment of the relationship between the mfecane and the history of colonization.[75] Nevertheless, these writers shared some general characteristics. They tended to focus on the details of Shaka's rise to power, his reorganisation of the Zulu army, the instillation of perfect obedience in his followers and his military innovations. Shaka was generally depicted as aggressive and cruel, and his reign viewed as a period of vast destruction and devastation. If Zulu history was cursorily represented in these works, it figured more fully in the writings of political thinkers in South Africa grappling with "the native question."[76] The works of the historians and political thinkers alike emphasized the professionalism and special expertise which underpinned their pronouncements on "native affairs."

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[75]C. Saunders, "Cobbing and Mfecane Historiography."

[76]See for example R. Plant, *The Zulu in Three Tenses, Being a Forecast of the Zulu's Future in the Light of his Past and Present*, Pietermaritzburg, P. Davis and Sons, 1905; M.S. Evans, *Black and White in South Africa: a Study in Sociology*, London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1911; and his *The Native Problem in Natal*, Durban, P. Davis and Sons, 1906.

Both the historians and the political thinkers drew heavily on the accounts of Zulu history recorded by early travellers[77] and missionaries,[78] on the collections of historical documents compiled by Bird[79] and Chase,[80] and (a point ignored by Cobbing) on African oral evidence.[81] In missionary texts Shaka was frequently represented as "the noble savage;" whereas in travellers' accounts it was generally his "savagery" that was emphasized, but this pattern was not as invariant as some reviews suggest. Both the collections of historical documents and the oral accounts offered negative and positive views of Shaka.

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[77]N. Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa*, first published London, E. Churton, 1836, republished Cape Town, Van Riebeek Society for the Publication of South African Historical Documents, 1937, and Cape Town, Struik, 1970, L. Herman and P. Kirby, (eds.); W. Owen, *Narrative of Voyages to Explore the Shores of Africa, Arabia and Madagascar*, London, Bentley, 1833; G.F. Angas, *The Kafirs of Natal*, first published London, Hogarth, 1849, republished Cape Town, A.A. Balkema, 1974.

[78]Rev.A. Gardiner, *Narrative of a Journey to the Zoolu Country*, first published London 1836, republished Cape Town, Struik, 1966; F. Owen, *The Diary of the Rev. Francis Owen*, first published 1838, republished Cape Town, Van Riebeek Society, 1926; Rev. J. Shooter, *The Kafirs of Natal and the Zulu Country*, first published London, E. Stanford, 1857, reprinted New York, Negro Universities Press, 1969; Rev. W.C. Holden, *The Past and Future of the Kaffir Races*, London, William Nichols, 1866, republished Cape Town, Struik, 1963; Rev. J. Ayliff, "History of the Abambo," *Gazette*, Butterworth, 1912.

[79]J. Bird, (ed.), *The Annals of Natal: 1495-1845*, vol. 1, Pietermaritzburg, P. Davis and Sons, 1888, reprint Cape Town, Struik, 1965.

[80]J.C. Chase, (ed.), *The Natal Papers*, first published Grahamstown, Godlonton, 1883, republished Cape Town, Struik, 1968.

[81]See, for example, Saunder's discussion of Theal's use of African sources. (Saunders, "Cobbing and Mfecane Historiography.")

By the 1920s, with the emergence of the discipline of anthropology and the creation of Bantu Studies departments in the universities (at least partly in the service of Bantu administration), African societies in their own right became the focus of attention in academic studies.[82] This occurred outside the discipline of history, and African societies were viewed as changeless; it was believed that there was no evidence on which historical research could be based. The history of the Shakan kingdom was thus relegated to short introductory chapters in ethnographies that were marred by implicit structural-functional assumptions that the rural African societies of the early twentieth century studied by anthropologists differed little from rural societies a century earlier.[83]

The other area where research on precolonial south-east Africa occurred was in the writings of missionaries, many of whom were associated with universities. The most notable scholar in this respect was the Rev. A.T. Bryant,

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[82]It is interesting to note that a number of the first ethnographers came out of missionary backgrounds, notably H. Junod, author of *Life of a South African Tribe*.(2 vols., London, Macmillan, 1927.) Likewise, the Rev. A.T. Bryant, author of a number of highly influential works on Zulu history, began his investigations into Zulu history while a missionary in Natal, and later became one of the first researchers in the Bantu Studies Department, University of the Witwatersrand.

[83]E.J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus*, first published London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1936, republished Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, 1950.

who was first a research fellow in Zulu ethnology, and later a member of the Department of Bantu Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand.[84] Bryant's publications,[85] which are still today amongst the most influential works on precolonial Zulu history, added a mass of new, detailed information about the Shakan kingdom, but did so in a form close to the conceptual mould of the settler historians. His histories of the Zulu kingdom were cast in terms of Zulu invasions, devastations, and with causality attributed to the "Great Man" rather than to an larger socio-economic forces.[86] Bryant introduced discussion of Shaka's sexuality that was to continue as a strong themein the literature and which was developed into studies that examined the "Shaka complex."[87]

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[84]The Wits Department of Bantu Studies was established in 1923. (B.K. Murray, *Wits, the Early Years*, Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1982, pp.125, 138.)

[85]A.T. Bryant, "A Sketch of the Origin and Early History of the Zulu People," in *A Zulu-English Dictionary*, Pietermaritzburg, P. Davis and Sons, 1905, preface; "The Origin of the Zulus," *Native Teachers' Journal*, vol.1, 1, 1919, pp.9-16; a series of articles in *Izindaba Zabantu*, 1910-13, reprinted in A.T. Bryant, *A History of the Zulu and Neighbouring Tribes*, Cape Town, Struik, 1964; *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, London, Longmans, 1929.

[86]For an excellent discussion of Bryant's contribution to Zulu historiography see J.B. Wright, "A.T. Bryant and the 'Wars of Shaka'," *History in Africa*, 18, 1991, pp.409-25.

[87]J.W. Fernandez, "The Shaka Complex," *Transition*, 29, 1967, pp.11-4.

With the development of apartheid ideology, the history of the African communities of South Africa received greater attention than ever before, as government policy-makers sought historical grounds for the separation of the African population of Southern Africa into different ethnic groups, as well as justification for the "retribalisation" of urban Africans and for the occupation by whites of choice lands. In this period, the precolonial history of southern Africa was initially left in the hands of the early ethnographers, like N.J van Warmelo.[88] The sustained treatment of African history by Afrikaner historians came later and was stimulated by the work of the liberal scholars, notably that of John Omer-Cooper.[89]

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[88]N.J. van Warmelo, *A History of Matiwane and the amaNgwane*, Ethnological Publications, Pretoria, Government Printer,1935; see also his *Preliminary Survey of the Bantu Tribes of South Africa*, Ethnological Publications, Pretoria, Government Printer, 1935, pp.70-1; "Shaka's Grave at Stanger," *African Studies*, 2, 1943, pp.108-12. I am grateful to Caroline Jeannerat for help with these references.

[89]Saunders notes that the leading Afrikaner historian Floors van Jaarsveld found, in *The Zulu Aftermath*, material that provided historical justification for the Bantustan policy. (Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, p.183.) The African states which Omer-Cooper saw emerging from the mfecane were regarded by those historians as the precursors of the Bantustans. (Saunders, *South African Past*, p.183.) For Afrikaner historiography of African societies see F. van Jaarsveld, *From Van Riebeek to Vorster, 1652-1974: an Introduction to the History of the Republic of South Africa*, Johannesburg, Perskor, 1975, chapter seven. Also see the discussion of the trajectory of this historiography in A.M. Grundlingh, "George Orwell's 'Nineteen Eighty-Four:' Some Reflections on its Relevance to the Study of History in South Africa," *Kleio*, 16, 1984, pp.20-33

An Africanist initiative developed in the 1960s with the work of the anthropologists Max Gluckman[90] and Monica Wilson,[91] as well as that of the Ibadan-based historian, Omer-Cooper.[92] These scholars sought to move beyond the earlier systematized and normative picture of the Zulu kingdom. They identified phenomena in the precolonial past such as the rise of states and the growth of interstate conflict, and tried to account for these developments. Essentially they conceptualized the Shakan kingdom as a creative and constructive response to regional changes. In positing that population pressure was the cause of such changes, Gluckman was suggesting that the changes were not attributable only to Shaka's leadership.[93] In 1968 these initiatives led to a conference in Lusaka (hosted by Omer-Cooper), and culminated in the publication of *African Societies of Southern Africa* edited by Leonard Thompson, and *The Oxford History of South Africa*, edited by Monica Wilson and Thompson. The net effect of these publications was

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[90]Gluckman, "The Individual in a Social Framework;" "The Kingdom of the Zulu in South Africa," in M. Fortes and E. Evans-Pritchard (eds.), *African Political Systems*, London, Oxford University Press, 1940, pp.22-55; "Analysis of a Social System in Modern Zululand," part B, *Bantu Studies*, 14, 1940, pp.147-74.

[91]M. Wilson, *Divine Kings and the "Breath of Men,"* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press,1959, see pp.23-4 in particular.

[92]J.D. Omer-Cooper, *The Zulu Aftermath: a Nineteenth Century Revolution in Bantu Africa*, London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1966, reprinted 1971.

[93]For an excellent discussion of Gluckman's treatment of the Shakan kingdom see Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," pp.61-9 and chapter two.

the rescue of what Thompson called the "forgotten factor" in southern African historiography. African history was being drawn centerstage in southern African historiography. E.V. Walters' study of political violence was also published in 1969. Walters argued that was often seen as Shaka's madness--his autocratic and harsh rule--had to be seen as the effective use of terror as a principle means of government.[94]

The 1970s saw the more Africanist focus of these scholars develop in two new directions. The first of these, coinciding with the political growth of the black consciousness movement, presented a highly idealized view of life in precolonial southern Africa. Notions of communal ownership, social equality, responsive and responsible chiefship, heroic and able leaders, were the characteristics of the period emphasized by scholars of precolonial times.[95]

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[94]E.V. Walters, *Terror and Resistance: A Study of Political Violence with Case Studies of Some Primitive African Communities*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1969.

[95]M.G.B. Mothlabi, "The Theory and Practice of Black Resistance to Apartheid: a Social-Ethical Analysis of the Internal Struggle for Political and Social Change," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Boston, 1980, see especially pp. 203-4; J. Ngubane, "Shaka's Social, Political and Military Ideas," in D. Burness (ed.), *Shaka, King of the Zulus in African Literature*, Washington, Three Continents Press, 1976, pp.127-62. Although cast in the form of an epic poem, Mazisi Kunene's epic poem celebrating Shaka in precisely the same terms, purports to be historically accurate. (Kunene, *Emperor Shaka the Great*.)

The other development of the 1970s was the infusion of early Africanist academic writings with materialist concerns. This provided historians with crucial new tools for the conceptualization of precolonial societies. The phenomenon of state formation, and most notably the emergence of the Zulu state, has been the chief subject of this approach. The emphasis was away from a focus on Shaka, and on his abilities and achievements in creating the Zulu nation, and towards the generation of a much wider-ranging debate with contributions from both within and outside of a Marxist perspective over explanations for the rise of the Zulu state. The explanations advanced included the further development in a number of ecological studies of the population pressure hypothesis originally put forward by Gluckman, notably the pioneering work of Colin Webb and J.B. McI. Daniel on settlement preferences of northern Nguni-speakers,[96] Jeff Guy's argument that state formation was the result of an ecological crisis precipitated by demographic pressure,[97]

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[96]C. de B. Webb, "Environment and History: the Northern Nguni Example," unpublished paper presented to the Conference on the History of the Transkei and Ciskei, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, 1983; also see Webb's "Of Orthodoxy, Heresy and the Difaqane," unpublished paper presented to the Teachers' Conference on African History, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1974; J.B. McI. Daniel, "A Geographical Survey of Pre-Shakan Zululand," *The South African Geographical Journal*, 55, 1, 1973, pp.23-31.

[97]J. Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, London, 1979; J. Guy, "Cattle-Keeping in Zululand," unpublished paper presented to the Language and History in Africa Seminar, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1971; J. Guy, "Ecological Factors in the Rise of Shaka and the Zulu Kingdom," in S. Marks and A. Atmore (eds.), *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*, London, Longman,

and Martin Hall's supporting analysis of dendroclimatological evidence.[98] Another explanation of state formation advanced in this period referred to the impact of external mercantile capital. A connection between ivory trading at Delagoa Bay and the emergence of the states to the south of the port was initially proposed by Alan Smith[99] and subsequently developed and refined by Henry Slater[100] and David Hedges.[101] The impact of trade in slaves through Delagoa Bay has subsequently been investigated by Patrick Harries,[102] Julian Cobbing[103] and Elizabeth Eldredge.[104] The thrust of these arguments is to suggest that demographic,

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1980, pp.102-19.

[98]M. Hall, "Dendroclimatology, Rainfall and Human Adaptation in the Later Iron Age of Natal and Zululand," *Annals of the Natal Museum*, XXII, 3, 1976, pp.693-703.

[99]A. Smith, "The Trade of Delagoa Bay as a Factor in Nguni Politics, 1750-1835," in L. Thompson (ed.), *African Societies in Southern Africa*, London, Heineman, 1969, pp.171-89; Smith, "The Struggle for Control of Southern Mozambique, 1720-1835," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1970.

[100]H. Slater, "Transitions in the Political Economy of South-East Africa," unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of Sussex, 1976.

[101]D.W. Hedges, "Trade and Politics in Southern Mozambique and Zululand in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1978.

[102]P. Harries, "Slavery, Social Incorporation and Surplus Extraction: The Nature of Free and Unfree Labour in South-East Africa," *Journal of African History*, 22, 1981, pp.309-30.

[103]J. Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi," pp.487-519; also see Cobbing, "Grasping the Nettle: the Slave Trade and the Early Zulu," paper presented to the workshop on "Natal and Zululand in the Colonial and Precolonial Periods," University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1990, and published as Conference Proceedings in 1991.

[104]Eldredge, "Conflict in Southern Africa," pp.1-36.

ecological or trading pressures, or a combination of all three, caused massive changes in the region that gave rise to states, a change conceptualized by Philip Bonner, amongst other historians, as a transition from a lineage mode of production to a new tributary mode of production, characterized by a new division of labor (notably in the form of the king's *amabutho*), the interruption of homestead heads' control over production and reproduction and the emergence of a new aristocratic class.[105] In terms of these arguments, the role of Shaka in the making of the Zulu kingdom was significantly played down in favor of more fundamental causes.[106]

The 1980s were characterized by two major developments in academic historiography. Firstly, the mfecane debate, already mentioned, placed a spotlight on the hitherto neglected issue of the slave trade, and still more significantly, made a call for the playing down of the size and impact of the Zulu kingdom. The other important development of the 1980s was a shift away from the political economy approach of the materialist scholars to an examination of the ideological bases of

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[105]P.L. Bonner, *Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires: the Evolution and Dissolution of the Nineteenth-Century Swazi State*, Cambridge and Johannesburg, Cambridge University Press and Ravan, 1983, chapter two. Also see E. A. Alpers, "State, Merchant Capital and Gender Relations in Southern Mozambique to the End of the Nineteenth Century: Some Tentative Hypotheses," *African Economic History*, 13, 1984, pp.22-55.

[106]See Wright and Hamilton, "Traditions and Transformations."

the early states and a new concern with methodology.[107] Influenced by literary theory, this approach raised fundamental questions about the historians' reading of "sources," and in particular about the genealogies of those "sources." Both developments led to new investigations as to how the received wisdoms came into place.[108] The late 1980s and early 1990s have seen renewed interest in the figure of Shaka and a new disquisition on the ways in which he has been represented in texts.

Renascent interest in the representation of Shaka was prefigured in an essay by William Worger published in 1979. In his article on the myth of Shaka, Worger attempted to examine the methodology of historians working on Shaka and the early Zulu state. He reviewed the main sources of evidence relating to Shaka in nineteenth-century sources, both European and African derived, "to see what it can tell us about the first Zulu

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[107]C.A. Hamilton, "Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power in the Early Zulu Kingdom,' unpublished MA thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1986; C.A. Hamilton and J.B. Wright, "The Making of the *AmaLala*: Ethnicity, Ideology and Relations of Subordination in a Precolonial Context," *South African Historical Journal*, 22, 1990, pp.3-23; J.B. Wright, "Politics, Ideology and the Invention of the 'Nguni'," in T. Lodge, *Resistance and Ideology in Settler Societies*, Southern African Studies, vol. 4, Johannesburg, Ravan, 1986, pp.96-118; J.B. Wright, "A.T. Bryant and the 'Wars of Shaka'."

[108]See Wright's detailed discussions of the contributions of Shepstone and Bryant in "The Dynamics of Power and Conflict," chapters two and three.

king and what it can suggest about the motives of those who presented it."[109] Worger argued that such a review is an essential prerequisite to any attempt to reinterpret the career of Shaka in relation to the origins of the Zulu state. Worger's argument made little impact when first published because the author failed to offer a radically new perspective on the nature of evidence or on the process of the production of texts. His argument that most of the accounts of Shakan times are "partisan arguments rather than unbiased testimony"[110] was not especially novel. In his interest in the stereotypes of Shaka, in assessing the arguments regarding the aberrance of Shaka's sexual behaviour, his personal relations with people around him, and his cruelty (often used as proof of his psychotic nature), Worger was occupied with establishing what Shaka really was like at a time when there was, amongst historians, a waning interest in the doings of great leaders and a growing concern with the thoughts and actions of ordinary people, and the socio-econmic forces affecting their lives.[111] In the late 1980s, with the renewed interest

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[109]William Worger, "Clothing Dry Bones," p.144.

[110]Worger, "Dry Bones," p.147.

[111]Christian Themba Msimang has also tackled the issue of the image of Shaka.(C.T. Msimang, "The Image of Shaka", in M. Macnamara, (ed.), *World Views*, J.L. van Schaik, Pretoria, 1980, pp.91-97.) Like Worger, Msimang attributes the existence of contradictory images of Shaka to diferences in the worldviews of the commentators, but does not repeat Worger's careful handling of the various texts. Msimang actually

in representations of Shaka the aim has largely been not so much to distinguish reality from myth but rather to highlight processes of invention.

In her 1988 study, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," Daphna Golan periodizes the historiography of the Zulu kingdom into four phases. These she identifies as characterized by colonialist images, the first African images in written form, the anti-colonialist histories of the 1960s, and more recently, liberation texts. Golan treats oral texts as a category distinct from that of historiography. She acknowledges the impact of literary texts on the making of the image of Shaka, but does not conceptualize the relationship between the historical and literary representations of Shaka.

The literary reworkings of the Shaka story are legion,[112] and there is a veritable plethora of analyses

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distinguishes three reasons why contradictory images exist: exaggeration (inadvertent or intentional), difference in attitude, and misjudgement of motives. Close reading of his argument reveals that differences in worldviews underlie exaggeration and misjudgement as much as attitude.

[112]See, for example, T. Mofolo, *Chaka: An Historical Romance*, Basutoland, Morija Press, 1925 (first published in English translation in 1931, and in French in 1940; republished London, Heineman, 1981 with a new introduction by Daniel Kunene); Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*; H.I.E Dhlomo, *Valley of a Thousand Hills*, Durban, Knox, 1941; Kunene, *Emperor Shaka*; L. Senghor, Dramatic poem to Shaka in *Ethiopiques*, 1956, also published

of these reworkings.[113] The connections between the literary treatments and the historiography have, however, been little investigated. The novels, plays and poetry that deal with Shaka, and the commentaries on them

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in *Poémes*, Paris, Editions du Seuill, 1964, translated by J. Reed and C. Wake, *Senghor: Selected Poems*, New York, Atheneum, 1969; S. Badian, *La Mort de Chaka*, Paris, Presence Africaine, 1972; C. Nènèkhaly-Camara, *Amazoulou*, Honfleur, J.P. Oswald, 1970; D. Niane, *Chaka*, Honfleur, J.P. Oswald, 1971; T. U Tam'si, *Légendes Africaines*, Paris, Seghers, 1967-8; B. Moustapha, *Le Commandant Chaka*, Paris, Hatier, 1981; M. Fall, *Chaka ou le Roi Visionnaire*, Dakar, Abidjan, Lome, Les Nouvelles Editions Africaines, 1984; also see S.A. Zinsou, *On Joue la Comédie*, Lome, Haho Haarkem, 1975; F.M. Mulikita, *Shaka Zulu*, Lusaka, Longmans, 1967; J.L. Dube, *Insila kaTshaka*, Marianhill, Marianhill Mission Press, 1932, translated by J. Boxwell as *Jeqe, the body servant of Shaka*, Lovedale, Lovedale Press, 1957; R.R.R. Dhlomo, *UShaka*, Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, 1936; E. Zondi, *Ukufa kukaShaka*, Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1960, reprinted 1976; McMenemy, *Assegaai!*; S.B.L. Mbatha, *Nawe Mbopha kaSithayi*, Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, 1971; L.L. J. Mncwango, *Ngezeni?*, Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, 1977, first published 1959. See also "Morena Chaka le Morena Moshoeshoe-TsaMehla ea Morao," in *Leselinyana la Lesotho*, 17 January, 1919; "Morena Chaka le Tona ea hae," *Leselinyana la Lesotho*, 7 February, 1919. For children's books on Shaka see D. Stanley and P. Vennem, *Shaka, King of the Zulus*, New York, Morrow Junior Books, 1988 (I am grateful to Neva Makgetla for providing me with a copy of this book); D. Cohen, *Shaka, King of the Zulus*, New York, Doubleday and Co., 1973; J. Mack, *Zulus*, Morristown, Silver Burdett and Co., 1981.

[113]See for example, D. Blair, "The Shaka Theme in Dramatic Literature in French in West Africa," *African Studies*, 33, 3 1974, pp.113-41; Burness, *Shaka, King of the Zulus in African Literature*; E. Modum, "Le Mythe de Chaka," *Ethiopiques*, 14, 1978, pp.49-58; L. N'Diaye, "Théatrè et Sociétè en Afrique Noire 'Francophone'," Ph.D thesis, Universite Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, 1979; D. Kunene, "Introduction," in T. Mofolo, *Chaka*, London, Ibadan, Nairobi, Heinemann, 1987; A. Gérard, "Relire Chaka," *Politique Africaine*, 13, 1984, pp.8-20; J.M. Spronk, "The Shaka Theme in the Francophone Theatre of West Africa," Ph.D. thesis, University of Oregon, 1983; G. Midiohouan, "Le Théâtre Négro-Africain d'Expression francaise," *Peuples Noires/Peuples Africains*, 31, 1983, pp.54-78; J.M. Spronk, "Chaka and the Problem of Power in the French Theatre of Black Africa," *The French Review*, 57, 5, 1984, pp.634-40; A. Ridehalgh, "Some Recent Francophone Versions of the Shaka Story," *Research in African Literatures*, 22, 2, 1991, pp.135-152; D.P. Kunene, "Shaka in the Literature of Southern Africa" in Burness, *Shaka, King of the Zulus in African Literature*, pp.165-192; R.E. McDowell, "The Brief Search for an African Hero: The Chaka-Mzilikazi Story in the South African Novel," *Discourse*, 11, 1968; S. Gray, "Shaka as Literary Theme," *South African Journal of African Affairs*, 5, 1, 1975, pp.66-70; B.V. Street, *The Savage in Literature: Representations of Primitive Society in English Fiction, 1858-1920*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975; K. Ogunbesan, "A King for all Seasons: Chaka in African Literature," *Presence Africaine*, 88, 1973, pp.197-217.

concern themselves largely with aspects of Shaka's life and personality. The first wave included the blood and thunder accounts by Haggard, Ritter and Peter Becker,[114] a near obsessive interest in Shaka's sexuality,[115] the heroic Shaka who featured in Roy Campbell's "Flaming Terrapin," the psychologically complex Shaka of F.T. Prince's poetry,[116] and the ambiguous figure in the writings of Africans like Thomas Mofolo, John Dube, Rolfes Dhlomo and Herbert Dhlomo.

A second wave occurred in the 1960s with the end of colonialism in much of Africa, and as African writers found in Shaka an ideal symbol of the nation-builder coupled with a strong image of talent. Typically, this Shaka represented a distinguished African past, and provided an important symbol of African initiative and achievement. This occurred in South Africa but was especially the case amongst Francophone West African writers.[117] Anna Ridehalgh, in a review of more recent

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[114]P. Becker, *Path of Blood*, London, Longmans, 1962; *Rule of Fear*, London, Longmans, 1964.

[115]Malaba describes as "pornographic" the accounts by Ritter, Fourie, Mcmenemy and Schoeman. ("Shaka as Literary Theme," p.330)

[116]F.T. Prince, "Chaka," in *Poems*, London, Fabe and Faber, 1938, reprinted in *The Doors of Stone*, published by Rupert Hart Davis, 1963.

[117]See for example, H.I.E. Dhlomo's early deification of Shaka, *Valley of a Thousand Hills*. Note that Herbert Dhlomo also wrote a play, *Shaka*, the manuscript of which is lost. See also B.W. Vilakazi's poems, "UShaka kaSenzangakhona," and "Phezu kwethuna LikaShaka," (Grave of Shaka) first published in *Inkondlo kaZulu*, 1935, translated into

Francophone versions of the Shaka story, distinguishes two distinct phases in this second wave.[118] Shaka is a great African hero in both phases but in the first period Shaka was often represented ambiguously, as "a figure of questionable authority."[119] Ridelagh discerns from about 1975, a new irreverance in the figure of Shaka, the making of him as more of a plebeian hero, and "a modern subversive."[120]

The endless reworkings of Shaka as symbol or myth in literature (as opposed to historiography) have attracted a number of academic commentators. The first full length study of this kind was Donald Burness's *Shaka, King of the Zulus in African Literature*.[121] Written in the heyday of Pan-Africanism and African nationalism, this study focuses on the treatment of Shaka in contemporary written African literature. For Burness,

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English in F.L. Friedman, D. Mck. Malcolm, and J.M. Sikakana (eds.), *Zulu Horizons*, Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1962, reprinted 1973; Zondi, *Ukufa kukaShaka*; Kunene, *Emperor Shaka*; O. Mtshali, "The Birth of Shaka," in *Sounds of a Cowhide Drum*, New York, The Third Press, 1972. For a discussion of the reinvigoration of the Zulu past during the Inter-War years, see S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa*, Baltimore and Johannesburg, The Johns Hopkins University Press and Ravan, 1986; and N. Cope, "The Zulu Royal Family under the South African Government, 1910-1930: Solomon kaDinuzulu, Inkatha and Zulu Nationalism," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Natal, Durban, 1986.

[118]Ridehalgh, "Recent Francophone Versions".

[118]Ridehalgh, "Recent Francophone Versions," p.142.

[120]Ridelagh, "Recent Francophone Versions," p.149.

[121]Burness, *Shaka, King of the Zulus in African Literature*.

African literature is inescapably political, and he explores the way in which the figure of Shaka is used as a proud expression of Negritude. For Burness, Shaka is a mythical figure that can be reworked to explain the origin and destiny of a people.

The next full-length study, Mbongeni Malaba's 1986 doctoral dissertation, extends Burness's discussion of the treatment of Shaka to encompass African oral literature, notably, the praise poems of Shaka. Like Burness, Malaba focuses mostly on literary texts--although he takes limited cognizance of the historiography--seeing them as shaped by the twin heritage of Africa as having white and black lineages. Malaba's study includes a review of popular texts conventionally excluded from literary comment. Essentially Malaba views himself as a literary critic whose task is "to evaluate the merits and demerits of the different interpretations of Shaka's significance.."[122] He also seeks to pick out the main themes in these interpretations. All of this he accomplishes with skill and, indeed, he goes further than this in making important connections between texts, tracing lineages, and, in particular, in recognizing influence of oral texts. For Malaba, Shaka is "all things to many

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[122]Malaba, "Shaka as Literary Theme," p.427

Africans, but the mythopoeicis of Shaka is a largely African phenomenon."[123]

The French literary scholar, Jean Sévry has just published a book of Shaka, *Chaka Empereur des Zoulous: Histoire, Mythes et Légendes*.[124] For Sévry, it is possible for one to simply chose one's own Shaka and the appropriation of Shaka is without limits. "*Chacun son Chaka, parce que chacun le regarde a partir de son système de representations, en un lieu précis, a une période historiquement datée.*"[125]

The most recent addition to the corpus of scholarship on representations of Shaka is the work of Rhodes University literary scholar, Dan Wylie. Wylie's forthcoming Master's dissertation investigates the patterns of thought displayed by *white* writers in their literary portrayals of Shaka,[126] and what they reveal about the quite specific attitudes held by whites towards the wider phenomenon of Africa. Wylie is concerned with the textual strategies pursued by, and the literary

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[123]Malaba, "Shaka as Literary Theme," p.427.

[124]Jean Sévry, *Chaka Empereur des Zoulous: Histoire, Mythes et Légendes*, Paris, Editions l'Harmattan, 1991.

[125]Sévry, *Chaka Empereur de Zoulous*, p.10. I am grateful to Jae Maingard for assistance in reading this text.

[126]D. Wylie, pers. comm., 23 April, 1990.

influences on, these writers. For Wylie the portrayals of Shaka in the texts which he analyzes all ultimately have their origins in, and are shaped by, the seminal text of the early trader, Nathanial Isaacs, who was resident in south-east Africa during Shaka's reign, and whose account of his travels was published in 1836.[127]

We see thus the presence of Shaka in a wide variety of settings. Representations of Shaka can be distinguished in three identifiable domains: the ideological, political and cultural domains of the migrant worker and the Inkatha leaders, the domain of academic historical research, and finally, the field of literature. In all three areas, the image of Shaka is much reworked and considerable commentary exists on the nature of such reworkings. In general, the commentaries agree in identifying a genealogy for most reworkings that derives from the writings of the earliest white visitors to Shaka's court. Apart from this heritage, the general view of Shaka is that each writer creates or invents their own version.

Embroilment of academic historians in debate over Shaka raises sharply the question of the nature of their project. If Shaka is but an invention, how do historians

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[127]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa*.

read texts as sources? Do accounts like those of the early traveller Isaacs, or the poet Mazizi Kunene, have any value as historical sources? And what of the historians' own texts? Are they, too, simply imaginative reworkings of a host of inventions? Finally, why does the figure of Shaka lend itself to so many reworkings in such varied contexts?

Chapter Two

The Making of Shaka: the extensions of historiography and the limits of invention

Chapter One identified the treatment of Shaka in three distinct areas--in political discourse, in scholarly historical writings and in literature. It also looked at meta-texts on each area: at, for example, the way in which analysts have examined Inkatha's use of history, at commentary on the historians' understanding of the notion of mfecane, and at the critics' and journalists' discussions of the poets' and television scriptwriters' deployments of Shaka.

This chapter begins by assessing the implications for Shakan historiography of the rigid division of the treatment of Shaka into three distinct areas. My argument is that the way in which Shaka is made and remade in each of these fields affects fundamentally the productions of Shaka that take place in the other fields. Although the three operate in different institutional settings and are subject to different procedures, they all contribute to ways of understanding the past. Thus, I argue that the domain of what constitutes

historiography needs to be enlarged to encompass all of these areas.

I argue, first, for the expansion of the category "historiography" to encompass Shaka in both political discourse and in literature. I then engage critically with the notion that histories are merely ideological texts open to manipulation in the service of political interests. Rather than viewing historical accounts of Shaka as the "inventions" of the colonizers, I maintain that they must be seen as the product of a two-way process of the transmission of ideas between indigenous and imperialist discourses. Finally, I consider the way in which the figure of Shaka, and the system of government which he devised, have become important metaphors in South African politics. The goal of the study is to establish historically the way in which meanings have accrued to the figure of Shaka, and the way in which, in that process, limits on the "invention" of Shaka are established.

Extending historiography

Increasingly today, historiographers are less confident of the "noble dream"[1] of objectivity and are sensitive to the impact on historians of their political and social environments.[2] They are also beginning to acknowledge the contributions of amateur and popular historians to the development of historiographies.[3] Nonetheless, they continue to construe the limits of historiography in a more narrow manner than is here suggested. They preserve what they consider fundamental distinctions between the approaches of, for example, Kunene's *Emperor Shaka*, the first published account of Zulu history by a Zulu author--*The Black People and Whence they Came*[4] written by Magema Fuze, Bishop

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[1]Novick, *That Noble Dream*.

[2]Saunders, *The South African Past*, see p.2 in particular.

[3]See, for example, the introductory essay to J. Brown *et al*, (eds.) *History From South Africa: Alternative Visions and Practices*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1991, first published as a special edition on "History from South Africa," *Radical History Review*, 46/7, 1990, by B. Bozzoli and P. Delius, "Radical History and South African Society," in which the authors locate the roots of radical history in, amongst other origins, the writings of Sol T.Plaatje and S. Modiri Molema on Tswana history. Also see the criticisms of this essay which argue that the particular lineage for radical history claimed by Bozzoli and Delius is narrowly selective and highly exclusive.(See in particular, W. Worger, "White Radical History in South Africa," and C. Saunders, "Radical History--the Wits Workshop Version--Reviewed," in the special "Perspectives" section on Radical History, *South African Historical Journal*, 24, May, 1991, pp.145-53 and 160-5 respectively.)

[4]M.M. Fuze, *The Black People and Whence They Came: a Zulu View*, first published privately in Zulu as *Abantu Abamnyama* in 1922, and translated by H.C. Lugg, edited by A.T. Cope and republished in English, Pietermaritzburg and Durban, University of Natal Press and Killie Campbell Africana Library, 1979, reprinted in 1982.

Colenso's assistant and printer--and that of the academy's well-footnoted "new history," *Natal and Zululand: From Earliest Times to 1910*, replete with scholarly bibliography and index.[5] While it is obvious that the three texts are indeed different, I question the exclusion of the first two from discussions of historiography.

My interest in redefining historiography has been influenced by two bodies of work. The first includes the efforts of historians of the 1980s who have promoted popular history and brought within the purview of the academy various kinds of alternative histories produced outside the universities. Groupings like the British History Workshop, the American Social History Project, the Swedish "Dig where you stand" movement and the University of the Witwatersrand's History Workshop have taken an active interest in popular history. While their projects have drawn historians' attention to varied forms of popular history and culture, their efforts have concentrated on the researching of social history--using "voices from below"--as sources for their written histories, and on the production of those histories in popular and accessible forms. These historians recognize that the roots of certain historiographical traditions

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[5]Duminy and Guest, *Natal and Zululand*.

lie outside the academies, but acknowledge those origins without making any accompanying inclusive gestures. In fact, the Wits History Workshop has been accused of the opposite tendency, of excluding non-academics from its "academic" workshops.[6] There are also those who seek to breach the academic ivory tower, who emphasize its power and who draw attention to accounts such as S. M. Molema's *The Bantu Past and Present*,[7] and early Unity Movement histories produced outside the academy.[8]

While cognisant of both the importance of popular history and the politics of knowledge, my concern in this study is not so much to correct the imbalances caused by different emphases on class and race in the construing of the limits of historiography as to consider the implications of such corrective efforts, and to question the accepted boundaries of historiography. My purpose is to review representations of Shaka in many discourses, and over time, in order to advance discussion on the

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[6]*Weekly Mail*, 20-25 February, 1987, and 27 February-5 March, 1987.

[7]S.M. Molema, *The Bantu Past and Present*, Cape Town, Struik, 1963, first published Edinburgh, W. Green, 1920.

[8]C. Rasool, "Going Back to our Roots: Aspects of Marxist and Radical Thought and Politics in South Africa, 1930-1960," unpublished MA thesis, Northwestern University, 1987, p.6. My thanks to Leslie Witz for this reference.

nature of history and historiography.[9] In this endeavor my thinking has been strongly influenced by the pioneering work of David William Cohen on "the production of history," and the importance of historical practices lying beyond the discourse of guild historians yet within the social worlds which historians study.[10]

Readers who may accept my preliminary point that the three fields in which representations of Shaka proliferate should not be separated out, may ask why it is that I seek to expand the category of historiography to encompass Shaka in political discourse and literature.

There are those who suggest that the production of history is a fundamentally political act,[11] and who might prefer that history and history production be contained within a discussion of politics. John Wright, for

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[9]John Wright noted in 1988 that there is very little historiographical awareness among South Africa historians.(Review of Smith and Saunders in *S.A. International*, 19, 12, 1988, pp.105-8.) Since then, this situation has altered somewhat, see, for example, W. Worger, "White Radical History in South Africa," and B. Freund, "Radical History Writing and the South African Context," in *South African Historical Journal*, 24, 1991, pp.145-53 and 154-9 respectively; and W. Worger, "'White' Radical History: A Response," and R. Taylor, "Is Radical History White?" in *South African Historical Journal*, 27, 1992, pp.262-3 and 259-61 respectively; J. Krikler's review of P. Bonner *et al*, *Holding their Ground*, in the *Southern African Review of Books*, "Waiting for the Historians," 3, 6, August-October, 1990.

[10]D.W. Cohen, *The Combing of History*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, forthcoming.

[11]Such a position ultimately underlies E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983.

example, argued in his review of two new publications on South African historiography that "...history is an intrinsically political discourse; ... it is a site of constant struggle between dominant and dominated groups, for which control of the past is of central importance in establishing precedents, moral justifications, collective identities, and group cohesion."[12] I accept fully the political nature of the production of history: indeed, one of the tasks of the study is to rethink the nature of the relationship between politics and history in the making of the image of Shaka. Yet I seek to go beyond the generally recognized distinction between propaganda and serious research. At one level, this distinction is obviously useful, but as the disputes discussed in chapter one between the academics and politicians, and the particularly trajectory and timing of the mfecane debate, reveal, this simple distinction does not have the capacity to enable adequate conceptualization of these multifaceted contests. It does not, for example, explain why *Ilanga* chose to denigrate the university-based historians through powerful historical allusion to the concept of *izinsila*. I shall show that such debates, and their complex intertwining of history and politics, is by no means a recent phenomenon, but rather that they characterize the development of the image of Shaka from

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[12]Wright, "Review," p.106.

earliest times. One of the tasks of the study, then, is to trace historically the relationship between history and politics as it concerns Shaka, and to use an understanding of that historical process to rethink the nature of their connection.

Consideration of the way in which politics and ideology affect representations of Africa began with Philip Curtin's seminal work, *The Image of Africa*.[13] This study led the way in identifying the existence of stereotypes of Africa.[14] For Curtin these were largely preconceptions and prejudices--with origins in travellers' accounts, and missionary reports--of a popular mind which was not aware of the work of professional historians. For Curtin,

> the most striking aspect of the British image of Africa in the early nineteenth century was its variance from the African reality, as we now understand it. There was also a marked lack of the kind of progress one might expect to find in a body of ideas that was constantly enlarged by accretions of new data.[15]

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[13]P.D. Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action, 1780-1850*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1964.

[14]For other early studies of images and perceptions of Africa see D. Hammond and A. Jablow, *The Africa that Never Was: Four Centuries of British Writing about Africa*, New York, Twayne, 1970; C. Allen (ed.), *Tales of the Dark Continent: Images of British Colonial Africa in the Twentieth Century*, London, Deutsch, 1979; M. van Wyk Smith, "The Origins of Some Victorian Images of Africa," *English in Africa*, 6, 1, 1979, pp.12-32. Also see E. Mphahlele, *The African Image*, London, Faber, 1962.

[15]Curtin, *Image of Africa*, p.479.

Curtin suggested two explanations for this: he noted that commentators were responsive to data that confirmed their European preconceptions and that the image of Africa tended to shift in relation to changes in European thought. "In this sense," he noted, "the image of Africa was far more European than African."[16]

In the early 1980's the work of Edward Said[17] on the relationship between colonial power and knowledge of colonized peoples, as well as the new disciplinary and discursive self-consciousnesses of the period, influenced scholars like Russell Martin[18] to go back to the question of the images of Africa with a new set of conceptual tools. Focusing on British images of the Zulu, Martin queried whether such images were confined to the popular mind and whether they permeated, albeit in different forms, the perceptions of scholars as well. Martin examined the way in which such images were made up out of the interpretations of travellers and missionaries and shaped or, as Martin put it, "deliberately created...designed to serve a variety of functions--to engage the British public in action, to rationalise

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[16]Curtin, *Image of Africa*, p.479.

[17]E. Said, *Orientalism*, New York, Pantheon Books, 1978.

[18]R. Martin, "British Images of the Zulu, c.1820-1879," unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Cambridge, 1982.

imperial policies, to justify and conceal."[19] Martin's notion of "individuals and communities respond[ing] to, accommodat[ing] and recreat[ing] the Zulu for themselves,"[20] also characterizes the work of Burness, Malaba, Golan, Sévry and Wylie, discussed in chapter one.

I suggest that the fundamental assumption that histories are ideological texts, shaped by and reflective of power relations of their time, while helpful in moving us beyond the simple idea that history is an objective account of the past, excludes from view numerous facets of the complex process of the production of such texts. One of the objects of this study is to throw into relief the complexities of that process of production, to trace the influences on it of matters conventionally designated beyond, or outside of, historiography, and to show that histories are not simply reinvented in terms of contemporary interests. I also challenge the idea, reflected in a number of these works, that, as Golan puts it, for whites Shaka was "a symbol of savagery" while for "Black South Africans he represents the power of Africa before colonialism and the belief in the capacity of

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[19]Martin, "British Images," p.16.

[20]Martin, "British Images," p.16. It should be noted that Martin is sensitive to the the extent to which a representer depends upon available cultural resources in constructing images.

blacks to lead themselves."[21] At certain stages, some whites viewed Shaka in a very positive light, while the view of Shaka as a tyrant has been shared by many Africans. I aim to show how these texts influenced each other, and how they established, in the process, limits on the possible recreations of Shaka.

There are those who would argue that history is but text, or at its most basic, discourse; that, as Nancy Streuver puts it, "[w]ords make history,"[22] and that history's subject is fundamentally implicated in textual processes.[23] Such a line of argument suggests the encompassing of politics and history within textual or discourse analysis. Again, I accept the literary and discursive aspects of historical texts. A growing number of scholars seek to overcome the disciplinary divide between history and literature, but the distinctions

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[21]Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," p.8.

[22]N.S. Streuver, "Historical Discourse," in *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, vol.1, 1985, p.249.

[23]The key texts giving shape to this position are, of course, Hayden V. White's publications, *Metahistory*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973; *Tropics of Discourse*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978; and "The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory," *History and Theory*, 23, 1, 1984, pp.1-33; D. La Capra, *Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language*, New York, Ithaca, 1983; P. Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1982. Also see D. Carroll, *The Subject in Question: The Languages of Theory and the Strategies of Fiction*, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 1982, especially chapters 5 and 6.

remain uncomfortably present.[24] This study is alert to the rhetoric of historical accounts, their fictionality and their subjectivity, and to the sources of these features. It examines the way in which particular versions of Shaka are made persuasive and become popular through the use of tropes, narrative strategies and other devices.

In this area the work of Hayden White is richly suggestive.[25] White argues that the essentially poetic question of prefiguring an historical field as a domain of a particular kind constitutes an initial interpretive act. Before cognitive operations can be brought to bear, the historical field must be imagined in terms of particular kinds of data bearing certain kinds of

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[24]The 1990 University of the Witwatersrand History Workshop included a large number of "literary" contributions but little dialogue occurred between the historians and the literary scholars. For a discussion of this see the exchange of views on the conference by David Atwell and Isabel Hofmeyr in the journal *Pretexts*, 1990, 1991. See also the work historians like A. Ashforth, *The Politics of Official Discourse in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990; and C. Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order: White Supremacy and Black Resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865*, Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1992, on the relationship between texts, discourse and power. In the study of representations of Shaka, the lead has been taken by the novelist Stephen Gray. See his "Account of Research into retellings of the John Ross Story of Early Natal" and his novel, *John Ross, the True Story: a Novel*. Also see my discussion of Gray's project, Hamilton, "An Appetite for the Past': The Re-Creation of Shaka and the Crisis in Popular Historical Consciousness," and Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," p. 5. Also see K. Barber and P.F. Moraes Farias (eds.), *Discourse and its Disguises: The Interpretation of African Oral Texts*, Birmingham, University of Birmingham, 1989.

[25]H. White, *Metahistory*, 1973; *Tropics of Discourse* (1978); *Content of Form*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.

relations to each other. Delimiting the field constitutes a second level of interpretation. Temporal boundaries are imposed and certain events made salient. Chronicle is transformed into complex story as some events are narrativised as inaugural, transitional and concluding motifs. Emplotment, White continues, constitutes a third level of interpretation. Plot characterizes dynamic relations between events and drives the story forward, figuring events into a recognizable story type, thereby specifying how the narrative in its entirety should be read. White offers thus a conception of narrative as a form of knowledge in itself, and a critique of positivist conceptions of historical practice.

In other words, White suggests that it is not enough to ask of an historical narrative whether the data are reliable, and the argument valid. We need to see that the rhetoric of the text is not merely a question of style, but embodies content and meaning. Part of what this study seeks to do is to establish historically the process by means of which the field of Zulu history, and more specifically Shakan times, came to be established. It tries to identify what data were brought to bear, when and why this happened, how temporal boundaries were established and certain events were made salient. It

seeks to account historically for the emplotment of Shakan historiography. Finally, it extends a textual approach to the analysis of public events, ceremonies, holiday resorts and television series which focus on Shaka.

I go on to use the classically anthropological methodology of making the familiar--in this case, history--strange, and therein to seek a new understanding of its nature. The method is not limited to the synchronic act of making strange, but seeks to explore history-made-strange diachronically, charting change over time. I try to establish something of what "history" may mean in African oral tradition. I explore the connections between the development of native administration and the novels of Rider Haggard and draw out their implications for Shakan historiography. I assess the way in which the television series *Shaka Zulu* and the **Shakaland** theme park function as forms of historiography. Within this, the key exercises of the study are the widening of the definition of the term historiography, and the historicizing of that historiography.

The limits of invention

The challenge to conventional distinctions and categories poses the question anew of why it is that the past is important, why history is produced both professionally--either orally or in the universities--and in non-professional contexts. There are two standard answers to this question. The first is that knowledge of the past helps society to understand the present, and thus, by implication, assists in planning for the future. The second concerns the importance of memory and the role of history in the constitution of identity. Both answers are connected to the often asserted claim that the past provides "justification" for the present *status quo*.[26]

The acts of manipulating and imagining which these answers imply are now generally accepted.[27] The central thrust of this study is to identify the constraints on these acts. My concern with limitations on the manipulating of Shaka in politics and the imagining of Shaka in literature flows out of two discontents with

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[26]M. de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1991. De Certeau interprets historical practice as a function of humankind's feelings of mourning, absence and loss. I would add here the more commonplace feeling of nostalgia.

[27]B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso, 1983; L. Vail (ed.), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, London, Berkeley and Los Angeles, James Currey, 1989; N. Thomas, "The inversion of tradition," *American Ethnologist*, 19, 2, 1992, pp.213-32.

current theoretical literature on the making of the image of Africa. The first discontent is with the notion of "the invention of tradition" as formulated in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's influential edited collection.[28] These essays look at the creation of new traditions in diverse political settings: by movements of cultural nationalism, imperialist states, and radicals seeking to challenge powerful conservative rituals with counter-traditions of their own. The book shows how these traditions play an important role in the construction of ideologies of nationalism, imperialism and radicalism. This work has in turn stimulated a host of other studies along similar lines.[29]

A key aspect of the notion of invented tradition as discussed by Hobsbawm and Ranger is that "insofar as there is...reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of 'invented' tradition is that the continuity with it is largely factitious."[30] My anxieties lie in two directions. Firstly, while Hobsbawm and Ranger

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[28]Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*.

[29]Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*; E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989; R. Keesing, "Creating the Past: Custom and Identity in the Contemporary Pacific," *The Contemporary Pacific*, 1, 1989, pp.19-42; A. Hanson, "The Making of the Maori: Cultural Invention and its Logic," *American Anthropologist*, 91, 1990, pp.890-902; S. Falk Moore, *Social Facts and Fabrications: "Customary" Law on Kilimanjaro, 1880-1980*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986.

[30]Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p.2.

understand the invention of tradition to be a process, and admit that "the actual process of creating such ritual and symbolic complexes has not been adequately studied by historians,"[31] they view that process as determined by what is politically expedient and as constrained by prevailing political necessities. Although they tend to focus on the creation of novel forms out of ancient materials, it must be noted that they do acknowledge that invented traditions are often "adaptations" of old ones. However, they do not question what it is that determines the material selected for adaptation, and how the process of adaptation actually takes place. They do not ask what materials are available, why they are available for adaptation, and what the limitations are on their use. Finally, they do not explain why it is that traditions which are obviously mythical are believed to be true. In other words, is it possible simply to "choose your Shaka," to paraphrase Sévry, or are there constraints on these processes of invention?

The notion of "invention" loses sight of the history of the tradition, of the way in which the tradition's (or elements of the tradition's) own past shapes its present. It further places full control over content and form in

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[31]Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p.4.

the hands of the "inventors"--usually political elites--and ignores the way in which their versions of the past are shaped by contesting and conflicting versions of the past.[32] It loses sight of the struggles between existing, often opposed, bodies of knowledge, and the ways in which such contests are related to the social conditions which prevail in the worlds inhabited by their promoters. It denies the possibilities of "hidden transcripts"[33] and "subjugated knowledges,"[34] and the effects these subversive texts have on the versions of the past promoted by those with political power. My argument then is that the image of Shaka is not an invention, either from scratch or from pre-existing

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[32]For a fuller discussion of this process and the Gramscian notions of hegemony on which it draws, see C.A. Hamilton, "Ideology and Oral Traditions: Listening to the 'Voices from Below'," *History in Africa*, 14, 1987, pp.67-86. Also see J. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, London, Yale University Press, 1985, which makes a related argument, but outside of, and in opposition to, the notion of hegemony. Scott argues that the notion of a dominant ideology can become a form of determinism, in which the power of subordinate classes to penetrate the world of the elite is underestimated. Scott emphasizes the importance of every-day forms of resistance. Added to his list of things like false compliance and feigned ignorance, are the options, here relevant, of manipulated histories, and other things which encode a subversion of the world of the dominant. Scott argues that the underclasses maintain their own worldview which is filled with a consciousness of the statements by those to whom they stand in opposition. The reverse process is surely also the case, and thus the statements of the underclasses are likely to permeate the worldview of the elite.

[33]J. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1990. I am grateful to Ran Greenstein for drawing my attention to Scott's notion of "hidden transcripts."

[34]M. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, (ed.), C. Gordon, New York, Pantheon Books, 1980, see especially "Lecture One, 7 January, 1976," p.81. I am grateful to Ran Greenstein for drawing my attention to the significance of this work to my argumment.

materials. Its making, I suggest, can be charted historically in much the same way as, for example, "the making of the working class"--or any other similar phenomenon in the discussion of which we are more comfortable with the notion of historical process--can be charted.

My second discontent is with the idea of the "West's" creation of the "Other." Following Edward Said,[35] it is now widely argued that "the West" invented a "primitive Other" in opposition to its "civilised self."[36] This perspective has been extremely useful in stimulating a critique of colonial modes of representation, in drawing attention to the way in which enduring power inequalities affect knowledge of dominated societies, and in highlighting the persistent tropes used to visualize the colonized.

The great virtue of Said's study--his powerful demonstration of "the sheer knitted-together strength"[37]

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[35]Said, *Orientalism*.

[36]See, for example, J. Clifford and G.E. Marcus, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, University of California Press, 1986; J. Fabian, *Time and The Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1983; H.L. Gates, Jr. (ed.) *"Race," Writing and Difference*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1986; H. Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse," in *October*, 29, 1984, pp.125-33.

[37]Said, *Orientalism*, p.6.

of western discourse on the exotic-- is also his argument's weakest point. His thesis, and the many studies that flow from it which focus on the process of "othering," must be criticized for presenting western discourse as fully systematic and invariant.[38] As D. Porter has rightly noted in his inquiry into travel literature and its modes of representations, Said's approach fails to make qualitative distinctions between a variety of texts produced under a variety of circumstances for different audiences.[39] One of the tasks of this study is to distinguish between texts produced under different circumstances. I query the very notion of a "western" discourse on the Zulu, and more specifically, the idea of a consistent representation of the Zulu king. I seek to show how, on the one hand "western" discourses changed over time. I demonstrate their heterogeneous nature, and finally, I try to show how their representations were shaped by indigenous discourses, themselves far from homogeneous. The notion of the West's construction of the Other loses sight of the historiographies of the people labelled "other," and

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[38]I include here the contributions to the special edition of *American Ethnologist* on the anthropology of colonialism which, on the whole, treat the category "colonizers" problematically, but which are framed within the perspective of the colonizers defining and imposing culture on the colonized.(*American Ethnologist*, 16, 4, 1989)

[39]D. Porter, "Orientalism and its Problems," in F. Barker *et al*, (eds.) *The Politics of Theory*, Colchester, University of Essex, 1983, p.182.

the ways in which they have shaped the "West's" knowledge of those communities. My argument is that historically the subalterns spoke,[40] and, more importantly, were heard. Their words were not reflected in pristine form in colonial discourse, and we may not now be able to recover their voices, but we can discern the traces and influences of their speech.[41] In some cases we find that colonial researchers succeeded in recording "hidden transcripts," having access to views opposed to those of the Zulu rulers. In other cases, we find traces in "public transcripts" of divergent views which have been absorbed and neutralized by elites.[42] These traces are present, I would argue, because the colonial worldview was not simply imported from the metropole and imposed on the colonized, nor was a new world view suddenly "invented." Rather, it emerged out of the colonial experience, through a process of transformation and

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[40]My phrasing here is, of course, a play on Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's article, "Can the subaltern speak," in C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1988, pp.271-313.

[41]What is revealed here is a potential contradiction between discourse theory and Gramscian hegemony. For a discussion of this contradiction and of Said's failure to grasp the construction of a discourse on the Orient as a process see Porter, "Orientalism and its Problems," pp.179-193. The problem of a contradiction between discourse theory and Gramscian hegemony is also raised in B. Bozzoli, "The Discourses of Myth and the Myth of Discourse," *South African Historical Journal*, 26, 1992, pp.191-7.

[42]In other words I question the usefulness of the concept of "a people without a history," and seek to raise questions about the notion of academic historians "giving" them a history. E. Wolf, *Europe and the People Without a History*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1982.

rearrangement. It was the hegemonic view because it articulated different versions of the world --including those of the colonized--in such a way that their potential antagonisms were neutralized.[43] In some instances, of course, we can detect those traces because opposition in the past was successful or because it was dramatic and noisy. In other instances, they remained hidden while contexts of unfavorable power relations prevailed, and later, in changed circumstances, became visible. In still other cases, the colonizers actively selected elements of the new worldview which they promoted from then existent African ideas, not as a consequence of struggles from below, but because of the power and attractiveness of indigenous concepts.

I also criticize the crude we-they dichotomy which lies at the heart of many current views of colonial discourse. I do this directly through exploration of the complex moment when the colonial administrator, Theophilus Shepstone, "becomes Shaka" in order to oversee the coronation of the independent Zulu king, Cetshwayo, and (indirectly) in my analyses of Rider Haggard's romantic African heroes and heroines. Thus my study of Shaka challenges Said's perception of an ontological and

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[43]This understanding of hegemony draws on E. Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*, London, Verso, 1977.

an epistemological distinction between the Orient and the Occident in "western discourse," or in this case, Africa and "the West,"[44] and acknowledges that historians' subjects' own representations have epistemological equality with those of the historians. Finally, by highlighting positive valuations of Shaka, I seek to take further James Clifford's criticism of Said's account of Orientalism, namely that it underplays the positive valuations of "the other" that occur in "western" representations.[45]

These discontents lead me also to take issue with Valentin Mudimbe's study, *The Invention of Africa*.[46] I seek to qualify Mudimbe's argument that the foundations of discourse about Africa lie in the colonial encounter. I suggest rather that we have to recognize that the origins of many of its components lie in indigenous African discourses. In making this argument, I am not suggesting that it is possible for us today to recover intact those indigenous discourses. I am arguing that we can identify their traces in colonial and Africanist

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[44]Said, *Orientalism*, p.2.

[45]J. Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1988, p.261.

[46]V. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1988.

discourse. These traces allow us not so much to liberate "subjugated texts,"[47] but to reconstruct more of the process of their incorporation into their present situations. In this study I thus offer one answer to Paulin Hountondjin's question, "*Que faire?*" following *The Invention of Africa.*[48] My answer moves away from a notion of discourse of the Other that is systematic, invariant and synchronic, to an insistence on the historicizing of the image of Shaka and a focus on variations. Rather than tracing small shifts in the representation of Shaka in one text to the next, and linking changes to changing politics and context--as do Malaba, Golan and Sévry--the study seeks to identify the events and historical developments that allow us to answer the question "why Shaka?" and which set the limits on "which Shakas?"

While I support fully the project of breaking down the barriers between the domains of "western theory" and "African sources"[49]--indeed I take that as one of my tasks--and agree that African mediations must be credited

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[47]As Foucault suggests a genealogical method might do.

[48]The question was posed at a panel session on Mudimbe's book at the American African Studies Association meeting in 1989, and recorded in Andrew Apter's article, "*Que Faire?* Reconsidering Inventions of Africa," *Critical Inquiry*, 19, 1992, pp.87-104.

[49]For a discussion of this project see C. Miller, *Theories of Africans: Francophone Literature and Anthropology in Africa*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1990, introduction.

their rightful place, I also question the suggestion in Christopher Miller's work[50] that this is a new development of post-colonial times.[51] My study asserts that indigenous intellectual endeavors were just as present in precolonial times, and influenced the colonial reading of Africa. The identity and desires of the colonizers were not simply projected, or inscribed on Africa, nor was Africa drawn from the imagination.[52] My study shows there was a dialogic process in the making of the image of Shaka. Where Miller claims this complex intermix of conflicting codes happened only when "Senghor and Césaire took pieces of their new Africa from Frobenius,"[53] this study pushes back its origins to the moment of first contact.

The view of the nature of colonial discourse as systematic and universal leads commentators like Golan and Cobbing to decry white writings about Zulu history as distortions of the Zulu past. Golan, for example, focuses on the fact that the Zulu linguist and

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[50]Miller, *Theories of Africans*.

[51]Likewise Malaba and Golan see the African and European coming together in early African writings, and treat earlier oral material as source.

[52]J. Comaroff and J. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonization and Consciousness in South Africa*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1991, chapter three.

[53]Miller, *Theories of Africans*, p.296.

researcher, the Rev. Henry Callaway,[54] described Zulu society as "savage."[55] Following Said, Golan dismisses Callaway as yet another producer of an invariant image of the Zulu, and views his collected materials as shaped by prevailing colonial power relations. This judgement inhibits Golan from coming to grips with the full complexity of Callaway's research efforts, and she is thus unable adequately to evaluate his contribution to the existing body of knowledge on the Zulu and neighboring peoples. In fact, Callaway was a curious and ambiguous figure, far from representative of the views of his missionary peers. While it is clear that Callaway's researches are filled with the stereotypes and preconceptions about Africans characteristic of his times, due consideration needs to be given to the particular circumstances of the production of his works, and to evaluation of his own view of his endeavors. In sharp contrast to many of his missionary colleagues who paid little attention to the methodologies which they employed in investigating African religious beliefs, Callaway felt that "[i]t is very important whilst tracing out their traditions to be careful not to mingle with

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[54]Rev. H. Callaway, *The Religious System of the AmaZulu*, Pietermaritburg, Davis, and Springvale, 1870; also see his *Nursery Tales, Traditions and Histories of the Zulu*, Pietermaritzburg, Davis, and Springvale, 1868.

[55]Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," p.38.

them suggestions of our own, or thoughts which they may have already had suggested to them by others."[56]

Missionary texts like Callaway's are not a focus of this study. A very similar problem occurs, however, in relation to the writings of colonial officials, like Theophilus Shepstone and James Stuart. Indeed, Golan dismisses Stuart as a destroyer of indigenous legal and cultural systems by claiming to preserve them.[57] Stuart's collection of oral evidence from the Zulu and neighboring peoples constitutes one of the major sources for the history of the early nineteenth-century. Stuart collected material in over one hundred notebooks and on numerous loose sheets of paper, an effort so prodigious as to be described as a life's work. The body of knowledge developed by Stuart was surely shaped by prevailing colonial relations and by his position in the colonial service. But Stuart was painfully at odds with the prevailing sentiments of most of his fellow colonists. He was disenchanted with official "native" policy: where the colonists were most concerned to develop policies which guaranteed their access to land and labor, Stuart objected to forced labor levies and to

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[56]Quotation from Callaway's journal for 1860, cited in M.S. Benham, *Henry Callaway: A Memoir*, (ed.), Rev. Canon Benham, London, Macmillan, 1896, p.225.

[57]Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," p.5.

the dispossession of Africans of their land. He evinced a unique and powerful commitment to giving Africans a say in their own affairs as well as to allowing them to be heard in their own words.

Clearly Stuart's colonial background, his expression of black-white relations in terms of the discourse of "civilized" and "uncivilized," and his recording techniques had an impact on the evidence which he transcribed. It is unlikely that when we read his text we hear the same account which was spoken to him. Nonetheless, like Callaway, his researches cannot be dismissed as colonial inventions of little or no use to historians. Rather, his interviews need to be considered in terms of his personal background, his complex career in the colonial administration, and the highly contested development of native policy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As much as we must look at how Stuart's notion of civilization was imposed on the traditions which he recorded, so too do we need to consider the way in which his ideas of "uncivilized" were shaped by the indigenous idea of *buzimuzimu*, translated by Stuart as "cannibalism," but glossed in other contexts by African writers as the opposite of civilized.[58] In

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[58]See, for example, J.S.M Matsebula, A *History of Swaziland*, Cape Town, Longman, 1988, first published Penguin, 1972, p.160. In suggesting that the idea of "cannibalism" has roots in African thought

advocating a re-evaluation of James Stuart I am not reverting to the position of accepting Father Placide Tempels on his own terms.[59] Nor do I accept uncritically the idea of Tempels, or Stuart, rejecting the roles of bringers of light to become receivers of native wisdoms. Yet, just as Andrew Apter feels that Tempels cannot be as easily dismissed as Mudimbe would like,[60] so, too, do I argue that Stuart should continue to command our attention, and that he offers a viable source of historical data, which, sensitively read, have a great deal to offer historians of Shakan times. To dismiss the writings of Callaway, Stuart and Tempels as examples of "colonial discourse" is to close off the possibilities of recovering material about Africa's precolonial past, and ultimately to revert to a denial of that history. In cases where early African oral traditions only exist in forms recorded by white writers, then, as Greg Dening put it, "One can see beyond the frontier only through the

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I question the perspective current that cannibalism was "an invention" of the West as the quintessential symbol of savagery. (Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, p.123.) I am not however suggesting that anthrophagy was common in early nineteenth century Natal. I am arguing that the idea of *buzimuzimu* was current, and that it was counterposed to the idea of social order. My suggestion then, is that the idea of cannibalism which appears in the writings of the colonizers has its origins as an idea in indigeneous discourse.

[59]The reference here is to the ethnophilosophy of the Belgian missionary Tempels, heralded by an earlier generation of negritude scholars as the recovery of an indigenous bantu philosophy, which Mudimbe critiques as but a more sophisticated and efficient means of civilizing and controlling Africans. (Mudimbe, *Invention of Africa*, p.138.)

[60]Apter, "*Que Faire?*," p.97.

eyes of those who stood on the frontier and looked out. To know the native one must know the intruder."[61]

Prompted by new methodological concerns about the nature of evidence, and by the crisis over the nature of "white" sources precipitated by the eruption of the mfecane debate, one of the main themes of the study is consideration of the many representations of Shaka in order to develop a view of how these texts should be read by historians and how they can be used as sources. In other words, the study asks critical questions about the sources which historians use in the reconstruction of Shakan times. It suggests that there is a far more complex relationship between indigenous narratives, and colonial ones, and the processes of representation in which they engage, than Said, Martin, Malaba, Golan and Sévry allow. It suggests that there is a historically conditioned dialectic of inter-textuality between "western" models of historical discourse and indigenous traditions of narrative, and seeks to identify some of the places where the indigenous narrative interpenetrates "modern" historical practice. This asserts the importance of history and of historicizing Shaka rather than, on the one hand, the simplistic notion of the

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[61]G. Dening, *Islands and Beaches: Discovering a Silent Land: Marquesas, 1774-1880*, Honolulu, The University of Hawaii, 1980, p.43.

invention or re-invention of Shaka--Sévry's idea that one can simply chose one's Shaka--or, on the other hand, Wylie's idea that a single line of descent can be traced from Isaacs' 1836 text into the present.

I question not only the maintenance of distinctions between the fields of politics, history and literature, but also challenge divisions implicit within each area. Chief amongst these is the distinction within political discourse between ideology--as in Buthelezi's Shaka Day speeches--and popular culture, as expressed, for example, in the Shaka chest. Another such distinction exists within academic historical writings between historical texts--the production of the guild-trained historians--and "sources"--notably oral traditions, but also the accounts of early travellers, missionaries and colonial officials. Within the field of literature distinctions exist between the poetry, drama and novels produced by scholars--*La Mort de Chaka*, or *Emperor Shaka the Great*--and the nineteenth-century praise poems of Shaka or even the popular 1980s television series, *Shaka Zulu*. I will elaborate briefly on each of these in turn.

Writings on Zulu nationalism emphasize the way in which the image of Shaka is manipulated to suit current political ends. Such manipulations clearly resonate with

popularly-held views of Shaka, as expressed in the Shaka chest and other forms. Many commentators explain contemporary Zulu militarism associated with the image of Shaka as the result of ideological manipulations by Zulu nationalists and their supporters.[62] This perspective, while extremely useful in drawing attention to the constructed nature of identity, fails to explain why the ideas concerned are readily accepted by ordinary people, including some Zulu-speakers who are opposed to Zulu nationalism. Many Zulu-speakers today, claim an awareness of themselves as existing and acting in a continuous context of social relationships that began with Shaka. One of the questions that I am concerned with is the history of that historical awareness. I seek to make a contribution to the understanding of ethnic politics in arguing that historicization of the image of Shaka allows us to begin to understand something of the making of popular apprehensions of Shaka. I look at the way in which, over time, meaning has accrued to the image of Shaka. I discuss the way in which that process of accrual serves to limit and constrain political and ideological manipulations of the past. I suggest that the contours of the history of the image of Shaka

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[62]G. Maré and G. Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and South Africa*, Johannesburg and Bloomington and Indianapolis, Ravan and Indiana University Press, 1987, p.57; S. Marks, "Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness," in Vail, *Creation of Tribalism*, chapter seven.

themselves give form and meaning to the story of Shaka, and limit the recasting of the image by political elites and their opponents alike.

I query the distinction between historiography and sources discussed above, and which is present in most historical reconstructions of Shakan times. Historiography is understood to be the work of academy-trained professionals, while in the category "sources" are included the oral accounts of Zulu-speakers alongside the writings of early travellers, traders and officials. While it is obvious that professional historians tackle the reconstruction of the past in a very different way from Zulu-speaking oral historians, unquestioning acceptance of this division ignores what is similar or comparable in their work. It further blurs important distinctions within the category "oral historians," namely, the differences between oral historians whose professional work it is, and was, to produce historical material, and oral historians who have been so labelled simply because they have been interviewed by researchers about the past. Indigenous oral historiographies demand historicization, have their own canons, and are governed

by rhetorical strategies, and narrative conventions different from those of guild historians.[63]

In terms of the third category, Kunene's *Emperor Shaka* is widely recognized as a "significant" component of the body of literature on the image of Shaka. Enacted texts, such as the television series *Shaka Zulu*[64] and the "total holiday resort," **Shakaland**, are not generally subjected to the same textual treatment, nor are they regarded as being part of the corpus of historiography. I argue that both enterprizes are complex texts that are enormously powerful in their impact on the envisioning of Shakan times. As visual evocations of the past, they, along with pageants and plays about Shakan times, are highly authoritative and seductive productions of the past. Indeed, I argue that they have a powerful impact on all acts of imagining the Shakan era, including the work of professional historians. They too, set limits on how the Shakan past is reconstructed in other arenas and in the future.

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[63]In insisting on the the naming of the "traditions" as historiographies and in refering to their canons, using the same language employed for their "western" counterparts, I am influenced by an exciting new body of literature on the nature of intellectual work within Africa, including most notably, D. W. Cohen and E.S. Atieno Odhiambo, *Siaya: The Historical Anthropology of an African Landscape*, London, James Currey, 1989: K.A. Appiah, "Out of Africa: Typologies of Nativism," *Yale Journal of Criticism*, 2, 1988, pp.153-178; Miller, *Theories of Africans*; Mudimbe, *Invention of Africa*.

[64]One exception here is the work of Daphna Golan which includes an anlysis of the television series as an ideological text.

While concerned with the politics of representations of Shaka, the historiography of Shaka, and Shaka in literature, I focus less on the central texts in each of those fields, and explore rather what happens in the borderlands between these areas. I am interested in texts on the boundaries between professional and popular history, between history and literature, and in those that elude such categorizations. I also seek to problematize the processes of declaring what is history and what is not; to look at texts whose status as history is contested and at locations denied the status of being "history." I look not only at written and oral texts, but also at history produced in household items, public events, in ceremony and display.

Historians increasingly need to develop understanding of historical practice in all of these domains, as well as a clear picture of the history of the image of Shaka before they can confidently evaluate sources for, and conduct research on, Shakan times. Cobbing's idea of European sources as "bad,"[65] and African sources as absent, is simply untenable. However, my intention is not limited to expanding the category of Shakan historiography and historicizing the image of

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[65]This term was used at the "Mfecane Aftermath" colloquium by one of the paper contributers, himself one of Cobbing's students.

Shaka. I argue further that "Shaka" is not simply a story that changes in the telling over time. It is also an image of highly compressed--and changing--meaning.

Shaka as metaphor[66]

The discovery of representations of Shaka in many and varied locations requires us to move beyond seeing each occasion as an historiographical exercise concerned with the reconstruction of the past. Rather, it seems, the figure of Shaka, and the system of government associated with his name, while the object of intense historiographical attention, are also deployed as metaphors, and as such, influence Shakan historiography in particular ways.

Metaphor allows a great deal of information to be compressed into a single utterance. Any given human experience--the reign of Shaka or present-day ethnic conflict--is complex. Metaphor telescopes its complexity without simplifying it. Metaphors are persuasive and attractive; they have a creative dimension. The aspect of

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[66]My discussion of metaphor owes a great deal to stimulating discussions with JoAnne Brown, and draws heavily on the introduction to her study, *The Definition of a Profession: The Authority of Metaphor in the History of Intelligence Testing, 1890-1930*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1992.

metaphor that is poetically-based resists translation into literal language. Literal language, likewise, cannot easily cope with the full complexity of that human experience, especially insofar as it is a changing complexity. So it hands those aspects over to vivid and forceful figurative language.[67] A great strength of metaphors is their capacity not to be true or false but to offer, or be seen to offer, insight.[68] In other words, one does not need to prove that contemporary African society is like Shakan society, or that a particular rendition of Shakan society is like it really was in the past. Rather, it is sufficient for the claim to be made that a particular way of thinking about Shakan society which is not false, offers insight into how we think about African society in other contexts. JoAnne Brown has argued of metaphor that it is its

> very vagueness and the multiplicity of metaphorical meaning that makes it a powerful social adhesive. Metaphor through its familar literal referent, appears to offer self-evident, socially shared meaning to the unfamiliar. Yet it invites each listener to interpret its meaning personally, even privately. Metaphor thus softens contradictions and differences because it encapsulates a whole social system of meanings in one term, while the comprehension of

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[67]A. Ortony, "Why Metaphors are Necessary and Not Just Nice," *Educational Theory*, 25, 1, 1975, pp.45-53.

[68]M. Black, "More about Metaphor," *Dialectica*, 31, 3-4, 1977, pp.431-57.

> specific aspects of the metaphor nevertheless may remain a very private mental act.[69]

In some instances, it should be noted, the image of Shaka is polytropic,[70] in that it may embody metonymic or synechdochical principles. Thus we find instances where Shaka is the part that represents the Zulu whole or the Zulu political system. There are also instances where Shaka is represented as an exception--as different from all other Africans--or as the symbol of all Zulus, where Zulus are regarded as being exceptional and different from all other Africans.

I examine the use of the figure of Shaka and the Shakan regime as metaphors in South African political discourse. I explore the questions of why, by whom and how it was that the metaphor of Shaka was selected and agreed upon as the bearer of meanings, in preference to any other option. I try to establish historically how the image of Shaka came to encapsulate a whole system of meanings.[71] I tease out what these meanings were and are, and finally, I show how the comprehension of

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[69]Brown, *The Definition of a Profession*, pp.13-4.

[70]E. Onuki-Tiernay, "Embedding and Transforming Polytropes: The Monkey as Self in Japanese Culture," in J.Fernandez (ed.), *Beyond Metaphor: The Theory of Tropes in Anthropology*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1991, pp.159-89.

[71]Here I follow Onuki-Tiernay who points out that the monkey in Japanese culture is not *ipso facto* a metaphor, but becomes a particular kind of trope under particular circumstances in a particular context. (Onuki-Tiernay, "Embedding and Transforming Polytropes.")

specific aspects of the metaphor varied in time and space. I demonstrate that the metaphor of Shaka was open to different interpretations by different parties who nonetheless perceived their respective interpretations to be widely shared, without ever realizing, as Brown puts it, "that the consensus is created by the vagueness of the metaphor itself."[72]

The political function of metaphor is to take something that is formed in the past, project it into the future, and then fill in the blanks. Metaphor functions as a model of an imagined future. Thus the historical dimension of metaphor is crucial, and can be said to have a predictive aspect. At the same time, it also has a constraining function, since it sets the limits on the acts of imagining. In the Shaka case, Shaka often becomes the model for future race relations, but in so doing, by conferring on Zulus, for example, a notion of their own militarism, becomes part of the making of the future. Since analogy established by metaphor is often vague and imprecise, in the action of projecting the past into the future; there is plenty of room for change, for the introduction of new materials. While there is scope for alterations, the possibilities of change are limited. Naomi Quinn has argued that, as meanings are culturally

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[72]Brown, *The Definition of a Profession*, p.14.

constituted, it is important to recognize that particular metaphors are selected by speakers and favored by listeners because they provide satisfactory mappings onto already existing cultural understandings.[73] Thus, in contrast to the generally accepted position of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson,[74] who argue that metaphor is productive of meaning, Quinn suggests that metaphor is constrained by understanding. One of the tasks of this study will be to explore the way in which Shaka as metaphor is constrained by cultural understandings.

What are the implications of the use of a particular metaphor rather than another? In other words, what were the references to shared understandings and experience that were being claimed by the evocation of Shaka rather than alternative metaphors? For Kunene, for example, the answer is simple. Shaka is the choice because of what he was "in reality."

> The one trait that has made the Shaka of both history and legend a universal conversation point and an inspiration of artistic creations, and sometimes even a symbol of African political aspirations, has been his Herculean temperament.[75]

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[73]N. Quinn, "The Cultural Basis of Metaphor," in Fernandez, *Beyond Metaphor*, pp.56-93.

[74]G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1980.

[75]Kunene, *Emperor Shaka the Great*, pp.176-7, also see p.190.

This study suggests an alternative answer to the question, an answer located in the history of the image of Shaka. It explores first the emphasis in oral traditions on Shaka. An important explanation for their treatment of Shaka, I suggest, lies in the central concern of oral traditions with the issue of the Zulu succession, a matter hinged on the figure of Shaka. Shaka's legitimacy is understood to be founded, not on his birthright, but on his success, and his achievements, which, in turn, depended on his army, and its character as highly disciplined and effective. These emphases found in the oral traditions, I argue, were transferred into European written accounts of Zulu history in a variety of ways, but most decisively when the Natal Native Administration began to draw on Zulu history for a model of domination and control. Finally, I show how this model came to be made into a metaphor for South African politics.

Once the Shaka metaphor was accepted, alternative ways of thinking about African society become very hard to imagine. Shaka as metaphor for African society made a number of very specific notions about the nature of African society seem common-place, self-evident and historically validated. As whites became increasing isolated from African society through apartheid and

separate development and had less and less personal, first-hand, intimate knowledge of Africans, new pressures developed for the gaining of knowledge of "the native as he really is," i.e. was, before contact with Europeans. This led to the emergence of a small group of experts "qualified" to mediate, to translate, to pronounce on the essences of Zulu history. The study also seek to investigate their impact on the making of the image of Shaka.

In summary, then, this study looks at the history of the image of Shaka and at the historical processes in terms of which Shaka developed into a metaphor for contemporary politics. I show how, in terms of both historical perspectives, certain data were preferred over others, how temporal boundaries were established and certain events in the story of Shaka were made salient. I account for the emplotment of Shakan historiography. I look at the construction and production of the image of Shaka, but also discuss what was excluded, forgotten or silenced. I am especially concerned with the constraints and limitations on the making of Shaka as image and metaphor, and the manner of their establishment. I pursue this concern through a focus on unwritten or marginal texts. I have not sought to construct a continuous narrative that "explains" the development of

the image and the metaphor of Shaka. Rather, I have taken a number of consecutive, but separate, moments in time, and have interrogated them. In each of the moments selected I have moved beyond the usual writings consulted to consider either subsidiary writings, unpublished writings, performances, and other forms in which the past is reconstructed, forms which are not conventionally part of the canon of historiography.

There are three parts to the rest of the study. The next section, Part Two, is concerned with the earliest traders' views of Shaka, as well as then existent African views, and the way in which the two intersected. Part Three looks at the way in which the Secretary for Native Affairs, Shepstone, drew on indigenous conceptions of Shaka and the system of rule associated with his name as a model for the Natal Native Administration. Shepstone's model was subsequently distorted by the British authorities in the course of events surrounding the Anglo-Zulu War. Colonial official James Stuart struggled to bring about the reinstatment of what he understood to be the essential "Shakan" core of the Shepstone system and, to that end, committed himself to a vast task of research into the history and customs of the African population of Natal and Zululand. Developments of this nature produced a complex image of the Zulu king in the

late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which was propagated in the novels of Rider Haggard amongst other channels. They resulted in the development of Shaka as a metaphor for South African politics and set in place limits on the possible reinventions of Shaka. In conclusion, Part Four explores the use of Shaka as a metaphor for politics in the television series *Shaka Zulu* and in the the **Shakaland** holiday resort.

The image of Shaka offers a useful and especially illuminating focus for the larger historiographical enterprise that lies at the heart of this study. This is partly because of the extensive treatment of Shaka in oral testimonies, in political discourse and the enactment of power, in historiography, in literature, and in commentaries on the representations of Shaka in these areas. More importantly, the focus on Shaka in the study is also driven by the necessity of gaining insight into the nature of powerful idea of "Zuluism," and the problems created by the invocation of Shaka and Zulu militarism in the present.

PART TWO

THE IMAGE OF SHAKA: ORIGINS AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

> "We are concerned to write the anthropology and history of those moments when native and intruding cultures are conjoined. Neither can be known independently of that moment."[1]

Part two of the study first looks at the texts on Shaka which date from the 1820s, that is, from the time of first contact between European travellers and the Zulu kingdom. From this it argues that the ideas about Shaka which appeared in the writings of the earliest travellers were not their "inventions," but were derived from a repertoire of ideas held by the Africans amongst whom the travellers lived.

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[1]G. Dening, *Islands and Beaches: Discourses on a Silent Land. Marquesas, 1774-1880*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii, p.43.

Chapter Three

"The character and objects of Chaka": a re-consideration of the making of Shaka as "mfecane" motor

In a series of papers and articles beginning in 1983, Julian Cobbing has offered a radical, and often provocative, critique of the "mfecane" as the pivotal concept of the history of nineteenth-century southern Africa.[1] He asks vigorous new questions about everything, from the identity of the "Fingoes" in the south and the "Mantatee hordes" on the highveld, to the extent of the slave trade around Delagoa Bay. Cobbing's work has stimulated a number of graduate studies on these topics, and has prompted a number of established students of the period to reassess aspects of their earlier work.[2]

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[1]J. Cobbing, "The Case Against the Mfecane", unpublished seminar paper, University of Cape Town, 1983; in revised form, "The Case Against the Mfecane", unpublished seminar paper, University of the Witwatersrand, 1984; "The Myth of the Mfecane," unpublished seminar paper, University of Durban-Westville, 1987; "The Mfecane as Alibi"; "Jettisoning the Mfecane (with Perestroika)," unpublished paper presented together with John Wright's "Political Mythology and the Making of Natal's Mfecane," to a seminar at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1988 entitled "The Mfecane: Beginning the Inquest"; and most recently, "Grasping the Nettle."

[2]See the work of Cobbing's students, notably J. Richner, "The Withering Away of the 'Lifaqane': or a Change of Paradigm," B.A. Hons. essay, Rhodes University, 1988; A. Webster, "An Examination of the 'Fingo Emancipation' of 1835," paper presented to the African Studies seminar, University of Cape Town, 1990; and that of John Wright on the genesis of the mfecane myth in Natal, notably "Political Mythology and

The sheer scope of the critique is, however, also the source of its greatest weakness. In particular, Cobbing may be criticized for misusing evidence and employing imprecise periodization.

Nowhere are these criticisms more pertinent than in relation to a central element of Cobbing's thesis, namely, his view of Shaka-the-monster as a European invention to mask illegal labor procurement activities and land occupation. In this chapter I focus on Cobbing's reconstruction of the making of the Shaka myth. My purpose is to disentangle the elaborate weave of Cobbing's powerful insights and implausible conspiracy theories. I suggest that, while Cobbing's critique is extremely valuable, especially in the way that it forces historians to question many of the assumptions with which they have for too long been extremely comfortable, he fails fundamentally to come to grips with the full complexity of his primary target, past historical myth-making processes.

Cobbing identifies four key elements in the notion of the mfecane as most commonly espoused: firstly, "a self-generated internal revolution" within northern Nguni-speaking societies which culminated in the 1820s in

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the Making of Natal's Mfecane."

the regionally-dominant Zulu power led by a savage despot, Shaka; secondly, attacks by the Zulu on neighboring chiefdoms which forced the latter to flee their land and which, in turn, displaced other chiefdoms still further afield; thirdly, a "cataclysmic period of black-on-black destruction" (including cannibalism) leading to the depopulation of the interior of South Africa; with all of this culminating, fourthly, in the restoration of security with the advent of the Europeans.[3] Cobbing's observation that this explanation of the depeopling of much of the southern African interior, and the redistribution of the remaining African inhabitants, serves to legitimate white occupation of the land and the ideology of separate development, is not new. But the case that he presents for the selection of its component elements, and how the myth became established, is challenging.

The central claim of Cobbing's critique is that by making Shaka the motor of the mfecane, white writers were able to ignore or cover up the devastating impact of white penetration into South Africa in the early nineteenth century. He suggests that this included the effects of a massive demand for labor in the form of slaves or variants thereof ("apprentices," "refugees" and

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[3]Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi," pp.487-8.

so on) from both the Cape Colony in the south, which was experiencing a labor supply problem following the ending of the British slave trade in 1807, and from Delagoa Bay in the north, an increasingly important slaving port in the 1800s.[4]

Cobbing argues that the various elements of mfecane theory were established as part of an "alibi" by early missionaries like Moffat and Melvill, traders like Fynn and Farewell, and colonial officers like Somerset, all anxious to obscure aspects of their activities and policies in relation to the early nineteenth-century African inhabitants of southern Africa--in particular their roles in resolving these problems of labor supply. The components of mfecane theory, he argues, were subsequently taken up, developed and combined by a generation of settler historians like Theal, Cory, Walker and Ellenberger, eager to argue the case for "the empty land" in response to the 1913 Land Act. After the Second World War, Cobbing continues, the explanatory scope of mfecane theory was widened by apartheid historians to explain "the natural 'pluralism' of black societies and

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[4]For the fullest and latest version of Cobbing's argument on the slave trade, see "Grasping the Nettle," pp. 5-20. This aspect of Cobbing's argument builds on the work of Patrick Harries, notably "Slavery, Social Incorporation and Surplus Extraction: the Nature of Free and Unfree Labour in South-East Africa."

how they self-sequestered themselves into proto-Bantustans in the time of Shaka."[5]

Cobbing's energetic interrogation of the available sources and his wide-ranging, highly inter-connected review of the central conflicts and forces at work across southern Africa offer a stimulating reinterpretation of early nineteenth-century southern African history. His demonstration of the "spatial sequence" of population movements, and the absence of "hard evidence for Zulu agency" for many of its key events, are convincing reasons for "jettisoning" the "Afrocentri[c] ... macro-theory or macro-myth of the mfecane" as an explanation for the depopulation of the interior.[6]

Cobbing's reconstruction of the making of the myth of the mfecane is as over-determined by white interests as the mfecane theory is innocent of them. For Cobbing, the history of the period is entirely shaped by settler and capitalist forces, as is the manipulation of the past which he highlights. The burden of Cobbing's argument is that the construction of the mfecane as an "alibi" for the more criminal of their activities, was determined by

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[5]Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi," p.519.

[6]Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi," p.517. Also see p.488 for the description of mfecane theory as Afrocentric.

the interests and views of whites. The early whites, and their settler heirs, simply "invented" the relevant components of the mfecane myth as they saw fit, and as best suited their needs.

But as any aficionado of crime literature knows well, a good alibi--one that excites little suspicion or is likely to hold up under investigation--is well-grounded in the facts as far as they can be determined and is invested with detail that is convincing. It appeals to the general preconceptions of its interrogators, its victims and its perpetrators, and it deviates from the actual events only in certain crucial respects. That the mfecane has been proven to be a good alibi is attested to by its resilience over time. This is not a result of simple-mindedness, but is a consequence rather of the embeddedness in the myth, and in its key features, of African views of the past, notably that of internal African agency.

By arguing that Europeans "invented" the myth of the mfecane and its component elements, Cobbing, and indeed, many other scholars, assume that the production of history in the nineteenth century was carried out by whites only, independent of the historical consciousness of the Africans with whom they were in daily contact.

The implication of this assumption is that nineteenth-century Africans were without an intellectual history of their own and that they were unable, or at least failed, to produce history in the service of complex ideological objectives worthy of comparison with their European neighbors, nor significant enough for the latter to need to take cognizance of. In other words, Cobbing's case against the mfecane is doubly focused on European activities at the expense of those of Africans: both in terms of his characterization of the events and forces of the time, and in terms of their production in historical discourse. In so doing, Cobbing repeats the separation of black and white history in as serious a way as the myth of the mfecane itself does. In effect, Cobbing simply replaces the master narrative of Shaka-as-cause-of-violence with that of slave-trade-as-cause-of-violence. In so doing, he fails to harness his powerful insights regarding the mfecane myth in the service of an analysis that takes proper cognizance of regional developments and local particularities.

My case then, is not for the mfecane, but against aspects of the case as presented by Cobbing. In the rest of this chapter, I challenge his assumptions about the European manufacture of the mfecane and the "virulent anti-Shaka literature" of the 1820s as, amongst other

things, an attempt "to draw a curtain over the slave trade."[7] I suggest that this invocation of conspiracy depends on an untenable notion of European interests as monolithic and as unchanging over time.[8] I address primarily the arguments advanced in Cobbing's single published article on the topic, "The mfecane as alibi: thoughts on Dithakong and Mbolompo," but I also comment on his widely-cited paper, "Grasping the Nettle: The Slave Trade and the Early Zulu", published as part of the proceedings of the workshop on "Natal and Zululand in the Colonial and Precolonial Periods," the main arguments of which have become the fundamental premises of a range of subsequent research projects.[9]

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[7]Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi," p. 504. In "Grasping the Nettle," Cobbing goes even further in the invocation of a conspiracy, describing the European manufacture of the mfecane as the perfection by settler propagandists of "their piece de resistance, 'the mfecane', combining partly contextualised facts, half-truths, and lies, both of commission and ommission." (p.1)

[8]In his 1989 article, "Political Mythology", John Wright aligned himself closely with the main points of Cobbing's arguments on the Natal/Zulu material under review in this paper. Following a warm debate on the topic at the Conference on Enlightenment and Emancipation, held at the University of Natal, Durban, 1989, at which both Wright and I presented papers, Wright has refined his arguments regarding trader politics, and avoids many of the errors and generalizations which characterize his own earlier article, and the work of Cobbing. For his revised position see his doctoral dissertation, "The Dynamics of Power and Conflict," especially the final chapter.

[9]See, for example, the papers presented by students or ex-students of Cobbing's at the recent colloquium, "The Mfecane Aftermath: Towards a New Paradigm," University of the Witwatersrand, September, 1991, notably J. Richner, "Eastern Frontier Slaving and its Extension into the Transorangia and Natal, 1770-1843"; A. Webster, "Unmasking the Fingo: The War of 1835 Revisited"; J.B. Gewald, "Untapped Sources: Slave Exports from the Southern and Central Namibia up to the Mid-Nineteenth Century"; C. Gorham, " 'A Blind Darkness': Knowledge, Trade, and the Myth of 1824: the Trading Settlement of Port Natal as Gateway to the 'Mfecane'"; B. Lambourne, "A Chip off the Old Block: Early Ghoya

I focus in detail on the 1820s, period in which Cobbing posits that the image of Shaka which became central to mfecane theory was established. Cobbing asserts that, from the first, it was in the interests of the Port Natal traders to promote Shaka as a tyrannical despot. I demonstrate that this sweeping claim misses crucial changes in the circumstances of the early traders, and completely ignores the productions of Shaka taking place in contemporary African settings.

The chapter examines the image of Shaka promoted in the Cape by the Port Natal traders in the 1820s and distinguishes between the versions sponsored by different factions within the Port Natal community. It looks at the way that these representations shifted during the period under review in response to specific developments in the traders' commercial ventures, and their relationships with the Zulu court and their African neighbors. In contrast to Cobbing's argument, I suggest that, before the Zulu king's death in late 1828, the traders' presentation of Shaka was that of a benign patron. There were two exceptions to this, and these arose in response to the particular financial difficulties which one of the traders, James King, faced at two specific moments in time. The chapter shows that

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History and the Emergence of Moletsane's Taung".

in the Cape, King came to be seen as manipulative and unreliable. His two negative depictions of Shaka were discredited in the eyes of the colonial administration and in the popular press, and did not, before 1829, succeed in establishing a negative image of Shaka in the Colony.

As was the case with the traders' images of Shaka, different versions of Shaka were promoted by different interest groups within the Zulu kingdom and the Natal area, and these also shifted over time in response to changing circumstances. The origins of Shaka's image as a tyrant are located both in versions of Shaka current amongst disaffected elements in the Zulu kingdom in the 1820s, as well as in the picture of a despot painted by the Zulu authorities themselves. The traders' productions of Shaka were not simply manifestations of the view of Shaka that most directly suited their material interests, but were also shaped by the form and content of the various African views which they encountered and with which they intersected during their stay in Natal.

My proposition is that, at various times, the Shaka in different European perorations took cognizance of the many Shakas that were heard in African voices, and vice-

versa. Out of this process emerged the "Shaka" that became central to mfecane theory.

The Cape's Shaka before 1824

The first representations of Shaka to percolate down to the Cape Colony were contained in the reports of visitors to Delagoa Bay, then the port nearest to the Zulu kingdom. In 1822, Henry Francis Fynn joined the *Jane*, a vessel belonging to the Cape mercantile concern, Nourse and Company, trading with Delagoa Bay. In a stay that overlapped with that of a British naval squadron under Captain W.F.W. Owen, Fynn spent some six months at Delagoa Bay, and undertook extensive exploration of its immediate surroundings. Fynn records that he heard of "the Zulu tribe, under Shaka, [who] were a very powerful nation." Intrigued, he arranged a visit to a Zulu homestead and would have continued on to Shaka's capital if the distance had not proved prohibitive. While much of Fynn's account of his visit to Delagoa Bay was written long after the event, and was extensively informed by subsequent information and attitudes which he acquired, it is evident that the impression of Shaka which he

gleaned at Delagoa Bay excited his curiosity and was not threatening.[10]

By 1823, reports of the prospects of trade with the Zulu kingdom received from Nourse and Co. were so favorable that Francis Farewell was able to secure significant financial backing by Cape merchants for an exploratory voyage to Delagoa Bay and Natal. Farewell chartered two ships, the *Julia* and the brig, the *Salisbury*, under James King. When they arrived at Delagoa Bay, Owen's vessel, the *Leven*, was in port, and Farewell went aboard to interview Owen. The interview contained nothing to discourage him, and he and King immediately proceeded to the coast of Natal in an attempt to open communications with Shaka.[11] They failed to land

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[10]J. Stuart and D.M. Malcolm (eds.), *The Diary of Henry Francis Fynn*, Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, 1950, see chapters one and two, and especially p.42. For background on Fynn's Diary see pp.415-6, 476-7.

[11]See Fynn, *Diary*, pp. 51-53, p. 56, note 1; J. King to the Sec. for Colonies, the Earl of Bathurst, 10 July, 1824, Cape Archives Depot, Government House Archives (G.H.) 1/39, pp. 45-58; J. King, *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 11 July, 1826; for details of Farewell's engagement of King see Cape Archives, Notarial Protocols, Cape Districts (N.C.D.) 35/8, pp. 534-541. Owen's journal was edited and published as *Narrative of voyages to explore the shores of Africa, Arabia and Madagascar*, (2 vols.) London, Bentley, 1833. However, the publication also includes material drawn from other sources, is heavily edited and cannot be treated as an accurate reflection of Owen's views in 1822. An account of Shaka, attributed to Farewell writing in 1825 is reproduced in Owen's text and must be treated with the same caution. It is most unlikely, for example, that Farewell would have referred to Shaka as "the king of Natal, and of the Hollontontes". One of Owen's officers, T. Boteler, also published an account of Owen's trip in 1835 (*Narrative of a voyage of discovery to Africa and Arabia, performed in His Majesty's ships Leven and Barracouta*, 2 vols., London, Bentley,1835). For some idea of what Owen's contemporary opinion of Shaka and the Zulu was like, see John Philip's report to Acting

successfully, and in the attempt sustained damage to their ships, losing two boats and a considerable amount of their trade goods.[12]

Undaunted, Farewell returned to the Cape, negotiated new financing with Messrs. Hoffman and Peterssen, hired a large party to accompany him--including the young Fynn--and engaged two ships to transport the party and their cargo to Natal. In response to a request from the Governor of the Cape for information regarding his activities, Farewell reported that the prospects of trade from a base at Port Natal were excellent, the "natives hav[ing] requested that we come and traffic with them..."[13]

Colonial Secretary, P.G. Brink, 13 April, 1824, Public Record Office (P.R.O.), Archives of the Colonial Office (C.O.) 48/62, believed to be based on Owen's information (see Governor of the Cape, Lord Charles Somerset to Bathhurst, 22 April, 1824, G.H. 23/7, pp. 144-145), in which Philip comments optimistically on the prospects for trade with the interior.

[12]The precise nature of this setback in commercial terms is difficult to assess. The venture was well-insured and substantial claims were made. Unfortunately, the extent of the final settlement is not known. In his letter to Somerset, 1 May, 1824, Farewell noted that the earlier expedition "sustained a most considerable loss" (Cape Archives Depot, C.O. 211, pp. 222-225). However, it is clear that for his next expedition Farewell was obliged to seek other financial backing. See N.C.D. 35/9, pp. 67-75, 117-126, 144-149, 573-578, 585-589.

[13]Farewell to Somerset, 1 May, 1824, C.O. 211, pp. 222-225; N.C.D. 35/9, pp. 573-578, 585-589. It is not clear from Farewell's letter who precisely "the natives" are, i.e. whether he means the Zulu authorities or the inhabitants of the bay area; for continued reports of Shaka's "friendly disposition" arriving at the Cape in this period see W.H. Lys, Officer of Health, to P.G. Brink, 12 April, 1824, P.R.O., C.O., 48/62.

By June, 1824, both ships had landed their cargoes successfully, and Farewell and Fynn had travelled overland to meet Shaka themselves. In the first report from the Port Natal settlement to the Cape, Farewell confirmed the expectations that Shaka would make a good trading partner. He depicted the Zulu king as enthusiastic about the settlement, and well-disposed towards the British. He noted that his companions found the orderliness, manners and customs of the Zulu both "astonish[ing] and pleas[ing]."[14] Cape opinion of Shaka could not have been better. For the next two years not one single negative report concerning the king emanated from Port Natal.

The traders' Shaka, 1824-1827

Cobbing's characterization of the Port Natal settlement and the objectives of the traders is a central aspect of his wider thesis about the invention of the mfecane myth. His argument can be broken down into two parts: firstly, his reconstruction of what the traders were actually up to at Port Natal; and secondly, how they represented their actions and those of the Zulu king.

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[14]Farewell to Somerset, 6 September, 1824, C.O. 211, pp. 650-651, 656-657.

Cobbing claims that the Port Natal traders were slavers, and that all evidence of this aspect of their activities has been systematically excised from their accounts of the period.[15] He uses two arguments to support these assertions: firstly, he argues for the existence of a vibrant slave trade centered on Delagoa Bay and the involvement of chiefdoms between the bay and Port Natal in slaving through the Portuguese port. He then locates the Port Natal trading entrepôt firmly in this context. Secondly, he rereads the traders' narratives in search of hidden slaving activities.

Reconsideration of both of these arguments suggests that they do not support his conclusions. In challenging Cobbing's arguments, I do not necessarily reject the idea that the Port Natal traders may have been interested in, or, on occasion, may have even participated in, slaving activities of one sort or another. I do not accept, however, that there is as yet any conclusive evidence regarding their successful prosecution of a trade in slaves, and argue that other considerations were crucial in shaping both their relationship with the Cape, and their depictions of Shaka.

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[15]Cobbing, "Mfecane as Alibi," p. 504; "Grasping the Nettle," p. 25.

I am critical of Cobbing's characterization of the Port Natal traders as slavers on a number of grounds. Firstly, it cannot be assumed that the region was the slaving vortex that he implies. The cases which he makes for a slave trade of significant volume through Delagoa Bay and for the Zulu kingdom as a significant supplying area, while suggestive, are by no means well-established. The major problem is Cobbing's failure to consider sources which contradict his claims. One instance of this must suffice to make the point, though others are available for review:[16] Cobbing claims that in the period after the Napoleonic Wars when slave exports off the southern coast of Mozambique greatly increased, Delagoa Bay gained preeminence as a supplier.[17] His

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[16]See, for example, Cobbing's assertion that in 1827 Cane supplied slaves to a schooner at Delagoa Bay. ("Grasping the Nettle," p.27) In my view the document cited as evidence is open to a very different reading. In such cases it is incumbent on the historian to discuss the quality of the evidence and the context of the document.

[17]Cobbing, "Mfecane as Alibi," pp. 504-506; "Grasping the Nettle," pp.4-5. In the latter paper, Cobbing claims further that in 1822-23 the main trading items moving through the Bay were slaves. He cites as his sources "the relevant evidence" in two volumes of G.M. Theal's edited *Records of South East Africa*, (London, first printed for the Government of the Cape Colony, 1903, reprinted Cape Town, Struik, 1964) without page references, and Fynn's *Diary*. The *Diary* is also cited in "Mfecane as Alibi" as a source of evidence for slaving at the Bay.(See note 101) The *Diary* is a source, like so many others, which Cobbing elsewhere (see, for example, "Mfecane as Alibi," note 120) discredits thoroughly. Dismissal of some of the major sources of the period as white "forgeries," and subsequent citation of them, is a characterisitic feature of his argument, and is subject to two criticisms. The first is that such texts are significantly more complicated constructs, and are shaped by a more complex set of interests, than Cobbing allows. (See my more detailed discussion below of precisely the same problems in Cobbing's treatment of James Stuart, chapters seven and eight.) The second is that, having indicted such sources, subsequent citation of them requires specific argumentation as to why they may be relied on in relation to a particular matter.

evidence for Delagoa Bay enjoying "additional priority" in this period is a reference to a letter from Owen, captain of the *Leven*. In point of fact this letter does not assert that the slave trade at Delagoa Bay was especially active, but that it might become so in the future. "The Port," Owen writes in 1823, "is more convenient than any other for direct communication with Brazil, and if the temptation to make slaves be permitted to be held out to the natives, ... they will cut one another's throats without mercy, and the whole country will be depopulated in a very few years."[18](my emphases) The context of Owen's speculations and opinions regarding the slave trade are worthy of further consideration. This letter, and other of his communications,[19] provide strong motivations for the British government to oust the Portuguese from the southern Mozambican coast, as part of a strategy to secure British sea routes and the Cape Colony. To this end, Owen emphasized the iniquities of Portuguese trading practices. In this context, his stress, at one point, on the relative lack of slaving at Delagoa Bay is noteworthy, an opinion not considered by Cobbing: "There are," Owen comments, "very few slaves exported from this place."[20] This remark surely demands

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[18]Theal, *Records of South East Africa*, vol. ix, p.37.

[19]Theal, *Records of South-East Africa*, vol. ix, pp. 32-35, 37-39.

[20]Theal, *Records of South-East Africa*, vol. ii, p. 487.

Cobbing's consideration. Closer attention to specific sources, their tight periodization and investigation of their contexts of production is clearly imperative in any attempt to assess the volume of the slave trade. They are essential prerequisites to the making of well-founded connections between the slave trade and wider regional politics, and more specifically, the trading activities of the Port Natalians.

Cobbing's argument that the Zulu,[21] amongst others, were active slavers, is based on evidence even more tenuous. The first source is the presence of Portuguese soldiers inland, on "expeditions," which, Cobbing claims--without a shred of further evidence--"can only have been for slaves."[22] At the very least, Cobbing needs to consider the possibility that they were engaged in securing traffic in ivory and cattle, two items of trade extensively discussed in the work of earlier researchers.[23] The second source is evidence that Cobbing is in expectation of one day uncovering:

> Other powerful Tsonga chiefs ...had fearsome reputations and are likely to have been

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[21]Cobbing, "Grasping the Nettle," p.8.

[22]Cobbing, "Grasping the Nettle," p.9.

[23]Hedges, "Trade and Politics"; Smith, "The Trade of Delagoa Bay," chapter eight.

> involved in the slave trade, although evidence has not yet come to my hand.[24]

Cobbing's argument regarding the slave trade as the context in which Port Natal must be viewed is based on the level of warfare and violence in the region. This is ascribed, without evidence beyond that already discussed above, to the vicissitudes of raiding "presumably for slaves."[25] (my emphasis) The teleology is surely untenable, and casts serious doubts over Cobbing's methods more generally. Nonetheless, there are indications that some chiefdoms did trade prisoners taken in war through Delagoa Bay, and this does warrant further investigation.[26] What is at issue, and which remains to be established with any reliability, is the timing and volume of this trade, and whether it was sufficient to constitute the slaving vortex which Cobbing invokes as the appropriate context for the Port Natalians' activities.

What evidence does Cobbing present for involvement of the Port Natal traders specifically in this supposedly vibrant regional slave trade? He sets the scene by claiming that Port Natal was at the time of the traders'

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[24]Cobbing, "Grasping the Nettle," p.10.

[25]Cobbing, "Grasping the Nettle," p.10.

[26]See, for example, the comments on p. 48 of Fynn's *Diary* to this effect.

arrival "already a fairly well-known slaving port."[27] but gives no reference; of the traders' participation in certain of Shaka's campaigns, he claims that "[t]here can be no doubt that these raids were for slaves,"[28] and again cites no evidence. Other scholars[29] have argued that very different reasons underlay the traders' armed forays at Shaka's behest--such as the growing insecurity of the Zulu rulers at this time leading Shaka to insist that his clients, including the traders, provide military support. Again, it is incumbent on Cobbing to consider these arguments.

Finally, Cobbing claims that "[s]hips calling at Port Natal in 1827-7[sic] could easily have taken out slaves."[30] The claim is based on the arrival of ships at Port Natal after the attacks (i.e. slave raids, in his terms) on the Ndwandwe and Khumalo. Not only is there nothing to indicate that the traders returned to Port Natal with prisoners,[31] but all evidence points to Shaka

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[27]Cobbing, "Grasping the Nettle," p. 26.

[28]Cobbing, "Grasping the Nettle," p.27.

[29]B. Roberts, *The Zulu Kings*, London, Hamish Hamilton, 1974, pp. 100-3; Hamilton, "Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power," p. 363.

[30]Cobbing, "Grasping the Nettle," p.27.

[31]Cobbing cites Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, vol.1, p.171 (i.e. p. 95 of the reprint) and Fynn's *Diary*, p.128, as evidence that the traders took captives in raids against the Ndwandwe and Khumalo.("Grasping the Nettle," note 215) Care needs to be taken in

as controlling the timing of the two attacks. One wonders how the traders managed to orchestrate the timely arrival of the two ships. In fact, the correlation in timing was not as neat as Cobbing claims it was. This Cobbing explains away as being the result of "a scrambled chronology in Fynn's material ... to prevent the historian from putting two and two together."[32] No source of an alternative chronology is cited. In fact, Isaacs, another of the traders, confirms that the "raid" cited took place in June 1826, while the arrival of the ship concerned can be dated to April, 1826.[33] In other words, Fynn's chronology is borne out by other sources, and Cobbing's is incorrect. More importantly, at least one of the ships concerned was the *Helicon*, a British naval vessel! Cobbing's persistent failure to consider

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the interpretation of this evidence. Isaacs observes that when the Khumalo surrendered they agreed to "give up cattle, and become tributary to the conqueror." Isaacs goes on to comment that "one of our seamen proposed that they should give ten young maidens by way of cementing their friendship by nuptial ties." There is no indication that the women were given to the traders, although it is not impossible. It is important to note that cattle with which the traders returned to Port Natal after this campaign, were not booty which they had seized, but a portion of the captured cattle awarded to them subsequently by Shaka. It seems likely that any captives taken in battle would also have gone directly to the Zulu king. The Fynn reference cited as evidence for the traders having taken captives in battle is even less conclusive. Fynn describes how, during the Ndwandwe campaign, Shaka interrogated a captured Ndwandwe mother and child, and then ordered them to be killed. Fynn then interceded on behalf of the child, asking that he "might become my servant." Although we have no way of proving it, this may well have been an opportunistic attempt by Fynn to acquire child labor, but it does not qualify as evidence of slave raiding.

[32]Cobbing, "Grasping the Nettle," note 217.

[33]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, p.60; *The Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser*, 28 April, 1826.

the evidence against his case, is the greatest weakness of his argument.[34]

Although the evidence for the involvement of the traders in slaving activities is insufficient for it to bear the weight placed on it by Cobbing's argument, the possibility that the traders occasionally traded in slaves, and carefully eliminated all references to such activities, cannot be ruled out. Cobbing is right to stress that the traders' accounts of their activities cannot not be taken simply at face value. However, the manner in which historians seek to reread these accounts in search of inconsistencies and signs of cover-ups must itself be much more rigorous and cautious than is presently the case. Furthermore, the assertion that the traders were heavily involved in slaving is inconsistent with the next element of Cobbing's argument, his claim that the traders, and their backers at the Cape, were keen to see the establishment of a colony at Port Natal: an official British presence would undoubtedly have nipped any slave trade in the bud. Finally, Eldredge's point that the ships sailing around the Cape tended to

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[34]Similarly, when he so suggestively draws our attention to the fact that, after leaving Natal, one of the traders, Nathanial Isaacs, went on to become a slaver elsewhere, he should also tell us that another member of the trading party, Charles Rawden Maclean (alias John Ross), later in life became an avid anti-slaver. (Gray, "South African Fiction and a Case History Revised," pp. 473-4.)

sail out in a large curve to avoid the South African coastline is a compelling detail in an argument against the existence of a South African slave trade.[35]

It is my contention that not only is it unlikely that the traders were energetic slave hunters, but also that their lobby for the establishment of a colony at Port Natal only kicked off after 1828 in response to the changed circumstances that prevailed after the death of Shaka. Cobbing's misplaced assertion that the traders sought to persuade the British to annex Natal in the 1820s skews our understanding of contemporary relations between Port Natal and the Zulu kingdom. Cobbing posits that the desire to see a colony established in Natal was the reason for the traders' obsessive discussions of the depredations of the Zulu king. While it is clear that, after the assassination of Shaka, at least some of the traders were eager to see the establishment of a colony, and that by that time they were unanimous in describing Shaka as a tyrant, in 1824-25 neither case prevailed. If Cobbing's attribution of motives to the traders is somewhat problematic, so is his argument that they demonized Shaka to promote their dual aims of slave trade and colonization. In fact, the image of Shaka presented

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[35]Eldredge, pers comm. August, 1992.

by the traders between 1824 and 1830 was nearly always benign--with two exceptions.

Cobbing describes Farewell's expedition as "a large colonising party" which landed "in the hope of creating a *fait accompli* for the only slightly interested Cape Government."[36] Farewell's report to Somerset in 1824 contains references which, taken at face value, may lend themselves to this interpretation.[37] Farewell notes the circumstances of a "grant" of land to the traders by Shaka, and describes conditions conducive to settlement. He suggests that these benign conditions would provide a "few families" from the distressed settler community in the Cape with a "comfortable assylum [sic]... as a colony." When placed in context, these comments resist interpretation as an insistent campaign for the colonization of Natal.[38]

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[36]Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi," p. 509; "The Myth of the Mfecane," pp.11-12; The *fait accompli* idea originates in the work of Roberts, *The Zulu Kings*, see p. 138 in particular. As evidence, Cobbing cites Farewell's first communication with Somerset, without noting that Farewell was not approaching Somerset but responding to a query from the Governor; he also cites Fynn's comments that in retrospect he realized that Farewell was going to stay longer than he said, but the remark does not necessarily connote a campaign for colonization. Neither is the latter borne out by Farewell's contracts regarding the ships, which were for 15 months only. (Notarised Affreightment Declaration, between James Gosling and F.G. Farewell, 15 April, 1824, NCD 35/9, pp.573-578) In his discussion of Farewell and King's motives for going to Natal, Fynn makes no mention of colonization.

[37]Farewell to Somerset, 6 September, 1824, C.O. 211, pp. 650-651. Cobbing does not, however, cite this document.

[38]While I do not consider Farewell's aim in 1824 to be the

The context includes that of Farewell's preoccupation with creating a viable base for his trading venture. The small Port Natal community was experiencing a crisis over the cultivation of agricultural products for their own consumption, as well as a shortage of labor more generally.[39] While there is nothing to indicate that the traders feared Shaka, Farewell was sensible of the small settlement's vulnerability, and of the need for the traders to operate from a secure and relatively self-sufficient base. It was on Farewell's agenda to establish clearly in the minds of the Zulu rulers the extent and nature of the traders' power and commercial interests.[40] Moreover, by September, 1824, twenty members of the original party had left Port Natal, and still another ten desired to go.[41] Farewell's suggestion that a "few families" could prosper in Natal was not a move to encourage formal colonization, but rather an

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establishment of a colony at Port Natal, I do recognize that Farewell was careful to try and secure official Cape recognition and support for his commercial venture. I am grateful to John Wright for discussion on this point.

[39]Lt. E. Hawes to C.R. Moorsam, Commodore of the British fleet at the Cape, 16 May, 1825, C.O. 233, pp. 245-246. For the published report see *The Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser*, 4 June, 1825.

[40]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 15, 22, 24, 42, 52, 53, 71; also see King's comments, *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 11 July, 1826; Farewell to Somerset, 6 September, 1824, C.O. 211, pp. 650-651; also see correspondence between the commander of the *Helicon* and the Cape administration regarding the first Zulu visitor to the Cape (C.O. 270, pp. 202-204).

[41]J. Hoffman and J.S. Peterssen to Moorsam, 9 March, 1825, C.O. 233, pp. 103-104.

attempt to maintain at Port Natal the infrastructure necessary for the prosecution of trade.

It would be equally problematic to read off from Farewell's claim to have received a land grant from Shaka a desire for British intervention in Natal.[42] Farewell had successfully negotiated access to the area around Port Natal with Shaka, although obviously not on the terms or in the form in which he represented it in his report. The "grant" at this stage offered no inducement to colonization in and of itself, but it did serve to underwrite the security and stability of the trading venture, and appealed to Farewell's backers in the Cape. In fact, the report of the grant was sent first to them, and then forwarded on to Somerset.[43]

In the meantime, the traders enjoyed greater success in their trading activities than in the subsistence sphere. They acquired ivory directly from Shaka, from the Mpondo country and from the inhabitants in and around Port Natal.[44] In a report that was subsequently published in the *Cape Gazette and African Advertiser*,

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[42]Cobbing, "Mfecane as Alibi," p.490.

[43]Farewell to Somerset, 6 September, 1824, C.O. 211, pp.650-651 and 656-657.

[44]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, pp.18, 22, 31; Fynn, *Diary*, pp.110, 117.

Lieutenant Hawes, the officer commanding the *York*, which called in at Port Natal in May, 1825, observed that the traders were "living on the best terms of friendship with the natives and under the protection of king Inguos Chaka," who, he noted, "professes great respect for white people." As Hawes reported, "The success of the party in their mercantile speculations is believed to be the extent of their expectations."[45]

But small storm clouds were gathering on the Port Natal horizon: Hawes also commented on the traders' lack of a boat and supplies.[46] Since their arrival in Port Natal, the traders had only once been able to use the *Julia* to replenish their supplies and transport their ivory before it was lost off the Natal coast. The cargo lost in the wreck of the *Julia* was valued in excess of the amount it was insured for. Coming on top of the

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[45]Hawes to Moorsam, 16 May, 1825, C.O. 233, pp. 245-246. For the published report see *The Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser*, 4 June, 1825. Hawes' report was passed on to the Cape Governor, Somerset, C.O. 233, p. 244. Note also, for example, that when Farewell's backers, Hoffman and Peterssen lost contact with him as a result of the wreck of the *Julia* in late September, 1824, they were dilatory in contacting the authorities, and once they did, expressed no alarm on behalf of the party at Port Natal. Hoffman and Peterssen to Moorsam, 9 March, 1825, C.O. 233, pp. 103-104. The authors of this letter comment that they returned from Natal because "the country and natives were different from what was told them." In the *Diary*, Fynn indicates that Peterssen was disappointed to find that Shaka's residence was not built out of ivory, and (being corpulent and temperamental) that he was not fitted for the rigors of Shaka's kingdom (Chapter five). Also see Moorsam's comments about their dilatoriness, Moorsam to Hoffman and Peterssen, 17 March, 1825, encl. N.C.D. 25/11, pp. 765-783.

[46]Hawes, *The Cape Town Gazette*, 4 June, 1825.

previous losses, this latest disaster almost certainly meant that Farewell was beginning to experience financial pressures on top of his supply problems.[47]

It was at this point that James King re-entered the picture. Although he had been on the earlier exploratory voyage with Farewell, he had done so in the latter's employ. He struggled to raise the necessary capital for a venture independent of Farewell.[48] In the loss of the *Julia*, however, King saw an opportunity for entering into the trade at Port Natal. The motivation for Cape capital to back him at this point consisted of two parts: the first was the commercial calculation that, by arriving with much-needed supplies and a vessel, King would be able to take over the sea transport aspect of the trading venture, if not actually insert himself into the port trade itself; the second was the representation of the endeavor as the humanitarian succouring of Farewell's party supposedly cut off for some time from the Colony.[49]

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[47]C.O. 233, p. 247; Hoffman and Peterssen to Moorsam, 9 March, 1825; N.C.D. 35/11, pp. 765-783 and enclosures; N.C.D. 35/9, pp. 573-578.

[48]King to Bathurst, 10 July, 1824, G.H. 1/39, pp. 45-58; Farewell to the editor, *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 31 January, 1829.

[49]Nonetheless, King's expedition was not heavily capitalized, and drew on credit as well as special concessions from the authorities. King to Somerset, 9 August, 1825 (C.O. 3929, pp. 136-139); also the response from the colonial authorities, Sir Richard Plasket, Chief Sec. to the Govt. to King, 12 August, 1825, (C.O. 4853, pp. 393, 409; also see C.O. 3929, pp. 184-185; C.O. 243, pp. 147-152; C.O. 235, pp. 511-512; C.O. 4853, p. 453; C.O. 293, pp. 1323-1326.

King's expectations were dashed when his vessel, the *Mary*, was wrecked on entering the bay at Port Natal in October, 1825, and its cargo lost.[50] King's party suddenly found themselves entirely dependent on Farewell, even for their sustenance. Undaunted, King tried another tack. The new arrivals set up camp in a separate area of the bay and immediately set about building a ship. However, their aim was not to be able to quit the shores of Natal, which they could have done on any one of a number of ships that called in at Port Natal during their sojourn there. Rather, the building of the ship offered a means of recouping losses, and of gaining a hold over Farewell who still lacked access to a much-needed vessel.[51]

The building of a boat was a lengthy undertaking. Isaacs' account makes it clear that King's party, of which he was a member, soon began to run short of provisions. They had nothing much to trade for supplies, while Farewell's party was constrained to husband its resources. After King's first visit to Shaka, together with Fynn and Farewell, the traders came away with one

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[50]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 13, 18.

[51]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 25, 60; also see Farewell's comments in the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 31 January, 1829; King to Bathurst, 10 July, 1824, G.H. 1/39, pp. 45-58. In fact, the building of a boat at Port Natal had been on King's agenda from the first, and to that end, he had taken with him to Port Natal the necessary tools and a shipwright.

hundred and seven head of cattle; one solution to the problem of supplies was to survive by Shaka's patronage. This King initially tried to do by salvaging gifts for the king such as the *Mary*'s figurehead, but, when ingenuity in this area ran out, his party was faced with a stark choice: either to be cut off from Shaka's patronage, or to become Zulu clients--a course of action which King realized involve military services.[52]

While the party hesitated over this issue, their conditions declined still further. It was at this time that relations between Shaka and the traders became especially strained, with the Zulu monarch seizing the ivory which Fynn had collected, apparently without royal permission.[53] Thus when, in April, 1826, the *Helicon* arrived at Port Natal, King took passage aboard in order to proceed to the Cape to obtain a new cargo, leaving his comrades in what Isaacs describes as a "miserable situation."[54]

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[52]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 60, 64, 66.

[53]*The Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser*, 6 January, 1826.

[54]A section of King's party, under Norton, the mate of the *Mary*, gave up the ship-building exercise, and in defiance of King, departed for the Cape in the wrecked ship's longboat. Those who remained behind began to find it impossible to obtain food or porters without invoking Shaka's name as a threat. Things became particularly severe in the period immediately prior to the traders' crops being ready for harvest. Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 27-28; 38; 41, 42, 47, 57, 64, 67-70; *The Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser*, 6 January, 1826, and 28 April, 1826; report of the mate of the late brig *Mary*, J.E. Norton, to Plaskett, 19 January, 1826, C.O. 293, pp. 97-100.

Cobbing argues that the traders promoted a negative image of Shaka at the Cape in order to encourage British intervention in Natal in the form of colonization.[55] Although he generalizes their source and timing, the images to which he refers arise out of this and a subsequent visit by King to the Cape.

Reports of the traders' circumstances which immediately preceded King's arrival in the Cape, and indeed, his own initial remarks, contain no negative references to Shaka or the inhabitants of the Zulu kingdom. "The natives" were described as "harmless" and as behaving "extremely well."[56] So satisfied was the colonial administration with the intelligence at its disposal for Natal, and the attractiveness of conditions there, that they had no hesitation in sanctioning proposed visits to Natal by botanists, missionaries and

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[55]The argument that the two stereotypes - "depopulated Natal" and "Shaka-the-monster" - were designed to encourage settlement and British involvement in Natal is in itself not convincing. Both stereotypes can be seen as disincentives for colonization. A good or better case can be made to the effect that the very opposite stereotype - a stable and orderly Zulu society under the firm hand of a powerful king on the borders of the proposed colony and the existence of a plentiful supply of labor, preferably rendered docile by the conquering Zulu (especially in the face of the turbulent Cape frontier and that Colony's labor problems) - would have constituted a significantly more powerful inducement to the British authorities. However, even had the traders wished to encourage settlement, they could not have argued that labor was plentiful, for it was not.

[56]Norton to Plaskett, 19 January, 1826, C.O. 293, pp.97-100; *The Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser*, 28 April, 1826.

the like.[57] Thus, when King arrived in Port Elizabeth in April, 1826, both the general public in the Cape and the colonial authorities had heard substantial praise of Shaka.[58] In his first public comments, contained in an article in the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, King continued in this vein, describing Shaka as obliging, charming and pleasant, stern in public but good-humored in private, benevolent, and hospitable.[59]

In the meantime, however, King's attempts to raise money for another ship and a cargo failed.[60] He was thus obliged to approach the colonial authorities for assistance. In his appeal he resuscitated the claim that

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[57]See the requests of C.H. Wehdemann, 8 November, 1824, C.O. 2659, pp. 693-694; granted 9 November, 1824, C.O. 2659, pp. 691-692, 695; C.O. 4851, p. 487; Cape Archives Depot, Archives of the Magistrate of Uitenhage, (U.I.T). 15/9, p. 247) and James Whitworth and Samuel Broadbent, 4 March, 1825, C.O. 230, pp. 375-378; and the response, C.O. 4852, p. 488, for permission to proceed to Natal.

[58]*The Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser*, 6 January and 28 April, 1826.

[59]*South African Commercial Advertiser*, 6 June, 1826.

[60]In May, King attempted to negotiate the purchase of a schooner on a two-thirds mortgage. Pointing out that his finances were precarious, King sought colonial aid with the financing by stressing that his object was to assist his wrecked crew, or failing aid, he requested the use of a government vessel. King was not allowed to bring ivory with him on the *Helicon* from Port Natal, despite Mrs. Farewell's request to the governor to allow an exception. King to Plaskett, 2 June, 1826, C.O. 293, pp. 619-622; Elizabeth Farewell to Somerset, 27 Dec. 1825, C.O. 235, pp. 946-949. Amongst other things, King also heard at this time of the failure of another of his schemes to come to fruition. See G.H. 23/7, p. 401, concerning his lease on the Bird and Chaun islands. Note that the Ordnance storekeeper at the Cape was pressing his backer Collison for debt settlement, while Collison himself was petitioning the Lieutenant Governor of the Cape for relief. See C.O. 293, p. 1319; C.O. 219, pp. 1317-1318.

he wanted to succour those left behind.[61] When he heard on 7 June that even this appeal had failed, King chose a new approach. In an article on the 11th June in the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, King, for the first time, represented Shaka as a "despotic and cruel monster."[62] On the basis of the threat posed by Shaka to the apparently vulnerable "castaways" at Port Natal, he succeeded in rallying sufficient support to fit out another vessel, the *Anne*, for a "rescue" mission, and, King thereby returned to Port Natal with a cargo of trade items, and Mrs. Farewell.[63] As Brian Roberts notes in a much neglected study that focuses on the contradictions between the traders' pronouncements of Shaka's murderousness, and their actions, Mrs. Farewell's inclusion in the party makes "one suspect the disparity between King's words and actions."[64]

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[61]C.A., C.O. 293/138.

[62]*South African Commercial Advertiser*, 11 June, 1826; note that this is the same description that is ascribed to Farewell in J. Bird (ed.), *Annals of Natal*, vol. 1, Pietermaritzburg, 1888, reprint Cape Town, 1965, p. 93, and which was quoted in G. Thompson, *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa*, vol. 1, London, H. Colburn, 1827, second edition, Cape Town, Van Riebeek Society, 1967, pp. 174-175.

[63]On 22 July, 1826, King, with the backing of one William Hollett, hired from John Thompson (Farewell's agent in the Cape), the *Anne*, and on the same day appointed Thompson his agent as well. N.C.D. 25/14, pp. 145-155, 156-159; N.C.D. 25/11, pp. 765-783.

[64]Roberts, *The Zulu Kings*, p. 98.

Thus King's second article in the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, which stands in marked contrast in content and style to his first article, cannot be seen as a bid to encourage colonization, nor as yet another instance in a stream of "mendacious propaganda" about Shaka: rather, it should be viewed as a highly specific strategy pursued at a particular moment. This image of Shaka stands in marked contrast to King's own earlier statements, as well as to the reports of the other traders, notably Farewell. The Cape authorities, however, clearly set little store by King's latest intelligence on Shaka, and continued to sanction trips to Natal.[65] Indeed, within months, King himself was obliged to try and repair the damage by convincing his backers in Cape Town that Shaka, although a despot, "to do him justice, is for a savage the best-hearted of his race."[66]

With King's cargo-laden return to Port Natal, the situation of his party improved dramatically.[67] But conflict immediately erupted between Farewell and King. The tensions between the two groups which prevailed

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[66]Application by George Rennie and response, C.O. 293, pp. 911-912; C.O. 4895, pp. 60-61.

[66]King to "T", presumably Thompson, May, 1827, published in *The Colonist*, 3 January, 1828.

[67]Isaacs, for example, was able to resume the collection of curiosities, an endeavor he had been obliged for some time to forgo because of the lack of trade goods. See *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 70-71.

before King's first trip to the Cape, and the open conflict which ensued after his return, are ignored by Cobbing in his arguments about the image of Shaka, but they have implications for the specific views of the Zulu king which the traders promoted subsequently. Even writers on the affairs of the traders who have taken note of the split, have failed to find a satisfactory explanation.[68] This is because the available evidence is not especially illuminating. Isaacs, one of the major sources on the quarrel, noted that it was over "matters of a pecuniary nature," and elaborated on a particular tussle between the two over the question of under whose name trade goods sent to Shaka would proceed.[69] Farewell, in a letter to the *South African Commercial Advertiser* in January, 1829, claimed that King had undermined him and attempted to exclude him from the trade.[70]

While it is difficult to say with any certainty what underlay the conflict, these remarks are consistent with the thesis that King had proceeded to the Cape on the

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[68]Roberts, *The Zulu Kings*, pp. 99, 103-104. Roberts suggests that King wanted to take over Farewell's grant of land from Shaka, but cites no evidence for this. Note that Cobbing's treatment of the split is confined to a discussion of divisions on the eve of Shaka's assassination ("Grasping the Nettle," p.28).

[69]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 75-76.

[70]Also see the report in the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 27 December, 1828.

understanding that he would there procure trade goods on Farewell's behalf, if not on his own as well. This enabled him to tap Farewell's superior credit at the Cape.[71] All along, it had been King's aim to enter the Port Natal trade on terms more advantageous to himself. Initially these had collapsed when he lost all of his cargo in the wreck of the *Mary*. On his return to Port Natal in October, 1826, King sought to hold Farewell to ransom over the question of supplies.

Farewell refused to co-operate with King, as did Cane and Ogle of his party, although Fynn, previously one of Farewell's party, now began to play an increasingly independent role. Again, the reasons for this are not hard to find when the trading, rather than colonizing, interests of the traders are examined. Fynn was one of the most active amongst the traders, particularly in the area south of Natal. He would have had none of Farewell's objections to "buying" supplies from King, if not exchanging ivory for them, and perhaps a greater need for fresh supplies.

As has been argued above, the greatest difficulties experienced by the Port Natal traders concerned the maintenance of a direct import/export route to and from

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[71]See note 63 above.

the Cape. The seas between Natal and the Cape are unusually treacherous,[72] while the financing of ships for the task involved considerable expense, a problem exacerbated by the succession of losses and the difficulty of negotiating the sand bar at the entry to Port Natal.[73] One option investigated by King was the location of an alternative port. The other was the opening up of a route overland.[74] It was at this time that King and Fynn (the trader with the most southerly base) began actively to pursue a plan to open up a direct southern connection with the Cape.[75] This, I would argue, was the logic underlying King's next journey to Port Elizabeth with two ambassadors from Shaka, and the

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[72]J.K. Mallory, "Abnormal Waves on the South East Coast of South Africa," *International Hydrographic Review*, LI(2), 1974, pp. 99-129. Ian Hunter of the Cape Town meteorological office explains that freak waves occur in two places in the world, one of which is between Durban and Port Elizabeth. The waves are the result of a combination of three factors: low pressure systems causing stormy conditions, large waves emanating from the "Roaring Forties" near the Antartic, and the south-flowing Aghulas Current , added to the fact that the narrow Continental Shelf allwos ships to sail very close to the continent.(Fifty/fifty, SABC TV, 17 January, 1993)

[73]King faced an added problem when his shipwright downed tools. For evidence of continued problems of supply, see the journey of "John Ross" to Delagoa Bay, and the traders' bartering for supplies with the *Buckbay Packet*. Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 101, 102, 117.

[74]See John Cane's deposition, 10 November, 1828, in which he asserts that Shaka "wished government to procure him a road that his people might come along with their sticks in their hands without assegaay or any other weapon to see the white people" and that Shaka said "he would send no more ivory by sea but would collect some and send them to Faka's kraal [en route to the Cape] ... and deliver them to an officer who should be sent down and from whom he would expect a present in return..." (G.H. 19/3, pp.388-415).

[75]By this time, moreover, Fynn's family had set up base in Grahamstown.

attacks, at much the same time, by Shaka and Fynn on the communities of Africans living in the area between the southern reaches of the Zulu kingdom and the Colony.

This series of events has also been misinterpreted and little understood, largely because of the obfuscation caused by the thesis that the traders desired to use Shaka's southern campaigns to generate fear at the Cape and in that way to push the British authorities into establishing a colony in Natal. Wright argues that King went to the Cape to get recognition for his latest land concession from Shaka, and "to agitate for the establishment of some kind of British authority at Port Natal to give his claims effect."[76] In fact, King did not raise the issue of the land grant until 29 July, 1828, that is, over two months after his arrival at the Cape, and, significantly, at the lowest point in his negotiations with the authorities. He used the grant to claim for himself the authority to negotiate on Shaka's behalf, something the authorities were expressly trying to avoid. Had King's primary objective been to obtain land grant recognition, he would surely have brought the original (or a supposedly original) document with him, but he did not. Instead he made a copy from memory--or so he claimed: the existence of the original, and of an

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[76]Wright, "The Dynamics of Power and Conflict," p.358.

original land grant, was later strenuously denied by another of the traders, John Cane.[77]

King's plan, it seems, was less ambitious. A more likely reconstruction of his objectives at this time is that he aimed to have Shaka support Fynn in clearing the way between Port Natal and the Colony; by establishing Zulu authority in the area--possibly at first through local chiefs forced to recognize a loose form of distant Zulu rule, and if necessary, the extension over time of a more direct form of Zulu administration--conditions more conducive to the prosecution of trade would be created. But King knew, of course, that any attempt by Fynn and Shaka to subdue the intervening communities would cause alarm at the Cape.

Shaka seems at this time to have started to work more closely with the traders than before, supplying them with ivory directly and easing the restrictions on their other trading initiatives.[78] He was interested in developing the southern reaches of his kingdom for other reasons. With the defeat of the Ndwandwe in 1826, the bulk of the Zulu army was freed for redeployment in the south. It has also been argued that internal

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[77]See G.H. 19/3, pp.473-475 and 376-384.

[78]See, for example, Fynn's *Diary*, p. 131.

disaffection at this time placed Shaka in a position of wanting to cement and monopolize the relationship with the traders, themselves based in the south. When Shaka mooted a plan to send ambassadors to the Cape so as to consolidate his position within the kingdom, King immediately agreed.[79]

The Cape's Shaka

The first move in the preparation of informed opinion at the Cape for the plan to open the overland route was the release by the traders' backers in Cape Town of a letter from Port Natal for publication in the *South African Commercial Advertiser*.[80] In the letter, King praised Shaka, spelt out his plan for a southern campaign, and stressed that Shaka's intentions towards the colony were peaceful. Thus, if anything, when King set sail in the recently completed *Elizabeth and Susan* for the Cape, he did so with the aim of promoting a very positive image of Shaka. On his arrival at Port Elizabeth on 4 May, 1828, he continued to stress "the

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[79]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, p. 71; King to "T", presumably Thompson, 27 May, 1827, published in the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 3 January, 1828.

[80]King to "T", presumably Thompson, published in *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 3 January, 1828.

friendly disposition of Chaka towards our nation," and the absence of any threat to the Colony from Shaka's latest campaigns.[81]

However, King had made a significant miscalculation. In the period between his first (1826) and second (1828) visits, the colonial administration's policy shifted from a concern with the opening up of new markets and strategic bases beyond the Colony, to one of stabilizing the independent frontier chiefdoms and containing expansion. By late 1827, Lt. Governor of the Cape, General Richard Bourke, stated that official policy was

> to maintain those situated immediately on our front in possession of their country as long as by their friendly and peaceable conduct they prove themselves deserving of our protection. This will be the easiest and cheapest way of preserving the colony itself from plunder and disquietude...[82]

In terms of this policy, the colonial authorities could not countenance Shaka's campaigns on or near the borders of the colony.[83] By the time King came to compose a detailed written statement for the authorities

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[81]King to J. van der Riet, Civil Commissioner, Uitenhage, 10 May, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp.30-33.

[82]Richard Bourke to Lord Viscount Goderich, 15 October, 1827 (G.H. 23/8, pp. 298-304).

[83]By the 9th of May, King had been in contact with military officials in Port Elizabeth from whom he would have learnt of this policy. (See Commandant F. Evatt to Lt. Col. Somerset, 9 May, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 35-36.)

on the purpose of the Zulu embassy, he was acquainted with the new policy. In his statement he stressed the urgency of sending one of the ambassadors back to the Zulu kingdom as soon as possible to apprise Shaka and Fynn of this unexpected shift. To his injunctions for speed, King added the puzzling comment that he had left hostages in Shaka's hand to guarantee the safety of the Zulu ambassadors. It is clear from the operations in the Mpondo country, of one of the claimed hostages, Fynn, that this was not the case.[84] However, King's claim lent an added impetus to the urgency of returning a messenger to Shaka, at the same obscuring Fynn's role in a southern campaign which was increasingly showing the possibility of coming into direct confrontation with the British. It also contrived to suggest that the traders' role in Shaka's campaigns was forced upon them.[85] Once this report was submitted, King waited to see whether his communication regarding Shaka's peaceful intentions towards the colony would result in a change in policy.

King was also waiting for the registration of the *Elizabeth and Susan* to be completed by the Port Elizabeth

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[84]See the discussion in Roberts, *The Zulu Kings*, pp.129-136.

[85]King to Van der Riet, 10 May, 1828; see also the emphases on haste, and in particular on the urgency of the return of one of the chiefs in King's anxious communication to Van der Riet, 24 May, 1828 (G.H. 19/3, pp. 39-42); Fynn, *Diary*, pp. 141, 153. Fynn subsequently made the same use of the hostage argument.

port authorities. He anticipated that the boat, once registered, would either begin plying regularly between Port Natal and the Cape, thus alleviating the supply problem, or alternatively, if disposed of, would provide him with the necessary capital to obtain a new cargo and transport it to Natal. During May, King was optimistic on both counts. His statement of Shaka's friendly intentions had filtered through to the frontier, while on the basis of his positive intelligence regarding Shaka, the authorities sanctioned the expedition of Messrs. Cowie and Green to the Zulu kingdom. Likewise, the press assured the general public that there was nothing to fear from Shaka.[86]

When, however, it appeared that the registration of the boat might be in jeopardy, and the Cape authorities, already tardy in responding to the embassy, appeared to want Shaka to bring his campaign to a halt, King attempted, once again, to use the threat of Zulu hostility to achieve his ends. He declared that if his craft was not registered he would not risk sending it back to Natal with the one Zulu ambassador whose arrival Shaka was anxiously awaiting. If Shaka did not hear from

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[86]See C.O. 4888, p. 217; C.O. 4893, p. 249; C.O. 4895, pp. 312-313; D.P. Francis, port captain, to the Acting Secretary to Government, Lt. Col. Bell, 9 May, 1828, and 23 May, 1828, C.O. 359, pp. 191-192, 198-199; Evatt to Lt. Col. Somerset, 9 May, 1828, G.H. 19/3 pp. 35-36; *The Colonist*, May, June, 1828.

his ambassador, he continued, the safety of the Colony could not be guaranteed.[87] The threat fell on deaf ears.[88]

The colonial authorities refused to be drawn into what they recognized as King's machinations. A government representative, Major A.J. Cloete, was despatched to Port Elizabeth to circumvent King and to deal directly with the Zulu ambassadors. Cloete was instructed to inform the ambassadors that King enjoyed no status in the eyes of the British authorities.[89] Although at this time intelligence from the frontier indicated that Shaka's army was advancing on the frontier chiefs, there were no fears in the official mind that the Colony was the object of Shaka's attacks.[90] What they did fear was that a war north of the frontier would send large numbers of refugees streaming into the Colony. Cloete's subsequent discussions with the Zulu envoys did not alter the picture of Shaka's intentions towards the colony as peaceful and the tenor of the pertinent

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[87]King to Bourke, 6 June, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 48-53; King to Van der Riet, 6 June, 1828 (G.H. 19/3, pp. 66-69); Van der Riet to Bell, 7 June, 1828 (U.I.T. 15/12, pp. 45-47).

[88]C.O. 4322, pp. 151-152. Nonetheless Bell took sufficient cognizance of the threat to have the possibility of registration carefully checked out for a loophole. (See G.H. 19/3, p. 54.)

[89]Bell to Cloete, 14 June, 1828, C.O. 4893, pp. 255-357.

[90]Minutes of the Cape Council of Advice, 21 June, 1828, A.C. 2, pp. 453-460; Major Dundas to Bourke, 20 June, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp.88-89.

official correspondence over the next two months indicates that King's image of Shaka-as-villain had failed to take root. The policy of the colonial officials was to meet with Shaka at the first possible opportunity to explain their position with regard to the chiefdoms across the border, after which, they believed, he would withdraw.[91] Over the next two months, the Cape authorities only became more sceptical of King, and what Cloete described as his "determined perversion of facts."[92] Likewise, reports in the press questioned the idea that Shaka was vengeful, describing him as "amiable" and as a better diplomat than the British officials.[93]

King's strategies were by no means exhausted and, until his departure in August, he tried a range of other ploys to extort money out of the authorities as well as to try to shore up his position in the eyes of the Zulu envoys, but all of these were blocked by the

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[91]See Somerset to Dundas, 15 June, 1828 Cape Archives Depot, Archives of the Magistrate of Albany (A.Y.) 8/79, pp. 193-196, 189-199; Rev. W.J. Shrewsbury to Somerset, 12 June, 1828, Somerset to Bell, 20 June, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 85-87; Dundas to Bourke, 20 June, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 88-91; and deliberations of the Council of Advice in Cape Town, 21 June, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp.92-95; Bell to Dundas, 21 June, 1828, C.O. 4888, pp. 270-271; Cloete to Bell, 27 June, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 96-103. Also see P.R.O., C.O. 48/124; G.H. 19/3, pp. 92-95; C.O. 4888, pp. 274-275.

[92]Cloete to Bell, 11 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 159-166. The colonial authorities were extremely suspicious of King and his motives in bringing the chiefs to the colony. They were also alert to the contradictions and shifts in the account of things that he promoted. See Van der Riet to Bell, 7 June, 1828, U.I.T. 15/12, pp. 45-47.

[93]*The Colonist*, May-July, 1828.

perspicacious Cloete. The latter also put considerable effort into exposing King's manipulations to the ambassadors, indicating that the British government dissociated itself from King, and emphasizing the colonial government's favorable disposition towards Shaka.[94]

Perhaps King's most outrageous maneuvre was to approach the Chief Commissioner for Uitenhage, Van der Riet, in an attempt to circumvent Cloete, and on the basis of reports of Shaka's imminent advance on the Xhosa chief, Hintsa, to offer to broker an accord between Shaka and the Colony. With this ploy, King tried for the last time to invoke a threatening Shaka, claiming that, if he did not intervene, both the Port Natal settlement and the Colony would be attacked by the Zulu. Once again the authorities remained unconvinced, with justification it seems, for in the same week King was claiming Shaka as a "friend of nearly three years" to whose "humanity and

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[94]King to Cloete, 4 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 125-126; Cloete to King, 4 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 126-127; Cloete to Bell, 4 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 115-124; Cloete to King, 5 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 167-168; King to Cloete, 5 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 169-172; Cloete to King, 10 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 174-177; Bell to King, 11 July, 1828, C.O. 4895, p. 336; Cloete to Bell, 11 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 159-166; King to Cloete, presumably 18 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 212-215; Cloete to King, 18 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, p. 216; Frances to Bell, 25 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 248-263; Cloete to Bell, 29 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 258-263; King to Cloete, 29 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 264-271; Cloete to Bell, 18 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 198-203; Cloete to King, 30 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 272-273; King to Cloete, 30 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 274-281; also see C.O. 4894, pp. 18-19; G.H. 19/3, pp. 178-181; C.O. 4893, pp. 265-267, 291-292.

kindness" he owed a great debt.[95] By August, as the situation on the frontier deteriorated, the colonial administration deemed it best to return the envoys to Shaka with assurances of friendship and a clear statement of their determination not to countenance his southern attacks. The embassy, including King, was returned to Natal aboard a naval vessel, the *Helicon*. After their departure, the press continued to report favorably of Shaka. When British forces thought, mistakenly, that they had engaged the Zulu army, an editorial in *The Colonist* accused the commanding officer, Dundas, of "gross violation of the law of nations."[96]

In fact, so "civilized" did the press view Shaka, that it was speculated that he must be "of white extraction."[97] In the same edition one correspondent commented perceptively on the problem of interpreting Shaka:

> The character and objects of Chaka it is not to be expected should be favourably represented by the tribes he had ruined, or threatened to destroy, and considerable caution is therefore requisite in weighing the evidence only procurable through prejudiced channels; from sources of this kind the Invader is declared a determined, a systematic, and a practiced

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[95]King to Cloete, 11 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 178-181; King to Van der Riet, 13 July, 1828, G.H. 19/3, pp. 206-209.

[96]*The Colonist*, 26 August, 1828.

[97]*The Colonist*, 19 August, 1828.

> plunderer, raising no corn, breeding no cattle, and procreating no children.[98]

The same reservation was true for King's representation of Shaka, and, indeed, was widely held.

Thus, it is clear that my reading of government documents and press reports of the period is very different from that of Roberts,[99] whose account of wholesale panic at the Cape in response to scares about an invasion by Shaka is the root of Cobbing's mistaken periodization of the image of Shaka.

On the mission's return to Natal, Shaka received the reports of his ambassadors, including the chronicle of King's deceits and manipulations, as well as the messages from the British authorities. Incensed by King's duplicity and foolishness, and anxious that he had come close to provoking the British into battle, Shaka promptly despatched a member of Farewell's camp, John Cane, overland to the Cape to affirm his peaceful intentions and his compliance with British requests. He also asked for an official British agent to the Zulu kingdom.[100] Through Cane Shaka stressed that he "was no

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[98]*The Colonist*, 19 August, 1828.

[99]Roberts, *The Zulu Kings*, chapters two-six.

[100]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, p. 133; *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 31 December, 1829.

longer disposed to molest the frontier tribes of Caffers" and that his aim was "free intercourse with the colony."[101] The Cape authorities were highly receptive to this latest embassy, and in November, the *South African Commercial Advertiser* reported its belief that the "frightful stories" sometimes told about Shaka were "mere fabrications."[102] As far as informed opinion at the Cape was concerned, in 1828 Shaka was no villain. Nor, for that matter, had there been anywhere a call for Natal to be colonized.

Shaka posthumously

Unbeknown to the *South African Commercial Advertiser* and its readers, however, both James King, the opportunistic purveyor of rumours of Zulu attack, and Shaka, the king who-was-not-a-monster, were already dead. James King died mysteriously on 7 September, and Shaka was assassinated on the 24th September. Cobbing argues on the basis of circumstantial evidence that Fynn was behind the assassination of the Zulu king.[103] The

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[101]Report of Sir Lowry Cole, G.H. 23/9, pp. 39-47.

[102]*South African Commercial Advertiser*, 15 November, 1828.

[103]Cobbing, "Mfecane as Alibi," pp. 512-513; "Grasping the Nettle," pp.28-29.

timing and circumstances of these deaths are odd, and Cobbing is correct to question the conventional interpretations. But his evidence for Fynn's involvement is not conclusive, and in his preoccupation with white agency and white sources, Cobbing fails to take account of Zulu oral tradition on the event, in which there is no hint of involvement by Fynn. Oral traditions are notoriously permeable to such information, while the succession practices of local northern-Nguni speakers--which preclude an assassin from succeeding to the office of his victim--would have placed a high premium on the revelation by the contenders for the succession of any involvement by Fynn and Farewell. It should be noted moreover, that the traders' response to the assassination was defensive. They improved their fortifications at Port Natal, readied their boat for an emergency departure: indeed, Farewell and Isaacs left soon thereafter for Port Elizabeth.

It was only after the death of Shaka that the traders began for the first time to talk about the colonization of Natal and to employ a rhetoric critical of Shaka.[104] Their monopoly over the Natal trade, which

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[104]See Farewell to Bell, 19 February, 1829, G.H. 19/3, pp.579-580; Farewell to the Chairman, Committee of the Commercial Exchange, Cape Town, 3 March, 1829, P.R.O., series C.O. 48/133; S. Bannister to Bell, 28 March, 1829, C.O. 3941, pp.403-404, and a host of other applications by Bannister. Note also the changed tenor of Farewell's communication

had prevailed since 1824, was finally coming to an end. Their successful promotion of conditions in Natal had stimulated others to follow in their footsteps.[105] The traders had not yet established relations with the new Zulu king in the way that they had with the old, and circumstances in Natal, in early 1829, were more volatile and less predictable than before. The traders had attempted repeatedly to make a go of the Natal trade on their own, and had failed. By 1829, and under these circumstances, colonization offered the traders an excellent opportunity for making good their by now quite considerable losses. It was at this time that Farewell raised capital against his land grant in expectation of the rapid development of Port Natal.

The vilification of Shaka that began at this time was as specific to the conditions which prevailed in early 1829 as King's remarks in 1826 and early 1828 were specific to his particular circumstances at the time. On his return to the Cape, Farewell faced accusations that he had fought in the Zulu armies--an allegation not without substance. The thrust of his defence, an argument which was subsequently taken up by Fynn and

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to J. Barrow, of 15 March, 1829, P.R.O., series C.O. 48/13.

[105]Bell to Mr. Benjamin Green, 22 August, 1828, C.O. 4895, p.350; Green to Bell, 11 August, 1828, C.O. 3937, pp. 323-324; Farewell to Bell, 4 December, 1828, C.O. 357, pp. 400-401.

Isaacs, was that the traders had been threatened by Shaka and forced to participate in the campaigns.[106] At this point, precisely because the Zulu king was dead, the traders could malign Shaka to provide an "alibi" for their own actions without undermining their own representations of the stability of conditions in Natal. In support of their case against Shaka, they drew on a stock of stories with which they had become acquainted in Natal, stories garnered from African informants.

Moreover, the traders were also aware that they could no longer monopolize the image of Shaka that prevailed at the Cape. The British authorities had resolved to send the agent requested by Shaka, and were highly suspicious of the traders. In addition, numerous other parties in the Cape announced their intention of proceeding north to the Zulu kingdom.

When these various groups arrived in Natal, they found that the image of Shaka as a tyrant which was gaining ground in the Cape in 1829 echoed strongly images prevalent in the Zulu kingdom and in Natal. Shaka-the-monster was no more the "invention" of the traders in 1829, than it had been before that. Nor was a

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[106]*South African Commercial Advertiser*, 27 December, 1828, 31 January, 1829; Farewell's report, G.H. 23/9, pp. 39-47; G.H. 1/15, p. 665.

negative view of Shaka the only image that prevailed in Zulu society in 1829. Resistance to Shaka's assassin and successor, Dingane, ensured the continuity of positive productions of Shaka. It is to an examination of the various African productions of Shaka that the next chapter turns, so as to challenge another of Cobbing's generalizations, his view that there is, at best, a single "Zulu" voice, that "it" presented a view of the Zulu past that was essentially unchanged between 1820 and 1900, if not the present, and that white views of Shaka were impervious to that view.

Chapter Four

Shaka in oral tradition

Domination and resistance in the Zulu kingdom under Shaka.

Sometime before about 1820, in a controversial succession, Shaka kaSenzagakhona took over the leadership of the Zulu chiefdom with the assistance the neighboring Mthethwa paramount, Dingiswayo. Then, as a tributary of Dingiswayo, Shaka was encouraged to create a firm regional basis of resistance to the Mthethwa's greatest rivals, the Ndwandwe. This was the beginning of Zulu power. The Ndwandwe subsequently defeated the Mthethwa, but the forces of the Zulu, which had not participated in the campaign, remained intact. Under threat of continued Ndwandwe aggression, the Zulu stepped into the gap left by the defeat of the Mthethwa paramount, and began to rally their neighbors into a defensive alliance. Over time, this was consolidated into Zulu domination.

Sometime before the first traders arrived at Port Natal, the Zulu forces, considerably enlarged and reorganised, repulsed an Ndwandwe attack, an act that heralded the collapse of the Ndwandwe kingdom. The Zulu were poised

to become the predominant power in the Phongolo-Thukela region.[1]

When the traders arrived in 1824, they entered a relatively new and highly heterogeneous polity which Shaka was in the process of consolidating into a centralized state. Divisions within the ruling house were rife. Shaka had isolated his close surviving male relatives, had placed distant male or female relatives in high positions, and surrounded himself with powerful generals and advisors who were not members of the royal house.[2] He declined to produce an heir. His controversial accession had divided the Zulu ruling house, and provided fertile grounds for rebellion against him. Ultimately, these conflicts and tensions within the royal house were to culminate in his assassination in 1828, by two of his surviving brothers.[3]

As Shaka consolidated his position as ruler of the Zulu, disputation within the royal family was overshadowed by struggles between the Zulu rulers and

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[1]For a more detailed discussion of these political developments see Wright and Hamilton, "Traditions and Transformations."

[2]Hamilton, "Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power," chapters four, six and seven.

[3]See Fynn's comments on the condition of the royal house and the assassination of Shaka, *Diary*, pp.156-7.

both their subjects and neighbors. One of the ways in which the Zulu rulers sought to unify the new kingdom was through the *amabutho* system (so-called age regiments). The *amabutho* system drew young men from different areas together and socialized them into identifying with the Zulu king as their ritual leader and the source of their welfare. At the same time, the king assumed the authority to decide when young men could set up households of their own. Unity within the kingdom was also fostered through the assertion of common origins for the disparate chiefdoms incorporated under Shaka in the early years of his reign. They were now obliged to think of themselves as being of common *Ntungwa* descent, and to speak "proper" Zulu.[4]

By the mid-1820s, however, this new ideology of state was not yet well-entrenched; nor was the centralization of the kingdom complete. In particular, Shaka faced rebellion in three areas: in two of the chiefdoms subordinate to his rule--amongst the Khumalo in the north and the Qwabe in the south--and still further south, in the *Lala* chiefdoms. In the later years of his reign, Shaka began to incorporate the inhabitants of newly subordinated chiefdoms south of the Thukela, not as

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[4]Hamilton, "Ideology, oral traditions and the struggle for power," chapter five.

"subjects" of the Zulu kingdom, but rather as despised "outsiders"--*amaLala*, "those who sleep (*ukulala*) with their fingers up their anuses"[5]--who were constructed as being ethnically inferior to the subjects of the core Zulu kingdom. Their chiefly houses were required to maintain identities clearly distinct from that of the Zulu ruling house, and their leaders, although accorded a number of privileges which distinguished them from the bulk of their own subjects, were excluded from certain of the kingdom's central decision-making processes. Their young men were not permitted to join the king's *amabutho*, but were put to work at menial tasks like herding cattle at outlying royal cattle-posts. In summary, members of these chiefdoms were oppressed by their Zulu rulers.[6] This situation was maintained by a combination of coercive and ideological measures. There were thus great inequalities within the Zulu kingdom, deep-seated divisions, and great disaffection.

Even after the defeat of the Ndwandwe and the collapse of Khumalo resistance in 1826, Shaka's position was by no means secure. In a subsequent battle, against the Ngwane chief, Matiwane, the Zulu seized some thirty

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[5]*JSA*, vol.1, p.118, Dinya.

[6]C. Hamilton and J. Wright, "The Making of the *AmaLala*: Ethnicity, Ideology and Relations of Subordination in a Precolonial Context," *South African Historical Journal*, 22, 1990, pp.3-23.

thousand cattle, but only at the cost of the lives of some three to four thousand warriors.[7] So serious was the disaffection in 1827 that Shaka was obliged to use the harsh restrictions imposed after the death of his mother Nandi--involving the killing off of anyone who was not perceived to have mourned sufficiently--to eliminate his enemies. Prior to his death, Shaka had already survived one assassination attempt.

Ongoing resistance of this kind, and smaller outbreaks of rebellion elsewhere, prompted continued coercive and ideological responses from the Zulu king. These included merciless campaigns and stern sentences for individual rebels. The effect of these actions was to invest Shaka with a reputation for harsh and arbitrary action. On the one hand, he fostered this image through carefully managed displays of despotism and brutal justice at his court, using terror as a basis for absolute rule across a huge kingdom. These displays were not only designed to inspire obedience from his subjects; they were also meant to strike fear into the heart of his enemies, and to impress outsiders, like the traders, with his power. His despotism was justified in the minds of some by the other component of Shaka's image, that of a

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[7]King to "T", presumably Thompson, 2 May, 1827, in *The Colonist*, 3 January, 1828.

leader of tremendous abilities, the great unifier, and the hero in battle. Both components of the image are reflected in his *izibongo* (praises). The Zulu king was reputedly one of the architects of his own image, collecting praises for himself that he liked. According to Mbokodo kaSokhulekile, Shaka took for himself the praise "The one whose fame resounds even as he sits," after he heard it used in respect of the Mbo chief, Sambela.[8] But as much as a reputation for harshness served Shaka's purposes, so too did it form the basis of opposition to his rule. Qwabe accounts of Shaka typically villify him as a tyrant, Lala accounts often depict him as a marauder, a destroyer and a "madman."[9]

Detailed review of the body of recorded traditions concerning Shaka allows us to identify three productions of Shaka which appear to date back in form and content to the time of his reign. The following analysis, based as it is on a close reading of Zulu history, will seem daunting to readers unfamiliar with Zulu names and and to those wary of dense historical and cultural detail. Despite difficulties of this kind, the gaining of a

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[8]*JSA*, vol.3, p.15, Mbokodo.

[9]See, for example, *JSA*, vol. 3, Mcotoyi, notably his narration of the story about Shaka directing people to sharpen their spears on the forehead of one Lucunge; even the testimony of Melapi, son of a *Lala* Shakan loyalist, Magaye, depicts Shaka in such terms. For the Qwabe view see the extensive discussion below of the testimony of Baleka. (*JSA*, vol. 2, p.232, Maquza; vol.3, pp.55-6, 65-7, Mcotoyi.)

perspective interior to the logic of the narrators is, I would argue, absolutely crucial to the exegesis of the texts. Close analysis is the only way to achieve a nuanced reading of the meaning and significance of oral traditions about Shaka, and to reveal the way in which the dominant versions of the past took cognizance of, and were constrained by, opposition views. It shows that Shaka was portrayed in the 1820s as a tyrant and a monster both by oral historians who supported him and those who opposed him. The traders encountered these different views of Shaka in many contexts ranging from his court, in circumstances of his making, to contacts with the rebellious Qwabe, Khumalo, and *amaLala*. By 1826, the traders were firmly inserted in the Zulu kingdom, and were closely involved in the extension of Zulu rule south of the Thukela which was proceeding apace at that time. They also heard reports of Shaka's depredations from the African community at Port Natal, many members of which had previously been driven out of their homes by Shaka.[10]

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[10]Fynn, *Diary*, pp.60, 65-66, 130; Isaacs, *Travels*, pp.18, 19, 24-26, 32, 37, 41, 63, 67, 70, 78, 83, 89-90, 140,

Listening for the voices of domination and resistance

Shaka's supporters and opponents had very different images of the Zulu king. The existence of these diverse views, the struggles between them, and their shifting content in response to changing conditions, both during the reign of Shaka, and subsequently, have been ignored by writers like Golan and Cobbing, and are precluded from consideration by the current developments in the theoretical literature on colonial discourse discussed in chapter two.

Golan is one of the few commentators on representations of Shaka who give consideration to the story of Shaka contained in oral traditions.[11] She includes in her historiographical overview of the Zulu literature a detailed structural analysis of an oral tradition, a generic "life story of Shaka," which is the basis for all later, written versions. This structural investigation, she argues, reveals the stories to be "symbolic representations of alternative worldviews rather than as records of past times."[12] For Golan, "the

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[11]Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," chapter three; and "The Life Story of King Shaka and Gender Tensions in the Zulu State," *History in Africa*, 17, 1990, pp.95-111. In his Ph.D. thesis, on "Shaka as a Literary Theme," Malaba looks at the treatment of Shaka in praise poetry but not in historical narratives.

[12]Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," p.175.

very basic story which most historians accept is but an invention."[13] She argues that the reason why, for example, Shaka is depicted as illegitimate in the oral traditions is not related to the actual circumstances of his birth, contested or otherwise, but because Shaka is used as a symbol of changing succession patterns--from a lineage inheritance basis to a merit basis--changes associated with the emergence of states. Golan's approach which views the details of Shaka's story as the clichés typical of hero stories--common to the life stories of "heroes" as diverse as Sundiata and Moses--suggests a new and useful way of reading such texts. Unlike Golan, who sees this as the essential content of the traditions, however, I argue rather that the stock features of the stories are also historical elements, and/or dramatic devices typical of oral narratives, on to which are hooked meanings and interpretations. My position draws in part on Harold Scheub's idea of a core of images lying at the heart of the storytelling tradition which narrators use as the basic materials for their story,[14] and extends it to argue that these forms are invested with particular core historical content. To reduce the content of the oral stories of Shaka to

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[13]Golan, "Gender Tensions," p.95. Also see "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," p.10.

[14]H. Scheub, *The Xhosa Ntsomi*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1975.

metaphor alone, such as a metaphor for succession, is to deny the historiographical status of these traditions. In this chapter I demonstrate their fundamentally historiographical nature, but do not exclude their metaphorical aspect.[15] While Golan is certainly right to point up the clichés, and the significance of their similarity to stock elements in the stories of other "heroes," she does not probe the connection between the use of clichés and personal narrative and public tradition.[16] The mythical or cliché elements in oral traditions are narrations about the past, and offer evidence of the past, but they are also a force in the present time of narration and are tied to the struggles of that present. Nowhere does Golan attempt to identify the interests which such sources represented, or to specify the relationship between the writers and their informants, or the writers and the Zulu king. The internal world of Zulu politics, ideological struggles and culture, and its impact on Zulu historiography, as

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[15]Golan's work on the capacity of the life story of Shaka to reveal gender tensions in the Zulu state, is challenging, but remains speculative in its current form because she has divorced the metaphorical from the historiographical. Golan needs, moreover, to take account of Hofmeyr's crucial points about differences in male and female storytelling, royal and commoner. (I. Hofmeyr, "'We Spend our Years as a Tale that is Told:' Oral Storytelling, Literacy and Historical Narrative in the Changing Context of a Transvaal Chiefdom," unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1991.)

[16]For a discussion the connection between myth in personal narrative and public tradition see R. Samuel and P. Thompson, *The Myths We Live By*, London, Routledge, 1990, "Introduction," especially p.15

well as the participation of European writers in that world, is simply ignored by Golan.

The assumption underlying Golan's idea of a generic life story of Shaka which is a metaphor for the changing constitution of Zulu society, is that the ideological discourses reflected in history are peculiar to western society, and that Africans only participate in these ideological discourses when they begin to write their history. Except in its ahistorical representation as a single "oral tradition," oral Zulu historiography is wholly absent in Golan's study.

Cobbing is another scholar who collapses all of the different, contending interpretations of Shaka in oral tradition into a single "Zulu voice," that presented a view of the Zulu past that was unchanged between 1820 and 1900, and which, in recorded form, he conceives of as being contaminated by the traders who shaped the historical fantasies of all subsequent recorders of oral tradition, in particular those of the most energetic "transcriber," James Stuart.[17] Cobbing is undoubtedly correct to reiterate Vansina's seminal points concerning

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[17]This view of Zulu oral tradition is spelt out at length by Cobbing in a review of the *James Stuart Archive*, entitled "A Tainted Well. The Objectives, Historical Fantasies, and Working Methods of James Stuart, with Counter-Argument," *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, 11, 1988, pp.115-54.

the need for scholars using information contained in collections of oral traditions to come to terms with the presences in the traditions of the collector. However, the recorder's interests are not as all determining of their texts as Cobbing supposes. Recent advances in the theory of literary criticism have demonstrated the capacity of texts to say things over and above what their authors, their editors, and even their collectors intend. The context in which the tradition is recorded affects its content, as do any interests which the informant, and/or the collector intend the text to advance, counter, avoid, or neutralize.

Oral traditions thus require the reconstruction of their own histories. We need to know under what circumstances the oral text came to be transcribed, and by whom.[18] We need to know all about the background, interests and experiences of the transcriber. We also need to know who the informant was, his/her background,

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[18]There has been a great deal of work done on how best to render oral narratives into written form. The performative aspects of oral narration are a crucial component of the text, as are pauses and tones. The oral narratives collected by James Stuart were recorded around the turn of the century and this kind of information was not included in his transcriptions. Its absence needs, however, to be noted. For a discussions of the kinds of meanings and information conveyed by these sorts of details see R. Bauman, *Story, Performance and Event: Contextual Studies of Oral Narrative*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986; D. Tedlock, *The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation*, Philadephia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983; D.W. Cohen, *Towards a Reconstructed Past: Historical Texts from Busoga, Uganda*, London, The British Academy and Oxford University Press, 1986, Introduction.

interests, and experiences. We need to establish how he or she gleaned the information provided, and we need to know all these things, in turn, the original informants. On the basis of all this information we can make judgements about the tradition, its periodization and its faithfulness in written form to the oral original. Where transmutations may have crept in over time we need to assess their likely content and scope. The extant traditions about Shaka differ significantly about key episodes in his life, and fundamentally in their evaluation of the Zulu king. Oral historical texts, as much as written texts, reflect the biases and background of their composers and chroniclers, the intellectual currents of their time, and have debts to one another.[19]

The form of the traditions also requires attention. The traditions discussed here are loosely structured narratives, lacking obvious literary conventions, and not readily divisible into clear genres. Their status as literary forms with a life of their own outside of the

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[19]P.D. Curtin, "Field Techniques for Collecting and Processing Oral Data," *Journal of African History*, 9, 3, 1968, pp.367-85; and his "Oral Tradition and African History," *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, 6, 1969, pp.136-55; J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition. A Study in Historical Methodology*, Chicago, Aldine, 1965; *Oral Tradition as History*, Madison, University of Wisconsin, 1985; P. Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*, Oxford, 1978; J. Miller, (ed.) *The African Past Speaks*, Folkestone, 1980; D. Henige, *Oral Historiography*, London, Longmans, 1982. Also see D. Cohen, "The Undefining of Oral Tradition," *Ethnohistory*, 31, 1, 1989, pp.9-17.

interview situation is not confirmed.[20] It may be that we still need to sensitize ourselves to the indigenous concepts and narrative conventions. One feature which is immediately identifiable, however, is, as Isabel Hofemyr, following Karin Barber, puts it, "a clear sense of political and social struggle as a key determinant in African oral literature."[21] This discussion focuses on this central generic characteristic.

The rest of this chapter will look at three productions of Shaka contained in oral traditions, all of which were recorded by James Stuart. One possible approach would be to begin with Stuart himself in an attempt to evaluate his impact on the traditions. I have decided rather to hold over consideration of Stuart and his presence in the traditions for treatment in a later chapter. This will have the advantage of following and building on discussions of the connections between the image of Shaka and the development of native policy in the decades before Stuart joined the colonial service. The rest of the chapter is divided in two parts: an

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[20]See Ruth Finnigan's *Oral Literature in Africa*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1970; "A Note on Oral Tradition and Historiographical Evidence," *History and Theory*, 9, 2, 1971, pp.195-201; *Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance and Social Content*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977; and *Literacy and Orality: Studies in the Technology of Communication*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1988.

[21]Hofmeyr, "Oral Storytelling, Literacy and Historical Narrative," p.8.

examination of the background and contexts of the informants, and their informants in turn; and a discussion of the role of the productions of Shaka contained in the traditions in promoting, countering, avoiding, and neutralizing interests and counter-interests. The discussion will utilize material and information yielded up by both the form and the content of the narratives. The second part of the discussion returns thus to the central question of this section of the study, the nature and role of different African represention of Shaka in the 1820s.

African representations of Shaka in the 1820s

A number of commentators on the reworkings of the Shaka story ascribe the focus on Shaka's cruelties to white distortions and inventions, deriving from the legacy of the early whites' need "to deflect their involvement in the murder of the king with a campaign of vilification against him...and with false statements about the popular acclaim at Dingane's accession."[22] Cobbing, for example, claims that Stuart's informants resisted his "fishing for horror stories" and asserts that there is a noteworthy contrast between "the

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[22]Cobbing, "The Tainted Well," p.150.

solicitude for Dingane and the hatred for Shaka that threads through white propaganda, and the Zulus' favorable memory of Shaka and their fear and hostility towards the 'bewhiskered one from Mgungundhlovu [Dingane].'"[23] Cobbing's blanket claims are simply wrong. "White propaganda," as we have seen in the previous chapter, and as will be shown for later periods in subsequent chapters, was not unanimous over time in support for Dingane and vilification of Shaka. Dingane's murder of Piet Retief was responsible for a major shift away from this interpretation in some (but again not all) white accounts of Zulu history. The "Zulu" memory of Shaka was likewise not unanimously favorable towards Shaka and opposed to Dingane.

The great well of bitterness towards Shaka which permeates the entire testimony of an informant like the Qwabe woman, Baleka (discussed below), was no mere response to Stuart's promptings. The Qwabe chiefdom was in rebellion for much of the reign of Shaka and was subject to brutal repressive measures.[24] Baleka's own father, Mpitikazi, nearly lost his life at Shaka's hand. A close reading of the recorded text, attention to its

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[23]Cobbing, "The Tainted Well," p.150.

[24]Hamilton, "Ideology, oral traditions and the struggle for power," chapter three.

powerful and emotive language, examination of its internal rhetorical structures and coherence, and the connections made by Baleka between the sufferings of the Qwabe and cruelty of Shaka makes it clear that much of the testimony owes its form to her father, Mpitikazi's experiences under Shaka and to the legacy of hatred left by Shaka's persecution of the Qwabe, and not to the interviewer Stuart's promptings. This is not, of course, to suggest that Shaka was indeed a monster. Rather, it is to assert that the demonization of the Zulu monarch was not the sole preserve of white commentators.

Events internal to the Zulu kingdom were responsible for sharp debates over Shaka, not merely between his supporters and detractors during his lifetime, but also subsequently as different Zulu interests drew on different "Shakas" to support their actions in new circumstances. Any attempt to discover the kinds of views of Shaka that prevailed in 1824 in the Zulu kingdom, must test the oral traditions for subversions or mutations that occurred subsequently. In particular, African versions of Shaka gained new content and relevance throughout the nineteenth century at times of succession disputes. The following discussion of the connection between succession disputes and changing productions of the image of Shaka offers a background

against which the perceptions of Stuart's informants must be evaluated. To the extent that this background suggests where and how changes in the story of Shaka came about, it also defines the limits and possibilities of such changes.

"Succession disputes cause slanders:" periodizing oral traditions about Shaka.

The observation by one of Stuart's informants, Mayinga kaMbekuzana, that "succession disputes cause slanders"[25] offers a guide as to how the impact of a long period of time on an oral tradition can be assessed in conjunction with a focus on the subjectivity of its transmitters. In the almost one hundred years under consideration--from Shaka's lifetime to the period when James Stuart did his interviewing--there were at least five major succession disputes in which versions of the life story of Shaka were contested.

Dingane's accession, following the death of Shaka, was the first major occasion when Shaka's image was subject to alteration and refurbishment. In the face of Dingane's ruthless suppression of anyone who expressed

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[25]*JSA*, vol.2, p.247, Mayinga.

regret at the murder of Shaka, numbers of Shaka's closest supporters chose to depart the Zulu kingdom rather than to challenge the usurpation: Nqeto, the Qwabe chief, was a case in point. The controversy escalated when rumours arose that Shaka had a son by a lover, and that the boy was being concealed by Shakan loyalists.[26] Nzwakele kaKhushwayo, chief of the Dube people, was killed by Dingane for claiming that a son of Shaka's was living at his mother's home.[27]

Forced to underpin his coercive onslaught with an ideological iniative, Dingane joined in the battle over the image of Shaka. His campaign entailed the maligning in the popular "media" of the time (songs, praises, etc.), of his predecessor as an illegitimate tyrant, and the justification of his role in the death of Shaka. In his praises recorded by a contemporary, J.T. Arbousset, the following lines occur:

> Death-defilement antidotes were eaten, within;
> They were eaten by Mmama and Mnkabayi.[28]

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[26]*JSA*, vol.2, pp.19, 22, 27, Mabonsa; vol.2, pp.70-1, Mageza; vol.2, pp.80, 93, Magidigidi; vol.2, pp.191-2, Mandhlakazi; vol.2, p.236, Maquza; vol.2, pp.250-1, 254, Mayinga; vol.2, pp.272, 279, 293, Maziyana; vol.1, p.6, Baleka; vol.4, p.218, Ndhlovu; Bryant, *Olden Times*, pp.200, 391, 412, 413, 414, 494, 520, 632, 665, 667, 668-9; also see *JSA*, vol 2, p.111, Mahaya; Bryant, *Olden Times*, p.107.

[27]*JSA*, vol.4, pp. 218, 219, Ndhlovu.

[28]D. Rycroft and A. Ngcobo (eds.), *The Praises of Dingana*, Durban and Pietermaritzburg, Killie Campbell Africana Library and the University of Natal Press, 1988, p.41. Note that this line does not occur in any of the other (later) versions reviewed in the book.

Mnkabayi (sister of the father of Shaka and Dingane) was widely accredited with having been the one who confirmed Dingane as the sucessor of Shaka, and who exonerated him from having had a direct hand in the death of his brother, an act which would have eliminated him from the succession. This crucial act of legitimation was thus recorded in his praises of the time. According to Baleka, Dingane called himself "Malamulela" (the Intervener) "because he had intervened between the people and the madness of Tshaka," a point supported in the analysis of this praise, and related eulogies, by Rycroft and Ngcobo.[29] Dingane appropriated for himself one of Shaka's most powerful and threatening praises, "The bird which devours all others," and killed off one of Shaka's chief "propagandists," the royal *imbongi*, Mxhamama.[30]

The corollary of this was that disatisfaction about Dingane's reign took the form of appeals to Shaka's spirit. When, in June 1830, Dingane despatched an army on winter campaign against the recalcitrant Bhaca, his disaffected generals began to claim that spirit of Shaka

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[29]*JSA*, vol.1, p.6, Baleka; Rycroft and Ngcobo, *Praises*, pp.97-8, 130. Also see the discussion of the denunciation of Shaka in versions of Dingane's praises in Malaba, "Shaka as a Literary Theme," pp.6-12.

[30]Rycroft and Ngcobo, *Praises*, p.17, and see lines 281-2 of Stuart's version of Dingane's praises and the discussion thereof on p.171; Fynn, *Diary*, p.157; Bryant, *Olden Times*, p.667. It is interesting to note in this context Rycroft and Ngcobo's observation that eulogies concerning the "eating up" of enemies was a key element in the praises of the Zulu royalty, p.29.

was appearing to them in dreams, urging them to retreat. Such was the impact of this claim that Dingane was obliged to back down and withdraw his forces.[31]

Another succession dispute developed in 1839, when another of Shaka's brothers, Mpande, allied himself with the Boers and led a large secessionist movement from the south of the Zulu kingdom into Natal. Known as "the breaking of the rope" (*ukudabuka kwegoda* or *ukuggabuka*), this was the first major split in the Zulu kingdom. In January, 1840, at the battle at amaQonggo hills, south of present-day Magudu, Dingane was defeated, and was subsequently killed. Mpande was then installed by the Boers.

Mpande faced a difficult task in justifying his alliance with the Boers. The term "the breaking of the rope" captures the enormity of this action. The "rope" was the grass cord that united all Zulu, that "runs through Zulu national life from generation to generation."[32] It was thus a perfidy of epic proportions, and it demanded extensive retrospective legitimation, particularly in the face of Boer seizure of large tracts of Zulu territory following the defeat of

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[31]Bryant, *Olden Times*, pp.398-9.

[32]*JSA*, vol.1, p.243, Kumalo.

Dingane, which left Mpande with a seriously reduced kingdom. Moreover, after the defeat of Dingane, the Boers had taken it upon themselves to proclaim Mpande king. To all intents and purposes, it appeared that he owed his accession to the Boers.[33]

Mpande was forced to move quickly to shore up his position. Dingane had killed off all of the remaining sons of Senzangakhona, with the exception of Mpande.[34] Thus, when the latter took over the Zulu kingship, he was able to claim to the legitimate successor of Shaka, and to present his actions as the defeat of Shaka's usurper and assassin, Dingane.[35] Henceforth the crucial lines concerning the legitimation of Dingane by Mnkabayi were dropped from Dingane's praises. During the reign of Mpande, whenever the royal eulogies were declaimed by the leading *imbongi*, Magolwana, a prologue criticizing Dingane for "thrusting an evil spear into Zululand" was

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[33]Bird, *Annals*, vol.1, pp.540-541, Report of the Landdrost of Tugela, October, 1839; pp. 574-5, extract from A. Delegorgue's *Travels in Southern Africa*, vol.1, Durban and Pietermaritzburg, Killie Campbell Africana Library and University of Natal Press, 1990, chapter 13, copy of the Volksraad Proclamation issued by Pretorious on 14 February, 1840; p.376. narrative by Daniel Pieter Bezuidenhout, published in *Orange Free State Monthly Magazine*, December, 1879.

[34]*JSA*, vol.1, p.196, Jantshi;

[35]R.C.A. Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, Durban, Knox, 1929, p.216.

inserted before his praises.[36] Rycroft and Ngcobo note a difference between the eulogies of Dingane recorded during his reign, and those recorded subsequently. In the latter Dingane is held responsible for the murder of another of his brothers, Mhlangana.[37] Dingane was thus invested with the tyrant's mantle, a move that accorded well with the image of Dingane propagated by Mpande's Boer allies, following the massacre of Piet Retief.

Mpande, as was to be expected, proclaimed Shaka's legitimacy in the strongest terms, and basked in his reflected glory. He was praised with the actions of Shaka, even where such actions were not incorporated into Shaka's own praises, and claimed proudly that he had served as a "great captain" during Shaka's reign.[38] Adulphe Delagorgue, a visitor to Mpande's emigrant court in Natal, at the time of his recognition by the Boers in September, 1839, (erroneously) understood him to be a

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[36]Rycroft and Ngcobo, *The Praises of Dingana*, p.7. It is tempting to interpret the lines "Vezi, though people may die [their] eulogies will survive; These will remain and bring grief to them,[*zibadabula*]; Remain and lament for them in the empty homes," of Dingane's eulogies which are ascribed to Magolwane's authorship, as a wry comment through a play on the word *dabula* on the capacity of eulogies to "cut" or "divide" both those who remember, and those who are remembered, by the poet who was both the author of the laudations in Dingane's time, and their refurbisher subsequently under Mpande.

[37]Rycroft and Ngcobo, *Praises*, pp.39, 42, 99, 103-8, 139-140, 175, 227.

[38]See the discussion in Rycroft and Ngcobo, *Praises*, p.120; Bird, *Annals*, vol.1, p.537, Mpande's testimony to the Volksraad in Pietermaritzburg, 15 October, 1839.

full-brother of Shaka's, and a half-brother of Dingane's. He reported hearing from Zulu sources that "Panda had...incontestable claims to royalty."[39] In a pattern that continues into the present, the image of the first Zulu king began to rise and wane in response to that of the second.

Mpande had, moreover, fathered a child for Shaka with Monase, a woman reputedly given to him for this purpose by Shaka. The evidence as to the biological paternity of this child, Mbuyazi, is debated in the sources. Some state that when Monase fell pregnant, Shaka installed her in Mpande's household.[40] Other sources indicate that the child was conceived after the death of Shaka.[41] There is no evidence that *lobola* was ever paid for Monase, but it had been paid for Ngqumbazi, who was supposed to give Mpande his heir. A dispute then arose between the rival claims of Mbuyazi--possibly a biological son of Shaka's--and Cetshwayo--the son of Ngqumbazi--which erupted into the Zulu civil war of 1856. Once again, the status of

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[39]Bird, *Annals*, p.553, extract from Delegorgue's *Travels in Southern Africa*, vol.1, chap. xiii.

[40]A footnote attributed to information supplied by Prof. L. Nyembezi, to E.H. Brooks and C. de B. Webb, *History of Natal*, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1967, p.94, notes "Monase, Mbulazi's mother, had been one of Shaka's "sisters". When she became pregnant Shaka passed her on to his brother Mpande." See also SP, file 9, item 51, p.2, Socwatsha (29 March, 1914).

[41]Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p.13, notes that Mbuyazi was born in early 1830s.

Shaka was relevant. Cetshwayo, implicitly challenged the claim that Mbuyazi was a son of Shaka by asserting that both he and Mbuyazi were the second sons in the houses of their mothers, the first son in each case having been killed by Shaka.[42] The implication here was that Shaka would not have fathered a second son in the house of a woman by then married to his brother. With the death of Mbuyazi in the battle of Ndondakusuka, Cetshwayo was able to follow Mpande in emphasizing the close connection between his branch of the family and that of Shaka, and Dingane continued to be vilified.[43] According to a missionary at Ulundi, Cetshwayo's capital, it was "Tshaka's song" that was the Zulu "National Anthem" in the 1860s.[44]

The next period when the status of Shaka as a son of Senzangakhona was of heightened relevance, occurred after the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879. The defeated Zulu king, Cetshwayo, was imprisoned in Cape-Town, and the British authorities proceeded to divide up the Zulu kingdom into thirteen chiefdoms. The rationale for this division was that, with their victory in 1879, the British had

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[42]Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, p.218.

[43]See "The Autobiography of Cetywayo" in Samuelson, *Long. Long Ago*, pp.213-218.

[44]Samuelson, *Long, Long, Ago*, pp.220-1.

succeeded in liberating the Zulu people from the tyranny of the house of Shaka. The post-war settlement was thus described as a return to the pre-Shakan distribution of peoples.[45] The settlement effectively terminated the rule of the dynasty of Shaka, as most of the chiefs who gained office by it were not members of the Zulu royal house. The only two members of the royal family to be included in the settlement were Hamu, son of Nzibe, and Zibhebhu, son of Mapitha, and both were to dominate the other appointed chiefs, and to lead them in a campaign to break the last vestiges of power of the legitimists seeking the return from exile of Cetshwayo.

Both Hamu and Zibhebhu were genealogically distant from the Zulu succession. Hamu's father, Nzibe, was a half brother of Shaka's, and a full brother of Mpande's. He died during Shaka's Balule campaign in 1828. Mpande subsequently "fathered" Hamu for Nzibe, by means of the institution of *ngena*, and placed Hamu in the Mfemfe homestead of Nzibe. Although biologically the son of Mpande, Hamu was thus genealogically the son of Nzibe, and, as such, was not of the line of Shaka. Zibhebhu's royal connection was more tenuous still. Zibhebhu was head of the Mandlakazi section of the Zulu royal family. The founding member of this section was reputedly Ngwabi,

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[45]Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, pp.71. 72, 77.

a boy captive reared in the Zulu chiefly household as an orphan grafted onto the royal family. Foundlings in Zulu society typically assumed the *isibongo* of their adopted family. Ngwabi grew up and married, but died before conceiving an heir. His widow was then impregnated in terms of the *ngena* custom by one of his adopted brothers, Mhlaba, son of Jama, and brother of Shaka's father Senzangakhona. The child of this union, Sojiyisa, was considered to be Ngwabi's heir. Nonetheless, Sojiyisa, and later his son, Mapitha (the father of Zibhebhu), were raised as members of the ruling family, and under Shaka and his successors were accorded all the privileges due to princes of royal blood.[46] The genealogical distance of both Hamu and Zibhebhu from the line of royal descent traced through Shaka meant that neither had a strong claim to the Zulu throne.

Nonetheless, with the deposition of Cetshwayo, and the backing of British authorities, both Hamu and Zibhebhu sought to enhance their prestige and power. Their ultimate goal, it seems, would have been recognition by the British of one of them as the new Zulu king. In 1879, however, the installation of a new king was not an immediate possibility. British policy at the

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[46]For a detailed discussion of the Mandlakazi genealogy see Hamilton, "Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power," pp.219-224.

time was to keep Zululand divided under separate chiefs. Nevertheless, a struggle for ideological preeminence began to be waged within Zulu circles. One form which this took was the casting of doubt on Shaka's legitimacy. By suggesting that Shaka was either not conceived by Senzangakhona, or that, if he was, by stressing that he was not recognized by Senzangakhona as a son, and that his later accession was illegitmate, Hamu and Zibhebhu began to pave the way for the accession to power of another branch of the Zulu royal family, one which did not trace its descent from Shaka, but rather from his father or grandfather. This period saw a contest between two versions of the origins of Sojiyisa: the one claiming that he was the biological son of a Zulu chief, and the other emphasizing that Ngwabi was an outsider, and suggesting that Ngwabi's wife was already pregnant when he died, a claim designed to deny any consanguinity between the Mandlakazi and the royal Zulu.[47] The parentage of Hamu was equally contested. The chief argument advanced against his ambitions was that he was an *emsizini*, that is, a child born out of intercourse between a king and a woman of the *isigodlo* during the *umkhosi* and therefore of inferior rank in the family.[48]

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[47]Fuze, *The Black People and Whence They Came*, p.177, editor's note 1; T. Cope, *Izibongo, Zulu Praise Poems*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1968, p.200; Bryant, *Olden Times*, pp. 44-45.

[48]See Bryant, *Dictionary*, p.593; *The Zulu People: As They Were*

This review of some of the most significant moments in the nineteenth century when the image of Shaka was the subject of controversy, and of significant reworking, indicates that simplistic notions of a single, unchanged "Zulu voice" are untenable for the rest of the nineteenth century as it is for the period of Shaka's reign itself. At the same time, the review posits very specific contexts and forms for such changes.

All of these succession disputes occasioned debate over Shaka's legitimacy, both in terms of the circumstances of his birth and accession, and in terms of his own actions (the merit argument) and entailed a corresponding refurbishment of the relevant oral traditions. To ascertain which, if any, of these moments had a bearing on a particular tradition, it is necessary to look closely at the informants concerned and their participation in these events and in such argumentation.

Zulu interpretations of the story of Shaka in the 1820s.

I have chosen for discussion here three productions of Shaka which purport to date back to the time of his

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Before the White Man Came, Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, second edition, 1967, p.519.

reign that differ in significant ways from one another, and for which there exists sufficient background material to reconstruct something of their context of production and transmission. In particular, I focus on the way in which each of these accounts treats the circumstances of Shaka's birth, his accession and his reputation as a tyrant/hero. Interestingly, there are no differences of any significance in accounts of his assassination. One feature of the death of Shaka which should be noted, however, is that a host of accounts refer to a deathbed prophecy by Shaka to the effect that the land would eventually be taken over by whites.[49]

The first account was recorded in 1902 by Stuart from Ndhlovu kaTimuni. The main elements of Ndhlovu's version of Shaka's birth were: that Shaka was illegitimate (born "*esihlahleni*"--literally, in the bushes, in other words outside of the normal social setting for a birth); that Senzangakhona acknowledged having a liason with Shaka's mother, Nandi; that Nandi and Senzangakhona were never married; that Senzangakhona subsequently attempted to pay *lobola* for Nandi, but that

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[49]*JSA*, vol.1, p.96, Dinya; p. 307, Lunguza; vol. 4, p.200, Ndhlovu; also see vol. 3, p.206, Mkebeni.

her parents pretended she was dead; that Shaka's birth was not widely known about at the time, and (specifically) that it was hidden from Senzangakhona.[50] Dealing with the equally sensitive question of the circumstances of Shaka's accession, Ndhlovu asserted that Shaka was "doctored" by Dingiswayo, which gave him a "magical" ascendancy over his father and caused the latter to sicken and die. Ndhlovu claimed that Senzangakhona died after Shaka's return to the Zulu chiefdom, and he considered Shaka to have been responsible for the murder of four of Senzangakhona's leading councillors, including Ndhlovu's own grandfather, Mudli. Finally, in Ndhlovu's account, Shaka emerges as a leader of great ability, an innovator and a hero in battle.[51] In response to a query from Stuart regarding Shaka's alleged atrocities, Ndhlovu commented, "People were concocting stories about him."[52] Ndhlovu dealt with

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[60]*JSA*, vol.4, pp.198, 202,203, 214, 215, 216, 222, 224, 227, 232, Ndhlovu. The story that Nandi was said to be dead and the birth of Shaka was concealed from Senzangakhona appears to be completely contradicted in another interview which appears in the published archive as Ndhlovu's testimony, in which it is claimed that Nandi was *lobola*'d, married Senzangakhona and went to live with him in the Zulu kingdom, leaving Shaka behind in the Langeni chiefdom.(See p.215). These claims are utterly at odds with the rest of Ndhlovu's testimony, and do not accord with Ndhlovu's argument as rehearsed by Stuart in the notes of his discussion with Ndukwana which make it clear that both Stuart and Ndukwana understood Ndhlovu to be claiming that Nandi and Senzangakhona never married.(See p.206). It is possible that the "marriage" version is an interpolation in the testimony of Ndhlovu of the testimony of another informant altogether.

[51]*JSA*, vol.4, pp.198, 204, 205, 228, 229, Ndhlovu.

[52]*JSA*, vol.4, p.219, Ndhlovu.

specific instances apparently illustrative of Shaka's cruelty by offering glosses that placed the accounts in contexts that explained the actions or mitigated against wholesale condemnation.

Ndhlovu owed his knowledge of Shaka to one Sipika, a man of Senzangakhona's Mnkangala *ibutho*, and to Ndhlovu's own father, Timuni. Sipika was actively involved in events leading up to the death of Senzangakhona, and the accession of Shaka, while Timuni, a member of the left-hand side of the Zulu royal family, was himself the son of one of the main protagonists in Shaka's accession, Mudli, chief advisor to Senzangakhona.[53] Before the content of this account can be used as a source for ideas about Shaka which prevailed during his reign, the question must be addressed as to what extent Stuart's informant, Ndhlovu, altered, either consciously or unwittingly, the stories which he heard from Sipika and Timuni.

One measure of Ndhlovu's editorial intervention is provided by the fortuitous recording by Stuart of an account of Shaka's life provided by another son of Timuni, Mhuyi. Comparison of the two testimonies reveals that they diverge to a degree and in a form beyond what

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[53] *JSA*, vol.4, pp.199, 232, Ndhlovu.

might be attributed solely to poor memory or faulty transmission in the chain of testimony. The essential difference in their accounts concerns the question of Shaka's status as a son of Senzangakhona: Ndhlovu states that Shaka was illegitmate, while Mhuyi says that he was not, and each account contains narrative details supporting its claim.

Stuart interviewed Ndhlovu first, in 1902, and again in early 1903. A few days after the latter discussion, he interviewed Mhuyi, and subsequently held joint discussions with both brothers, at which another of Stuart's informants, Ndukwana, was also present. On this occasion the discrepancies between the accounts were discussed explicitly. Neither Mhuyi or Ndhlovu were adamant in adhering to the less significant details of their respective versions. On the central question of the legitimacy of Shaka's accession, Mhuyi was prepared to concede that Ndhlovu was correct.[54] Ndhlovu, by way of contrast, persisted more firmly in his conviction that the circumstances of his birth showed Shaka to have been illegitimate.[55] There are two possible circumstances, not mutually exclusive, which could have underlain the development of the debate in this form: either Mhuyi was

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[54]*JSA*, vol.4, p.39, Mhuyi.

[55]*JSA*, vol.4, p.217, Ndhlovu.

less interested in the account than Ndhlovu, and less well-informed, in other words simply a poorer source; and/or Ndhlovu could have had a particularly strong motivation for promoting his version of events.

Comparison of the two testimonies shows that Ndhlovu's much longer account was also far richer in historical detail. Stuart himself observed that Ndhlovu demonstrated an especially strong interest in and knowledge of historical matters.[56] He had nothing comparable to say about Mhuyi, whose testimony lacked the detailed knowledge of his brother's (for instance, in sharp contrast with the specific knowledge of obscure residences displayed by Ndhlovu, Mhuyi could not recall the names of Senzangakhona's *imizi* beyond those of the very famous Nobamba and Siklebe,[57] and Mhuyi admitted that he did not have much opportunity to hear about past matters.) In fact, Mhuyi never lived in the Zulu kingdom, whereas Ndhlovu was chief of a section of the royal house, based in the Maphumulo division.[58] Finally, Mhuyi only heard his account from Timuni, who was an infant at the time of Shaka's accession, whereas Sipika,

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[56]*JSA*, vol.4, p.206, Ndhlovu.

[57]See for example, *JSA*, vol.4, p.39, Mhuyi, and compare with pp.211, 213, 224, 230, Ndhlovu.

[58]*JSA*, vol.4, pp.36, 37, Mruyi; and p.198, Ndhlovu.

Ndhlovu's additional informant, was an eyewitness to the events debated.[59] The texts, and the circumstances of the two informants suggest that the first proposition, that Ndhlovu was better-informed than Mhuyi, holds up. It is also possible that Ndhlovu's greater knowledge was a product of his interaction with Sipika, a source not shared by Mhuyi.

The possibility that Ndhlovu was especially motivated in promoting the view that Shaka was illegitimate, on the other hand, is not fully substantiated. Ndhlovu was a supporter of Mkhungo, the only surviving son of the house of Mbuyazi, that is the house that was connected directly to Shaka (see above, p.170).[60] This alignment would presumably have placed pressure on him to affirm Shaka's legitimacy in whatever form was most appropriate. That he did by claiming that, while Shaka was born *esihlahleni*, there was no doubt that he was fathered by Senzangakhona. (I deal with the significance of making a claim about the legitimacy in this roundabout way rather than in a more direct form on p.176 above). Another factor can be found in the circumstances of the death of Ndhlovu's grandfather, Mudli, at Shaka's hands. If

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[59]*JSA*, vol.4, p.39, Mruyi.

[60]*JSA*, vol.4, pp.200, 212, Ndhlovu. For Ndhlovu's interest in Mbuyazi as the heir of Shaka, see his remarks on p.198.

Ndhlovu's branch of the royal house, angered by the murder, harboured a grudge against Shaka, and were concerned to malign him, they would have done well to suppress other details of Ndhlovu's story, details which explain crucial lacunae in Shaka's personal history. The suppression of these details would have allowed them to suggest that Shaka was not Senzangakhona's son, but an imposter of other origins. Either the wholesale blackening of Shaka went beyond the limits of historical credibility, or it was not precisely their aim.

Timuni and his brother, Sigwebana were, moreover, obliged to leave the Zulu kingdom during the reign of Dingane when the latter sought to kill them, under circumstances unfortunately not further elaborated on by Ndhlovu.[61] This turn of events presumably turned them against Dingane. In practice, enmity towards Dingane tended to mean support for the house of Shaka, at least in retrospect. If the *ikohlo* (left-hand) branch of the royal family opposed Shaka during his lifetime, as a result of his murder of their kinsman Mudli, events in the 1830s seem to have turned them back into the "Shakan" fold. Indeed, as the house of Mudli was the *ikohlo* branch of the Zulu royal family, they, unlike other branches, such as those of Hamu or Zibhebhu whose

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[61] *JSA*, vol.4, pp.206, 207, Ndhlovu.

connections to royalty predated Shaka, were precluded from laying claim to the Zulu kingship through a denial of Shaka. The *ikohlo* house conventionally could never accede to the chiefship.

It is significant that within a few years of giving his testimony to Stuart, Ndhlovu led an uprising in the Maphumulo district, a sequel to the rebellion of Bambatha. Marks suggests that chiefs like Ndhlovu acted out of feelings of "national pride and a stirring precolonial tradition," that they were, in effect, early Zulu nationalists.[62] Although Dinuzulu's role in the events of 1906-08 is extremely difficult to specify, and although Ndlovu formally denied acting on the Zulu king's instructions, there is no doubt that he saw his actions as supportive of Dinuzulu, and himself as a bearer of the tradition of Shaka, and after him, the royalist Usuthu.[63]

Another possible explanation for the ambiguities in Ndhlovu's attitude towards Shaka lies in the claim by another of Stuart's informants, Jantshi of the Mabaso people, that Ndhlovu's father, Timuni, derived his information from Jantshi's father Nongila, and not from

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[62]S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1970, pp.228, 239.

[63]Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, pp.229, 313, 315, 357. For her discussion of the role of Dinuzulu see chapter ten.

the family of Mudli. Indeed, the accounts by Ndlovu and Jantshi are remarkably similar. Nongila, as will be elucidated later, was a staunch Shaka man, in a way that Timuni's immediate family may not have been.[64]

The foregoing discussion suggests that a variety of conflicting pressures was brought to bear on Timuni, and subsequently Ndhlovu, in terms of the image of Shaka to which they ascribed. Before a final assessment of Ndhlovu's testimony can be attempted, however, it is necessary to examine Nongila's view of Shaka, as presented by Jantshi.

Nongila was an eyewitness to the birth and accession of Shaka.[65] His story was recounted to Stuart by his son Jantshi about a month after Ndhlovu's interview, at the latter's instigation.[66] Jantshi's account was similar to that of Ndhlovu. He asserted that Shaka was illegitimate; that no *lobola* was ever paid; and that Nandi and Senzangakhona never married. However, he claimed that that the birth of Shaka was not concealed.[67]

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[64]*JSA*, vol. 1, p.188, Jantshi.

[65]*JSA*, vol.1, p.177, Jantshi.

[66]See Stuart's note, *JSA*, vol. 4, p.206, Ndhlovu.

[67]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.178, 179, 188, 189, 191, 199, 200, Jantshi. Also see p.179 where Jantshi notes that illegitimate children were frequently referred to as "*itshaka*."

Jantshi concurred with the story of Dingiswayo "doctoring" Shaka and the connection between this and the death of Senzangakhona. But Jantshi claimed that Senzangakhona died before Shaka's return to the Zulu chiefdom, and that no-one was ousted when he took over. He stressed that Sigujana, Senzangakhona's heir, although touched at Mthethwa by Shaka on precisely the spot where he was later to receive a fatal injury, died out of Shaka's presence in battle. He remarked, "It is probable that Tshaka was offered the position of the king".(my emphasis)[68] Jantshi's view of Shaka was one of a successful conqueror, and not of a ruthless killer. "As a matter of fact," he commented, "Tshaka did not put to death the kings and kinglets he defeated, if, when he proceeded against them, they ran away and did not show fight. He made them *izinduna*."[69] Nevertheless, Jantshi did note that Shaka frequently caused people to be put to death.[70] He related how Shaka fed people to the vultures, but linked such acts to the maintenance of authority and discipline in the Zulu kingdom more directly than did Ndhlovu.[71] According to Jantshi, Shaka would cut off a man's ears if he did not listen, i.e.

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[68]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.181, 182, 199, Jantshi.

[69]*JSA*, vol.1, p.187, Jantshi.

[70]*JSA*, vol.1, p.195, Jantshi.

[71]*JSA*, vol.1, p.195, Jantshi.

obey, and he would pick out anyone wounded in the back in battle and kill him for being a coward, for running away.[72] In Jantshi's account, Dingane was unfavorably compared to Shaka as being more venomous, treacherous and tyrannical, and less accomplished.[73]

Nongila, Jantshi's father and informant, belonged to the Ntontela *ibutho*, originally one of Senzangakhona's *amabutho* and later taken over by Shaka. It was made up of men born between c.1785 and 1790.[74] Although he "was looked on as a hereditary member of the [Zulu] tribe," Nongila's *isibongo* was Mabaso.[75] He was, moreover, a spy, highly trusted by the Zulu kings. This was a task generally reserved for members of the Zulu proper.[76] After Shaka's assassination, Nongila remained at his post under Dingane, but ultimately, narrowly escaped death at the hands of the new king.[77] In 1839, he crossed into Natal with Mpande, and played a key role in Mpande's campaign against Dingane.[78] He returned with Mpande and

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[72]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.195, 201-2, Jantshi.

[73]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.196, 197, Jantshi.

[74]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.174, 180, Jantshi.

[76]*JSA*, vol.1, p.175, Jantshi. Also see p.180.

[78]*JSA*, vol.1, p.175, Jantshi. Also see pp.192, 193.

[77]*JSA*, vol.1, p.196, Jantshi.

[78]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.174, 197, Jantshi.

continued in the service of the Zulu royalty until 1856 when he again fled the Zulu kingdom, just before the battle of Ndondakusuka between supporters of Mbuyazi and Cetshwayo. He was, presumably, an Mbuyazi supporter, for it seems that the family did not return to the Zulu country.[79] These involvements all align Nongila with factions which promoted Shaka, rather than with his detractors, and indeed, Jantshi recorded his father's admiration for Shaka. For Nongila, there was only one king, and that was Shaka.[80]

For his part, Jantshi, who was born c.1848, lived in the Zulu kingdom until the age of puberty, and seems to have identified closely with the Zulu proper.[81] We know little about his subsequent experiences and his political allegiances. It is, however, significant that in his adult life he lived in Natal, and did not participate in any of the events surrounding the succession disputes discussed above. Finally, it should be noted that his testimony is marked by careful distinctions which he drew between what he was told by his father, what his father was witness to and what he heard from others, and other generalized hearsay. Moreover, Jantshi distinguished

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[79]*JSA*, vol.1, p.200, Jantshi.

[80]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.197, 198, Jantshi.

[81]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.174, 175, 176, Jantshi.

between his own opinions and what derived from those authorities, and freely acknowledged where his information was incomplete.[82] Although Ndhlovu observed that Jantshi was an *imbongi* of note, it is unlikely that he was a composer of praises, in the sense of an ideologue seeking to present a particular world view. Rather, he seemed to have been an *imbongi* who praised using eulogies composed by others, a relayer of ideas, rather than a maker of them.[83] He evinced a romantic attachment to "Zulu-ana," discernible in his testimony, and demonstrated by his pilgrimage back to the old lands of the Mabaso.[84]

In summary, then, Jantshi's testimony was probably derived largely from his father. Any alterations which he was responsible for seem likely to have been accidental or random, rather than directed by the wider context in which he moved. Nongila's account, on the other hand, was probably shaped by his personal experiences. On the whole, they would have tended to influence him to present an advantageous picture of Shaka, one that was probably not far removed from the

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[82]See for example, *JSA*, vol.1, pp.187, 189, 190, 197, 199, 201, Jantshi.

[83]See *JSA*, vol.1, p.174, Jantshi, where he states explicitly that the praises that he knows were learnt from his father.

[84]*JSA*, vol.4, p.206, Ndhlovu; vol.1, p.176, Jantshi.

view of Shaka which he held, as a supporter of Shaka, during the latter's lifetime. Insofar as Nongila's knowledge and opinion of Shaka shaped that of Timuni, it would likewise have been in a manner sympathetic to Shaka.

The final account of Shaka's birth and accession which can be dated with some certainty to the reign of Shaka is that of Mpitikazi, recounted by his daughter Baleka to Stuart in 1919, already discussed above.[85] In Baleka's much shorter account of the birth of Shaka she assserted that Shaka was illegitimate but that Nandi was married to Senzangakhona, and that Senzangakhona did know of Shaka's existence. Baleka professed ignorance on the *lobola* question. On the other hand, it must be noted that she further claimed that Shaka was not reared in the Zulu chiefdom, but by his maternal grandmother. Here, the detail in Baleka's account is significantly richer than that of the other accounts, presumably because her father grew up in the same family as Shaka. On the question of Shaka's accession, Baleka merely commented that "When he [Shaka] arrived among his people his father

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[85]*JSA*, vol.1, p.5, Baleka noted that her account of Shaka's birth and accession was derived from her father. Note that on p.4, Baleka observed that she heard most of her tales from Sixaba, her grandmother, called also Makokela, i.e. daughter of Kokela, brother of Mbengi, the Langeni chief. Her story is thus dominated by two orientations, the Langeni view of Shaka, and her status as a Qwabe.

died." Her remark does not strive for the same niceness on this point as that achieved by Ndhlovu and Jantshi. Baleka narrated this story to Stuart during their second meeting, and her tone and attitude towards Shaka was markedly more restrained than in subsequent interviews. It is nonetheless significant that in what is otherwise a powerful indictment of Shaka, she did not suggest that he was a usurper, responsible for the death of his father. Indeed, when Stuart read Ndhlovu's account to Baleka, she responded by saying that her father had never recounted such a version.[86]

Mpitikazi, Baleka's father and informant, was raised amongst the Langeni people, at the home of his mother. In fact, his mother was a close relation of Shaka's mother, Nandi.[87] Mpitikazi was a member of Shaka's Fasimba *ibutho*, made up of youths born c.1795-8, and was thus a young man in his late teens at the time of Shaka's accession.[88] Mpitikazi had a somewhat chequered existence under Shaka. His career began under a cloud for he was responsible for warning the Langeni people of his mother's house to flee when Shaka attacked them after his accession. Baleka describes the hopelessness of her

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[86]*JSA*, vol. 1, p.5.

[87]*JSA*, vol. 1, p.4, Baleka.

[88]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.6, 8, Baleka.

father's plight as he sought refuge from Shaka without success. Finally, Mpitikazi turned himself in, and was saved from a certain death by the intercession of his maternal relative, Nandi, who begged Shaka not to kill him. Mpitikazi went on to fight in a number of Shaka's campaigns, including the ill-fated Balule expedition to the north. With the death of Nandi in October 1827, however, Mpitikazi lost an important bulwark between himself and the Zulu king. He was, moreover, a Qwabe by birth, closely linked into Qwabe affairs. Baleka noted, for example, that her father was a skilled *imbongi* of the Qwabe chiefs. In the reign of Shaka, identification as Qwabe could be dangerous. The Qwabe chiefdom was in rebellion for much of the time and subject to brutal repressive measures.[89]

Mpitikazi died in 1888 and Baleka provides no information about his career after the death of Shaka. A few details gleaned from the text, such as Mpitikazi's marriage to a woman of Mpande's Ngcosho *ibutho*, suggest that that Mpitikazi remained in the Zulu country for some time and then crossed into Natal. Baleka got her name (from *ukubaleka*--to run away) as a result of her birth at the time of the battle of Ndondakusuka, when many people were in flight. She does not state which side of the

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[89]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.7, 8, Baleka.

conflict her family were on. The name "Baleka" would lead one to think that it was that of Mbuyazi since his followers crossed into Natal after the defeat by Cetshwayo. This is supported by the fact that Baleka was born in the Majozi chiefdom, just inside Natal, and must have remained there for quite a while for she remembered seeing the Majozi chief, Ngoza, in whose territory she grew up.[90] If Mpitikazi was an Mbuyazi-ite he would most probably have been exposed to strong pro-Shaka sentiments later in life.

The circumstances detailed above suggest that much of this testimony owed its form to Mpitikazi's experiences under Shaka and to the legacy of hatred left by Shaka's persecution of the Qwabe, possibly ameliorated by Mpitikazi's subsequent support for Mbuyazi. It is in these terms that Mpitikazi's version of the birth, accession and reputation of Shaka, as relayed by Baleka, must be interpreted. Baleka noted the details of Shaka's persecution of the Qwabe, and recounted a host of gruesome tales told to her by her father about Shaka's inhumanity and wanton cruelty, including stories of the Zulu king cutting open a pregnant woman, and feeding

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[90] *JSA*, vol.1, pp.4, 8, 10, Baleka

human corpses to the vultures.[91] Her judgement of Shaka was harsh:

> That man used to play around with people. A man would be killed though he had done nothing, though he had neither practised witchcraft, committed adultery nor stole.[92]

For Mpitikazi and Baleka, Shaka was best summed up by this one of his praises: "The violently unrestrained one who is like the ear of an elephant."[93] Finally, for them, Shaka, who refused to father children, and whom they credit with having killed his own mother for concealing a child of his, was an animal: "A person like Tshaka is like a wild beast, a creature which does not live with its own young, its male offspring."[94]

The three accounts considered above, that of Mudli's family insofar as it is contained in Ndhlovu's account, together with that of Sipika, a member of Senzangakhona's entourage, Nongila's as given by Jantshi, and possibly relayed by Ndhlovu as well, and Mpitikazi's as related by Baleka, offer us three views of Shaka - a complex, even ambiguous view from a related royal lineage, a positive view through the eyes of a loyal servitor, and a negative

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[91]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, Baleka.

[92]*JSA*, vol.1, p. 12, Baleka.

[93]*JSA*, vol.1, p.8, Baleka.

[94]*JSA*, vol.1, p.8, Baleka.

view from a foe. In all three accounts there is a discernible core content that dates back to the reign of Shaka as well as identifiable signs of later accretions and modifications. This core is open to structural analyses like that of Golan's. However, there are also historically contested elements of the story of Shaka which demand attention.

The most significant feature of all three accounts, despite the different allegiances of their narrators, is that they all claim that Shaka *was* a son of Senzangakhona. In other words, *contra* Golan, the tension in these narratives is not between two different notions of legitimacy--an old pre-state notion of blood inheritance, and new state notion of the right to rule on a merit basis--but rather the focus was on the kinds of argumentation which were possible within a paradigm that asserted birthright as crucial. The key difference between the accounts lies in the degree of explanation which they offered for the irregular circumstances surrounding Shaka's birth and his precise status as a son of Senzangakhona. Ndhlovu and Jantshi grounded the issue in the argument that Shaka was born before Senzangakhona was of a marriagable age.[95] Ndhlovu recalled his father

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[95] *JSA*, vol.1, p.188, Jantshi; vol.4, pp.198, 214, 222, 232, Ndhlovu.

Timuni as saying "A Zulu chief does not father children."[96] This was given as the reason why the birth of Shaka was concealed. In conversation with Ndhlovu, another informant, Munyana, drew an analogy between this practice and the custom of a leopard:

> ... when say three young are born, one of them a male, the male is taken away and hidden by its mother and suckled where hidden, for fear lest the father should kill it.[97]

Ndhlovu agreed that Zulu kings (and lions) followed this practice.

The claim that Shaka was born before Senzangakhona was of marriagable age was essential to the rest of their story of the birth of Shaka, for it was the rationale for separation of father and son. Both Ndhlovu and Jantshi claimed that Senzangakhona's chief advisor, Mudli, arranged for the child to be born in the Langeni chiefdom.[98] Although the details vary, in their accounts it was Mudli's actions which lay at the root of the estrangement between Shaka and his father. This emphasis clearly owes its existence in part to the informants' privileged access to the testimony of Mudli's own son, Timuni. The story that Senzangakhona was not yet of

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[96]*JSA*, vol.4, p.232, Ndhlovu.

[97]*JSA*, vol.4, p.232, Ndhlovu.

[98]*JSA*, vol.1, p.178, Jantshi; vol.4, pp. 198, 202, 214, 221, Ndhlovu.

marriageable age, and more particularly, the details of Mudli's intervention thus provided a specific explanation for the unusual circumstances of Shaka's childhood and his status, an explanation that was entirely absent in Baleka's more bald account of events. The claims of Ndhlovu and Jantshi that Shaka was the son of Senzangakhona are thus much stronger than that of Baleka which is contradictory and unsatisfactory. Moreover, the contrast between Baleka's failure to offer detailed comment on Shaka's birth and her comprehensive account of his childhood away from the Zulu chiefdom was open to interpretation as evidence that Shaka may not have been of Zulu origin.

It is significant that while the testimonies of both Ndhlovu and Jantshi emanated from sources generally well-disposed towards Shaka, neither informant tried to claim that Shaka was legitimate, nor did they attempt to hide the unusual circumstances of his upbringing. Indeed, obfuscations of that nature would have been impossible in Shaka's time for it seems that Shaka was not known at the Zulu court before his accession. He did not speak the same dialect as the rest of the royal family, while his half-siblings were known to have been borne of a Qwabe father, and all of these facts were widely advertized by factions opposed to his accession. Instead of trying to

deny these points, the accounts by Sipika, Timuni and Nongila relayed through Ndhlovu and Jantshi sought to account for the anomalies in the Shaka story. I would suggest that the fact that they did this is a function of the limits of credibility within which they were constrained to operate in the early nineteenth century, whereas accounts which date from later periods, such as that of Mhuyi (which cannot be traced back to Shakan times) are not similarly confined.

The versions of the Shaka story relayed by Ndhlovu and Jantshi offered a similarly sophisticated response to the allegations that Shaka killed his father and his father's rightful heir. By stressing that Shaka was indirectly behind their deaths, these versions contrived to invest Shaka with magical powers, at the same time as neutralizing the worst of the allegation. This was achieved by at once admitting <u>some</u> involvement, but also by clearly establishing a satisfactory distance between Shaka personally, and the deaths. As with the circumstances of his birth, I would suggest, an outright denial of Shaka's involvement in Senzangakhona's death would not have washed with his new subjects. Similarly, neither of these versions of the story of Shaka sought to <u>deny</u> the so-called atrocity incidents. Rather, they

again attempted to neutralize them by accounting for them.

As was noted above, however, the component elements of the productions of Shaka by Ndhlovu and Jantshi were not identical. Jantshi, more readily than Ndhlovu, found explanations for the atrocities. Jantshi's claims that Shaka was not hidden from Senzangakhona, and that Shaka was not yet in the Zulu chiefdom when Senzangakhona died, were also much less ambiguous than Ndhlovu's remarks that Shaka's birth was concealed from Senzangakhona and that he was already present in the Zulu chiefdom when his father died. These differences presumably relate to the operation of the Mudli factor in Ndhlovu's account giving that account origins in a bias less favorable to Shaka. Thus Ndhlovu's account can be seen as containing a residue of the factionalism within the royal house which dates back to the reign of Shaka, overlain by the *ikohlo* branch's subsequent alignment with factions which promoted a positive image of Shaka. Under these circumstances it is possible that the Mudli factor, which could be interpreted as evidence of Mudli having conspired against Shaka, was given a slightly different emphasis in narration by Ndhlovu and used to provide additional interior evidence for the story of Shaka as having been hidden from Senzangakhona.

Baleka's account, on the other hand, lends itself to a reading as a production of Shaka by his enemies during his life time. Mpitikazi's alignment with Mbuyazi after Shaka's death, might be expected to have caused him to tone down his criticisms of Shaka. The only area of the testimony in which this is discernible is that of the circumstances of Shaka's birth and accession. Any claims that Shaka was not the son of Senzangakhona, or that he was responsible for the death of his father, would have undermined Mbuyazi. While Baleka's testimony otherwise indicted Shaka in the most severe terms, it was ambiguous on these two crucial questions.

Finally, we need to consider to what extent Ndhlovu, Jantshi and Baleka, as well as Timuni, Sipika, Nongila and Mpitikazi, used the story of Shaka metaphorically. Where Golan suggests that oral versions of the Shaka story are metaphors for changes in the succession practices from a birth to merit basis, this discussion suggests rather that in these stories Shaka was a metaphor for discussion of the relationship between order and chaos. In all of the versions, Shaka is always the embodiment of both: at once "the violently unrestrained one" who fathered no children, and the highly accomplished leader who imposed rigorous discipline. The stories differ in how the Shaka story was used

metaphorically as a means of discussing the complex relationship between social order and chaos. Tied to the relationship between order and chaos is the equally important issue of the role of a ruler in society. Each tradition offers a view of the nature of rulership and sovereignty. The equation of Shaka's "monstrous" features with transcendant political authority was a shared characteristic of all the traditions. We see in these traditions the origins of a metaphorical reading of the story of Shaka that was, as we shall see in later chapters, subsequently adopted and reworked in colonial appropriations of Shaka.

Before we move onto a discussion of the appropriation of Shaka in colonial texts, and in written form, we should note that African oral productions of Shaka in the 1820s were not confined to the Zulu kingdom.

The "frontier Caffers" production of Shaka, 1827-1828.

As early as May, 1825, the colonial administration at the Cape was beginning to wrestle with the "Fetcanie problem"--"tribe(s) of savages ...advancing on the frontier of the colony."[99] The first recorded mention of

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[99]See Cape Archives, Z.P. 1/1/33 and 1/1/36; C.O. 234, pp. 270-271,

the involvement of Shaka in the disturbances immediately north of the border occurred on the 25th July, 1827, when the Landdrost in Somerset, W.M. Mackay, interviewed a "Fetcanie" refugee. The informant claimed that his people, the "Masutu" and "Manquana," under "Maheta" and "Mathiana," were defeated by Shaka, who had then taken their cattle. This, the informant claimed, led his people, the "Fetcanie," to attack others for their cattle.[100] The report of this interview was subsequently discussed at the highest level in Cape Town, and the agency of Shaka duly noted.[101] Three weeks later, Lt. Col. Henry Somerset, Commandant of the Frontier, recorded a conversation which he had with the "Tambookie" chief, "Powana," who claimed that he could not return to his country for as long as Shaka continued his wars against the "Fetcanie." Powana continued, "Chaka is driving these people on and as long as he does I cannot remain... I heard it [the fact that Shaka was advancing] from the Fetcanie."[102] George Thompson's *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa* was published

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672-687, 691; C.O. 233, pp.400-405; C.O. 287, pp.204-218, 224-225, 285-303; C.O. 333, pp.18-21, 39; C.O. 2692, pp.923-940; C.O. 48887, pp.341-344.

[100]W.M. Mackay to the Chief Secretary of Government, 8 August, 1827, C.O. 2693, pp.783-94.

[101]Minutes of the Council of Advice, 23 August, 1827, A.C. 2, pp.55-9.

[102]Somerset to Bourke, 31 August, 1827, C.O. 2693, pp.833-5.

in 1827, and by August of that year was being read by colonial officials.[103] James King's description of Shaka as "a cruel and despotic monster" which appeared in the *South African Commercial Advertiser* was reproduced in *Travels*, and although the report contained no mention of Zulu campaigns anywhere near the colony, it is possible that it intersected with and reinforced the news from African communities on the frontier of Shaka as the agent behind the disturbances.[104] Nonetheless, it is notable that, although in this period the administration's frontier policy was determined by this identification of Shaka as the agency behind the frontier disturbances, the officials did not set any store by King's report, nor did they adopt anything of King's hysterical rhetoric.[105] In other words, the colonial administration's understanding of Shaka as the agency behind the disturbances was not, as Cobbing claims, the result of the Natal traders' propaganda.[106] Rather, it was reported as coming straight out of the mouths of the "frontier Caffers." There is no discernible reason for

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[103]C.O. 2693, pp.837-46.

[104]"Some Account of Mr. Farewell' settlement at Port Natal, and of a visit to Chaka, King of the Zoolas," (From anonymous article in *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 18 July, 1826), in Thompson, *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa*, p.248.

[105]See, for example, the Lt. Governor of Cape, Gen. Richard Bourke to Lord Viscount Goderich, 15 October, 1827, G.H. 23/8, pp.298-304.

[106]Cobbing, "Mfecane as Alibi," p.200.

the officials concerned to have "invented" the conversations which they recorded so meticulously.

History as alibi; alibi as ideology

This chapter has shown that the image of Shaka-the-monster and the idea of "Zulu tyranny" have African origins. In the 1820s they were well-entrenched in the oral traditions of both Shaka's supporters and his enemies, although in different forms. In 1829, however, following his death, these images became for the first time dominant in both Cape Town and the Zulu kingdom.

Of course, after the 1820s, African versions of Shaka continued to be generated in diverse forms. The range of testimonies about Shaka in the *James Stuart Archive* testify to this diversity and continued interest in Shaka, as do the many versions of Shaka's *izibongo* brilliantly discussed in Malaba's doctoral dissertation.[107] The traditions and the praise poems emphasize the disruptions of Shaka's reign, with an accumulation of detail upon detail, frequently in powerful poetic forms, that convey a strong sense of their authenticity and integrity as African productions,

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[107]Malaba, "Shaka as a Literary Theme," part one and chapter three.

rather than the distortions of their recorders. While these traditions and the praise poems are extremely difficult to provenance--each requires the kind of analysis done on the three traditions discussed above--the cumulative weight of their insistence of Shaka imaged as chaos and order, and, as Malaba has shown, the reinforcement of these points of content in choice of literary devices, together with the expressive play of the language used, makes a strong argument for us to locate the roots of this image in African context, and not to assume it was a convenient, racist European invention.

Cobbing and the many other scholars who favor the latter course argue a familiar case: that in South Africa history is distorted to cover up past misdeeds and to legitimate conditions in the present. In that form, history becomes a component of the dominant ideology. The implication of this is that it happens in a mechanical and reductionist fashion, that, ideologues "invent" the version of the past that best serves white interests, and this "invention" is then incorporated wholesale into a dominant ideology.

The argument presented here is that, like alibis, both histories and ideologies which are successful

resonate in a body of information known to both their promoters and those whom they seek to persuade. Moreover, although any one version of the past may be the best known one, or any one ideology the dominant one, neither exist independently of other versions or views. Rather, the struggle between dominant and subordinate ideologies and versions of the past are part of each one's *raison d'etre*.

New versions of the past, no less than the ideologies which they seek to underpin, must articulate different versions of the past in such a way that their potential antagonisms are neutralized, and the argument is convincing. The various elements that make up a version of history that serves well any particular ideology must incorporate and neutralize the arguments of the opposition. Since any ideology is always in a state of being struggled over, that is, is always "in process," so, too, is the historical account constantly shifting to take account of the changing terrain of the struggle, the subtle elaborations and shifts in the argument of the opposition.

PART THREE

THE MEN WHO WOULD BE SHAKA

> "...and in any place where they fight, a man who knows how to drill men can always be king. We shall go to those parts and say to any king we find--'D'you want to vanquish your foes?' and we will show him how to drill men for that we know better than anything else. Then we will subvert that King and seize his Throne and establish a Dynasty."[1]

Part three of the study looks at the way in which African understandings of Shaka and Shakan rule were drawn on by Theophilus Shepstone as a model for his system of Native Administration. Chapter five examines the ways in which Shepstone's view of Shaka became part of the historiography of both African oral historians and European writers, notably as a result of Shepstone's enactment of the role of Shaka at the coronation of Cetshwayo and through his reports and researches. Chapter six looks at the way in which Shepstone's reading of Shaka was overwhelmed in the run up to the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, as the authorities sought to use Zulu despotism as an excuse for going to war with Cetshwayo. In the aftermath of the war, the imprisonment of

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[1]Rudyard Kipling, "The Man who would be King" in W. Somerset Maughan, Maughan's Choice of Kipling's Best, New York, Doubleday and Co., 1953, pp.162-92, this quote p.169.

Cetshwayo and the Zulu civil war which followed, the situation again reversed itself as the authorities, notably Shepstone, argued once again that the successful administration of Zululand depended on the Zulu monarchy.

The second half of Part Three (chapters seven and eight), turns to consider the recording project and the impact on the historiography of Shakan times, of the Natal magistrate and "native affairs expert," James Stuart (1868-1942). The argument of this section proceeds in two parts: the first part looks at the making of the man and his ideas in the context of his times, and addresses the question of his motivation and methods for recording a vast body of African oral tradition. The second part examines his own synthesized--but never published--versions of the history of Shaka, establishes a clear distinction in both form and content between them and the testimonies of African informants which he recorded, and traces the impact on both types of text of his understanding of native policy.

Chapter Five

"Father to the King's children": Theophilus Shepstone and the appropriation of the mantle of Shaka, 1846-1873.

When the Zulu king Mpande died in 1872, his son Cetshwayo was installed as the new ruler of the independent Zulu state. Deep in heart of the kingdom the installation ceremony was presided over by Theophilus Shepstone, Secretary for Native Affairs in the neighboring British colony of Natal. While it is remarkable in itself that a colonial administrator officiated in the coronation of the monarch of an independent state, of even greater interest is the fact that both Shepstone, and the Zulu councillors who invited him to participate in the ceremony, understood that he did so "as Chaka." In a message to the Natal authorities, the Zulu leaders claimed

> ...that by Zulu law Mr. Shepstone represents Chaka, and is therefore in the place of Cetywayo's father; that he was the witness before whom Cetywayo was proclaimed as heir by Panda more than ten years ago, and that he represents the British Government.[1]

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[1]British Parliamentary Papers (BPP), Colonies, Africa 30, Natal, facsimilae reproductions produced by Irish University Press, Shannon, 1971, c.1137, "Statement by Zulu messengers Sidindi and Komesiwebu, June 9th, 1873," pp.24-5.

Shepstone described his participation in similar terms:

> I came as Chaka...I was commissioned by the Zulus, and by the Government that was superior to the Zulus, and I had my own special rank besides; no-one could contest that right with me and no one had ventured to contest it.[2]

This chapter focuses on Shepstone's assumption of the mantle of Shaka. It reviews his role in events leading up to and during the coronation, and goes on to establish the rationales of both Shepstone and the Zulu leaders in casting the Natal Secretary for Native Affairs in the role of Shaka. Here the focus is on the way in which a dramatic script about sovereignty was authored by, on the one hand, Shepstone, and on the other hand--but not always in harmony with one another--Cetshwayo and his senior councillors. A central argument of the chapter is that Shepstone drew on existing African conceptions of sovereignty articulated in the image of Shaka to establish a model for colonial domination and native administration, and as a legitimation of colonialism.

The appropriation and manipulation of symbols and signs that lay at the core of the colonial encounter has been the subject of a number of influential studies stimulated by the work of Terence Ranger on "the invention of tradition," and most recently extended in

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[2]BPP, c.1137, "Report of the Expedition sent to install Cetshwayo as King of the Zulus," p.11.

exciting new directions by historical anthropologists.[3] These studies suggest that events and actions such as the coronation were not neutral, nor did they have inherent meanings. Rather, such acts acquired meaning and significance according to the political and cultural premises of those involved in their representation and interpretation.

The imaginative activity entailed in the acquisition of meaning or the "invention of tradition" in these events has been a major focus of such studies. Less investigated are the constraints which operated to limit the scope of the imaginative acts of colonial power. This chapter seeks to extend the work on "the invention of tradition" to encompass analysis of the limitations on "invention" in a particular context. The explication of a symbolic act like the coronation demands historical enquiry, not only into the events of the past, but also into the logic that underlay interpretations of the event. This approach allows us to examine the

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[3]T. Ranger, *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa, 1890-1970: The Beni Ngoma*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1975, pp.166-7; T. Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa," in E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp.211-62; Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford, Westview Press, 1992, p.4; D. James, "'I Dress in this Fashion': Women, the Life Cycle and the Idea of *seSotho*," unpublished paper presented to the Association for Anthropology in South Africa, 1992; H. Hendrickse, "Historical Idioms of Identity Representation among the Ovaherero in Southern Africa," unpublished Ph.D thesis, New York University, 1992.

coronation, and the role accorded in it to Shaka, in terms of the cultural logic of the Natal colonial officials on the one side, and the African population of the Zulu kingdom on the other. These logics themselves are understood to be the products of particular historical processes which set limits on the extent of their possible manipulation.

Two logics were invoked by Shepstone, to different degrees and in different combinations in a variety of settings. Different perspectives influenced each other in the creation of understandings of events, and the formulation of plans of action and intervention, and different logics became enmeshed with each other in the representation of Shaka. Investigation of the historical process of their intertwining allows us to identify the conditions of and limitations on, on the one hand, the representations of Shaka in Natal and the Zulu kingdom in the mid- and later nineteenth century, and, on the other hand, the conceptualization of "native policy."

Jean and John Comaroff have argued that in relation to the colonized the final objective of "generations of colonizers...whether it be in the name of a 'benign,' civilizing imperialism or in cynical pursuit of their labor power...had been to colonize their consciousness

with the axioms and aesthetics of an alien culture."[4] This chapter reveals other--even opposite--processes at work. It highlights the way in which Shepstone sought to shield the African population of Natal from precisely such alien influences, and tries through a focus on the image of Shaka to tease out the context, the nature and the significance of his "conservatory" efforts. To emphasize Shepstone's appropriation of the "aesthetics and axioms" of the <u>indigenous</u> culture is not to suggest that he facilitated the preservation of such features intact. In fact, Shepstone intervened quite extensively in African "custom." The argument here is that he did so in a way that was informed, but also constrained, by what he understood to be the cultural logic of the society concerned.

The Comaroffs preface their study of the colonization of consciousness, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, with an evocative account of the London Missionary Society's gift to their mission at DithaKong of a clock whose hours were struck by carved wooden soldiers. The authors draw out the way in which this proclaimed the value of time and symbolized the imposition of "order" and "civilization," subjecting the

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[4]Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, volume one, p.4.

local Tswana community to the bondage of its rhythms. By way of contrast, this chapter shows how Shepstone and his system of African administration sought in indigenous systems of thought a model of order and control--a model represented by Shaka. The chapter also explores the way in which the Shepstone system appropriated to itself and its project of domination indigenous rhythms of time, in which cause and effect were not chronologically determined, but rather, where prophecy and preordination, recounted retrospectively, functioned to explain and justify. Here we begin to look at the way in which prophecy--a central motif in African oral historical narratives--reverses the idea of reinventing the past by predetermining the future. The focus on the appropriation of indigenous concepts by the colonizers, I suggest, asks us to re-evaluate in some measure our understanding of the processes of the "colonization of consciousness."

Shepstone "as Chaka"

In 1873, following the completion of the rituals prior to the public acknowledgement of Mpande's death, Zulu leaders sent a delegation of three envoys together

with Cetshwayo's white advisor, John Dunn,[5] to Theophilus Shepstone--or "Somsewu" as he was known in *isiZulu*--the Natal Secretary for Native Affairs. The delegation requested him as "Father to the King's children," to participate in the installation of the heir, Cetshwayo, or as they put it, "...to establish what is wanting among the Zulu people."[6] In a subsequent message, the Zulu leaders stressed that the invitation to Shepstone was based on Shepstone's witnessing of the nomination of Cetshwayo as Mpande's heir at a ceremony twelve years earlier, in terms of which "by Zulu law Mr. Shepstone represents Chaka."[7]

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[5]C. Ballard, *John Dunn: The Great White Chief of Zululand*, Johannesburg, A.D. Donker, 1985, p.100.

[6]BPP, c.1137, Statement by Zulu messengers "Umrabalala, Gwaisa and Hlabemcitsha," on 26 February, 1873, statement signed by W. Harding (Chief Justice), D. Erskine (Colonial Secretary), J. Ayliff (Treasurer), M.H. Gallwey (H.M.'s Attorney-General, and T. Shepstone (Secretary for Native Affairs), p.22.

[7]BPP, c.1137, "Statement of Zulu messengers Sidindi and Komesiwebu, June 9th, 1873," pp.24-5. The question arises as to whether this document is an accurate reflection of the Zulu envoys orally delivered message. In the discussion below of Zulu rulers' rationales, I marshall the evidence which leads me to think that it is. In addition, it should be noted that the written statement was translated by W.D. Wheelwright, and attested to by Resident Magistrate, J. Bird, and bears the "marks" of the two messengers. See also "Message from Cetshwayo and Mpande," 27 December, 1870 (Natal Archives Depot, Secretary for Native Affairs papers (SNA) 1/7/6, p.138) in which the Zulu rulers stated that they looked to the Government as "protectors of the house of Chaka;" see also "Message from Cetshwayo," 29 February, 1876, in which Cetshwayo represented himself as "a child of the Natal Government, having been placed by it at the head of the Zulu nation."(SNA, 1/7/6, p.244.) The reading and interpretation of the texts of the messengers poses complex problems: the very notion of "messenger" is imprecise. We know very little about the way in which these messengers were briefed at the Zulu end, nor do we know by whom they were briefed. It seems that they were envoys (Stuart's informant Socwatsha used the term *amanxusa*, the modern sense of which is members of a commission of enquiry, Killie Campbell Africana Library, Stuart Papers (SP)file 9, item 51, p.4), i.e. representatives who could be

Two months later this request took Shepstone to Cetshwayo's residence in the Zulu kingdom, accompanied by a large retinue consisting of the Royal Durban Artillery with two field pieces, the Maritzburg Rifles' military band, a substantial Volunteer Corps, and a party of "three hundred Natives under their several headmen,"[8] as well as a large marquee and a cloak of scarlet and gold--the trappings with which he would conduct the coronation ceremony.

Shepstone's installation of Cetshwayo has largely been ignored by historians, who tend to dismiss the event as an empty imperial gesture.[9] Jeff Guy describes Shepstone's official report of the proceedings as a

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cross-questioned after delivering their messages and who could draw on their own understandings of the situations in hand to further explicate matters. Likewise, the circumstances of the delivery of the message, it reception and transcription are not known. Close examination of the language of the messages and their various contexts, which would go some way to answering these kinds of questions, merits a study in its own right.

[8]BPP, c.1137, "Report of the Expedition sent to install Cetshwayo as King of the Zulus", p.7. The account of the coronation rendered here is as seen through Shepstone's eyes and is drawn from his official report. In order to achieve a critical perspective on his version of events I have also used accounts published in the Natal press (see, for example, *Natal Colonist*, 23 September, 1873; *The Natal Witness*, 23 September, 1873; *Natal Mercury*, 9 September, 1873; *Times of Natal*, 23 September, 1873) as well as John Dunn's account in D.F.C. Moodie, *The History of the Battles and Adventures of the British, the Boers and the Zulus in Southern Africa from the time of Pharoah Necho to 1880*, vol. 2, Cape Town, Murray and St. Leger, 1888, pp.476-7; and SP, file 9, item 51, testimony of Socwatsha.

[9]The major exception is C.T. Binns' well-researched but un-annotated early work, *The Last Zulu King: the Life and Death of Cetshwayo*, London, Longmans, 1963, which contains a detailed description of the coronation, but offers little analysis.

"typically long, obfuscating and vainglorious despatch."[10] It is indeed self-inflated, but insofar as it reveals Shepstone's understanding of the possibilities of exploiting Zulu notions of sovereignty within the terms of indigenous cultural logic, the document is a complex and important text. Shepstone's narrative of the coronation events reveals aspects of both his rationale for participating in the ceremony as well as his understanding of the dramatics of power.

Shepstone planned to enter the Zulu kingdom, taking a route past Cetshwayo's residence, and there, in Shepstone's words, "take possession of him, and present him to the assembled nation and then proceed to install him as King."[11] This attempt to assert a form of complete British suzerainty was preempted when part of the coronation ceremony was carried out while the British expedition was still *en route* to the designated site. In the days immediately preceding the ceremony over which Shepstone was to preside, Mpande's principal officer, Masiphula kaMamba of the emGazini people, proclaimed Cetshwayo king in a ceremony held in the ritually significant Makhosini area, alongside the graves of the

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[10]J.J. Guy, *The Heretic: A Study of the Life of John William Colenso, 1814-1883*, Johannesburg and Pietermaritzburg, Ravan and Natal University Press, 1983, p.223.

[11]"Report of the Expedition," p.9.

early kings and the site where Shaka had been installed.[12] This earlier ceremony, and the events surrounding it, have also received little attention from scholars.

On the day of installation presided over by Masiphula, all the rituals of installation were completed, including the manufacture of a new national symbols (such as the *inkatha*, a coil of grass and bodily substances representing the unity of the nation), the fortification of the new king, and the rendering of the royal *bayete* salute. Then the majority of the assembled people dispersed back to their homes.[13]

When Shepstone arrived at Mthonjaneni, overlooking the Makhosini, he found it "ominously" deserted. In his report Shepstone confessed that the "situation was embarrassing," and he demanded a full explanation and some appeasement from the Zulu authorities before he would proceed.[14] Shepstone noted in his report, without any further explanation, that at this point he received news of the death of Masiphula, the chief officiator at

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[12]R.L. Cope, "Shepstone and Cetshwayo, 1873-1879," unpublished MA thesis, University of Natal, 1967, p.57.

[13]For an account of this ceremony, see Binns, *The Last Zulu King*, pp.62-3.

[14]"Report of the Expedition," pp.10-11.

the preemptive ceremony. Further messages were exchanged with Zulu envoys, who assured Shepstone that the earlier ceremony was no slight on him, nor a substitution for any portion of the forthcoming coronation. Shepstone reported the messengers as saying that no one could carry out the actual installation but himself, for "I came as Chaka."[15]

At this point Cetshwayo and his advisors proposed a change of venue for the ceremony which Shepstone was to preside over, to a place removed from the ritually-significant Makhosini--"the place of kings" and the site of many royal graves--to a venue close to one of Cetshwayo's major military establishments, Mlambongwenya. The recording of these maneuvers by the Zulu leaders in Shepstone's text allows us to begin to discern something of the thinking behind the coronation from the Zulu side. The change of venue to a ritually less significant site effectively downgraded Shepstone's role in coronation. Shepstone's account reveals that a strategy of containment was implemented by the Zulu rulers in a number of other ways as well.

The Secretary for Native Affairs, fully cognizant of the ritual significance of the Makhosini, initially

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[15]"Report of the Expedition," p.11.

refused to accede to the proposed change of venue. Shepstone suggested that his reluctance was connected to doubts about Cetshwayo's intentions towards his expedition. In response to such allegations, Cetshwayo, according to Shepstone, commented,

> Let my father come...and let me act the parricide they wished to paint me; by killing him I should have done nothing towards vanquishing the English. Chaka was master of all the black people, but even he said the English were his superiors.[16]

thus explaining his own actions in terms of a prediction made forty-five years earlier by Shaka. This prediction was given as the guarantee of Shepstone's safety in 1873, and an affirmation of his paternal status. Shepstone's reference to the prediction through the words of Cetshwayo was itself an invocation of the past in a manner typical of nineteenth-century indigenous historical narratives.[17] Assured, the expedition finally moved on to the new site proposed for the installation, that of the grave of Mpande, rather than of the earliest Zulu kings, thus conceding the first round. But the struggle over the precise role Shepstone was to play in the coronation was not yet over.

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[16]"Report of the Expedition," p.12.

[17]See, for example, SP. file 9, item 51, p.34, for Socwatsha's discussion of Shaka's foresight, as well as the references to Shaka's deathbed prophecies in chapter four.

The next wrangle occurred over which party would be the first to pay its respects to the other. Shepstone called on Cetshwayo to come up to his camp. The Zulu king responded by pleading that he was indisposed due to a swollen leg. Finally Cetshwayo moved up to his nearby establishment of Mlambongwenya. Shepstone then urged him to come the whole way to his encampment. Here Shepstone and Cetshwayo's accounts differ, with each claiming it was the other who gave way first.[18] Shepstone sought to precipitate matters by sending a carriage to fetch Cetshwayo, thus circumventing the latter's excuse regarding his indisposition. When Cetshwayo finally did pay a visit to Shepstone--and it is not at all clear whether this was the first visit of the series or not--he did so by walking behind the carriage, thus refusing to be taken up by the conveyance but also, through the act of walking, revealing that his leg was fine shape. When Shepstone began to show annoyance at the possibility that he was being made a fool of, Cetshwayo hastened, or at least Shepstone claimed that he did, to demonstrate in private that the injury was real. Cetshwayo seemed to be treading a careful line between showing public

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[18]For Cetshwayo's version see C. de B. Webb and J.B. Wright, *A Zulu King Speaks: Statements Made by Cetshwayo kaMpande on the History and Customs of his People*, Pietermaritzburg and Durban, University of Natal Press and Killie Campbell Africana Library, 1978, p.18.

independence of Shepstone, while privately endeavoring to mollify him sufficiently for the ceremony to continue.

Once Cetshwayo had visited his encampment, Shepstone agreed to go to Mlambongwenya to hammer out an agreement concerning British support for the Zulu in the latter's border disputes with the Transvaal. At this point, the initiative seemed to have passed into Shepstone's hands. A magnificent firework display the night before the coronation was his opening salvo, and he continued in a style of high panoply. The following day, on 1 September, 1873, in the presence of some 10 000 warriors (considerably fewer people than were present at the ceremony presided over by Masiphula) Shepstone caused a large marquee--housing the many presents for the king--to be erected in the cattle byre of Mlambongwenya. At the expedition's nearby encampment a procession was formed up, with Shepstone at the head, followed by the brass band, the Durban Artillery with their two field pieces, and the column of mounted volunteers. The procession entered Mlambongwenya and took up positions at the top end, near the marquee. Shepstone, speaking in fluent *isiZulu*, and pausing throughout to obtain vocal assent for all his propositions from the councillors and nobles around him, read out a series of "laws," specifying conditions for the passing of death sentences and

prohibiting the indiscriminant shedding of blood in the Zulu kingdom.

Then, followed by the most important European officials present, Shepstone led Cetshwayo accompanied only by his *inceku* (a special personal attendant), into the marquee. The flaps of the tent were drawn and guarded by two sentries of the Durban Royal Artillery. "Cetywayo had not in any way interfered with, or suggested any portion of the programme," commented Shepstone,

> but he was anxious that, in accordance with the theory upon which we had hitherto acted, I should at some part of the ceremony take possession of him, and so transform him that his own people would not know him; it must not be done in public; the Zulus had given him over to me; I must take him from their sight a minor and present him to them a man; I must take him as a Prince, and restore him to them their King.[19]

Inside the marquee, Cetshwayo was then "transformed" by Shepstone placing the scarlet and gold mantle on his shoulders and putting the crown--a design derived from a Zulu warrior's headdress, "improved upon by the master tailor of the 75th Regiment, and signify[ing] the Zulu trappings of war subdued to a peaceful purpose"--on his head. Meanwhile a carpet had been spread outside the tent in a conspicuous spot facing the people, and on this

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[19]"Report of the Expedition," pp.14-15. Shepstone's report does not clarify what the "theory" was.

stood the "Chair of State," with another of a less pretentious nature placed alongside it for Shepstone.[20]

At the word of command, the marquee was opened, the sentries stood to attention, and Shepstone led forth Cetshwayo, duly seating him on his throne. After a few minutes pause he rose and presented the King to his brothers, his councillors and his nobles, pointing out to them that "he, who a few moments before had been but a minor and a Prince, had now become a man and a King."[21]

The band struck up, heralds went among the people proclaiming Cetshwayo as King, the military escort stood to attention, and the Durban Artillery fired a salute of seventeen guns. Shepstone then presented Cetshwayo with the tent, the chair and the carpet. With a final gesture designed to ensure the sanction of Shaka for the proceedings, the official party went to pay a visit to "a little kraal named Shaka's saddle, to interview Shaka's sister,"[22] the only surviving member of the first Zulu king's immediate family.

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[20]"Report of the Expedition," p.16.

[21]"Report of the Expedition," p.16.

[22]Binns, *Last Zulu King*, p.72.

The final dispute of the ceremony concerned whose heralds would go out to inform the people about the new laws. Shepstone wanted the laws widely proclaimed in his presence, to prevent their being stifled by the nobles. Cetshwayo agreed, but wanted it done by Shepstone's people, not his own. In the end, it was settled that heralds from both parties would go, Cetshwayo's to make the actual proclamation, Shepstone's "to correct and supply the omissions."[23]

Shepstone's account reveals that the meaning and significance of the series of events leading up to, and the drama of the ceremony itself, were thus in part contested, and in part agreed upon. In interpreting his actions as "taking possession" of Cetshwayo, and "transforming" him, Shepstone was claiming to have accomplished the quintessential colonial gesture. Shepstone subsequently asserted that his "crowning" of Cetshwayo was implicitly recognized by the king as a mark of British suzerainty over the Zulu kingdom. Shepstone's account suggests that Cetshwayo had maneuvered to avoid precisely this construction, while Cetshwayo's own accounts of the coronation and other subsequent statements confirm this. Cetshwayo specifically stated that Shepstone had acknowledged that he, Cetshwayo, was

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[23]"Report of the Expedition," p.16.

recognized as king of the Zulu people first by the Zulu. Cetshwayo reported Shepstone as saying "Here is your king, you have recognised him as such, and now I do also, in the name of the Queen of England. Your kings have often met violent deaths by the hand of your own people, and if you kill this one, we shall require his blood at your hands."[24] This statement makes it clear that, while Cetshwayo resisted some of the interpretations, like Shepstone, he accepted others, notably those which conferred British support and protection.

The last act of the installation expedition took place the next day, when Shepstone paid his farewell visit to the King. "A remarkable incident occurred during this conversation," recorded Shepstone.

> Uhamu, who has always been looked upon as the King's bother, and for some time before the installation, as his rival, said he wished to take advantage of my presence to explain

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[24]Webb and Wright, *A Zulu King Speaks*, p.18. This account was published in *Macmillan's Magazine*, February 1880, as a narrative "taken down from the lips of Cetywayo," by Captain J. Ruscombe Poole, the officer in charge of the Zulu king in captivity. It was translated by the official interpreter, W.H. Longcast. As Poole became a close friend of Cetshwayo's we can assume that he sought accurately to reflect the king's view, but the text must be treated with reservations concerning the possibility of it having mutated in transcription and translation. In his letter to the Governor of the Cape, Sir Hercules Robinson, Cetshwayo confirmed that Shepstone was invited to coronate because the Zulu thought of themselves "not without or outside the English nation, but within the English nation".(Webb and Wright, *A Zulu King Speaks*, p.45.) The content of this letter was probably affected by Cetshwayo's straited circumstances as a British prisoner needing, at the time of writing, to demonstrate his loyalty to the Crown. See also the testimony of Ndukwana (Webb and Wright, *The James Stuart Archive*, vol.4, p. 275) who declared that "Somsewu had expressed himself thus, the whites had never as a matter of fact governed Zululand".

publicly what his real position in Zululand was, for though it was well-known to the Zulus it was not known to the white inhabitants of Natal and of the Transvaal Republic. In both these countries he had been frequently accused of designing to usurp Cetywayo's place; and if it were not that Cetywayo and the Zulus well knew that such a thing was impossible, these accusations would long ago have cost him his life. He then went on to explain that, although he was really Panda's son, he was legally the son of Panda's deceased brother, and that he already possessed all the rank and property, namely that which belonged to Unziba, which he could claim, that he had no right to claim anything that belonged to Panda's family; and that, before any such right could accrue to him, every male member of that family in Zululand and Natal, and even he who is in the Transvaal, must die and leave no son behind. All present listened attentively to this statement, and earnestly assented to it; Cetywayo said he wished to assure me that it was strictly true, and he was anxious that it should be known."[25]

Shepstone offered no further explanation for this declaration by Hamu. He returned to Natal and when his report of the coronation was completed in 1875 he sent a copy to Cetshwayo.[26]

The coronation drama seems at first glance to be a classic example of the accoutrements of "civilization" being brought to bear as the opening gambit in the colonization of the consciousness of the Zulu people, in

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[25]"Report of the Expedition," p.17.

[26]BPP, c.1342-1 "Further Correspondence Relating to the Colonies and States of South Africa (Natal)," Lieutenant-Governor Sir H. Bulwer, to the Earl of Carnarvon, 7 September, 1875, enclosure copy of a letter Bishop Schreuder to SNA Sir Theophilus Shepstone, 20 August, 1875, pp.30-35.

the manner elegantly explicated in other contexts by the Comaroffs. However, the maneuverings by Cetshwayo as revealed in Shepstone's own text point to another, rather different, reading of these events. The first step in clarifying that reading is to establish the Zulu rulers' reasons for soliciting Shepstone's presence at the coronation. The second step is to draw out Shepstone's rationale for participating in the ceremony. Finally, we shall examine the Zulu rulers' motivation for conferring on Shepstone the mantle of Shaka, as well as Shepstone's reasons for accepting the mantle of Shaka.

The Zulu leaders' reasons for inviting Shepstone to the coronation

The Zulu rulers calculated that the invitation to Shepstone to install Cetshwayo would draw the British into a longstanding border dispute between the Zulu kingdom and the Transvaal over the Ncome river area. Cetshwayo hoped that the establishment of a special relationship between the Zulu kingdom and Natal would contain Boer encroachments on his north-western flank. The Zulu envoys who bore the original invitation noted that "Chaka many years ago sent an embassy to the Cape, and thereby decided which way the Zulus should look, and

they have determined to look only as their Chief Chaka directed them,"[27] in other words towards the Cape and British power. Indeed, this claim to a connection dating back to Shaka was repeatedly invoked by the Zulu leaders in the course of the next decade as they sought British support against the Boers.[28] We observe here the use of the notion of Shaka's vision as determining events in the future being used by the envoys to support their argument. When Shepstone cited Cetshwayo as explaining his actions in terms of Shaka's foresight, he was, it seems, using a trope from indigenous historical narratives.

Cetshwayo perceived correctly that the idea of a "special relationship" which the Zulu rulers needed, would appear desirable to Shepstone for other reasons, and that it would prove an irresistible bait to the British to become involved in the border dispute. Had Shepstone declined it seems likely that Cetshwayo would have reversed his policy of using the British against the Boers. On Mpande's death the Zulu leaders had also sent cattle to the Boers and had reputedly invited them to

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[27]BPP, c.1137, Message by Sidinda and Komesiwebu, 9 June, 1873, pp.24-5.

[28]SNA 1/7/6, Message from Cetshwayo, 11 November, 1875, p.237; and SNA, 1/7/6, John Dunn to Shepstone, 20 April, 1876, p.250, both cited in Cope, "Shepstone and Cetshwayo," pp.110 and 121 respectively.

install Cetshwayo.[29] When questioned on the matter by the British, the Zulu leaders denied that this other message was a coronation invitation.[30] It is difficult to know what to make of this exchange, but it does lend itself to the interpretation that the Zulu leaders were hedging their bets, and speaks to the imperative in Zulu foreign policy at this time of gaining the support of a powerful neighbor.

The involvement of Shepstone (or, possibly, the Boers) in Cetshwayo's coronation served the further purpose of making it difficult for Natal (or the Transvaal in the alternative scenario) subsequently to promote the claims of another candidate living with the Zulu kingdom's neighbors. As it turned out, it was Shepstone and the British who became embroiled in this strategy, but it would have had a similar outcome if it had been the Boers.

The Natal government had long been associated with attempts to intervene in the Zulu succession. At the time of the announcement of Mpande's death, rumours

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[29]*The Transvaal Advocate*, 25 February, 1873, quoted in *Natal Witness*, 11 March, 1873, cited in Cope, "Shepstone and Cetshwayo," p.45.

[30]BPP, c.1137, written copy of Zulu messengers responding to query about the Boers be asked to coronate, 3 May, 1873, pp.89-90.

abounded that Mbuyazi, one of Cetshwayo's brothers, was being kept by the British and would be promoted as a rival nominee.[31] Shepstone's was seen as the guiding hand behind these plans. Indeed, Mtshayankomo, the son of Mpande's *imbongi*, narrated a story in which an omen appeared to Mpande before his death, in the form of a buck.

> It was said that the buck had been sent by Somsewu to hold back (*godhla*) the people of Mpande. It was said that Mbuyazi was still alive. It was said that this strange event had been caused by Somsewu, and that he had caused it on behalf of Mbuyazi.[32]

Again we note the device of prediction--the omen--being used in Mtshayankomo's retrospective narrative to account for events subsequent in time, viz. the accusation that Shepstone was involved in the promotion of rival candidates.

Mbuyazi was not the only rival whom Cetshwayo feared on the eve of his installation. Hamu kaNzibe was another powerful possible candidate. As discussed in an earlier chapter, Hamu's genealogical father was Nzibe, a half-brother of Shaka's and a full brother of Mpande, but his biological father was Mpande. During his reign, Mpande

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[31]See, for example, *JSA*, vol.3, p. 105, Mgidhlana.

[32]*JSA*, vol. 4, p.109, Mtshayankomo. *Ukugodhla*--to hold back, to reserve. Also see J. Stuart, *uKulumetule*, London, Longmans, 1925, chapter 29.

had caused marks of special respect to be shown to his late full-brother Nzibe, Hamu's father. Nzibe was praised on occasions when the Zulu kings were praised, and it was claimed that Nzibe had enjoyed a special status as the "senior" son of Senzangakhona.[33] Hamu guarded jealously his status as a "great" prince.[34] He was viewed as a power that rivalled Cetshwayo. "Cetshwayo never went to Kwa Mfemfe [Nzibe and later Hamu's residence]," noted a contemporary, "He never set foot there, for it was clear that Hamu was another king".[35] Even in Mpande's time, Hamu enjoyed special privileges that acknowledged his status. Hamu carried out his own *umkhosi*, had his own *isigodlo*, and called up his own forces, all the marks of kingship.[36]

Shepstone's account of the coronation reveals a struggle between Cetshwayo and certain of his senior councillors. This struggle also underlay the final act of the coronation--the speech by Hamu--and in order to be able to make sense of his speech it is necessary to go back to reconsider the issue of the earlier "pre-emptive" ceremony carried out by Masiphula.

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[33]*JSA*, vol.4, p.117, Mtshayankomo.

[34]*JSA*, vol.4, p.110, Mtshayankomo.

[35]*JSA*, vol. 4, p.117, Mtshayankomo.

[36]*JSA*, vol. 4, p.118, Mtshayankomo.

One possible reading of this earlier ceremony is that the Zulu rulers never really intended to involve Shepstone in the ritual heart of the installation, but merely offered the British a subsidiary, but public, role, sanctioning what had already taken place. Indeed, this is close to the way in which Cetshwayo represented Shepstone's involvement when, in later years, the Zulu king discussed his installation during an appeal to be restored to his kingdom. However, Cetshwayo did acknowledge that Shepstone was greeted with the royal *bayete* salute in 1873.[37] In response to a question put to him by the Cape Commission on Native Laws and Customs of 1881, as to whether he in "anyway acknowledge[d] the authority of Shepstone" over him, Cetshwayo was translated as answering that "when his father died, he sent messages with a large ox to Shepstone, to report it to him, and to say that he wished Shepstone to see about the country being settled under him because the Zulu nation was a relation of the English."[38] It may well have suited Cetshwayo, constructing as he was his arguments after the collapse of the Zulu power, to acknowledge a British role in the coronation that he might have been less ready to admit in 1873. Even

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[37]Webb and Wright, *A Zulu King Speaks*, "Cetshwayo's letter to the Governor," p.43.

[38]Webb and Wright, *The Zulu King Speaks*, p.80. See also p.41.

allowing for such pressures, Cetshwayo's testimony seems to accord Shepstone an important role in the coronation. Indeed, it is unlikely that Shepstone would have agreed to participate in the ceremony if he thought he would not play the central role, and it seems further unlikely that, given Shepstone's famous intelligence network, he would not have heard of advance preparations for a preemptive ceremony had such a ceremony been on the royal agenda from the start.

While it is probable that the Zulu leaders planned to contain the extent and significance of Shepstone's participation, and that Shepstone hoped to expand on it as much as possible, elements of evidence available from the testimony of Mtshayankomo who was a member of the Ngobamakosi *ibutho* which was present for the ceremonials, suggest that the decision to carry out an earlier ceremony was prompted by a possible challenge to the succession by another claimant, one who was thought to have been preferred, or at least condoned, by Shepstone.

Mtshayankomo's testimony provides evidence of both a conflict between Shepstone and Masiphula, and a struggle amongst the Zulu leaders themselves.[39]

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[39]*JSA*, vol. 4. Mtshayankomo's testimony was the basis for the account in J. Stuart, *uHlangakula*, London, Longmans, 1924, chapter 20.

According to Mtshayankomo, when the forces of the British and the Zulu converged on Mlambongwenya, a mutual show of strength ensued. Shepstone's men fired off blank cartridges, causing the Zulu forces to take fright. Then the Zulu units sounded the *ingomane*, a thunderous beating of raised shields, which in turn caused the horses of the Natal contingent to bolt. This so rattled Shepstone that he turned on Masiphula (still living in this account) and accused him of trying to stir up trouble.[40] While Masiphula had wanted this display of strength to be made, other of Cetshwayo's leading men, such as Mnyamana kaNgqengelele of the Buthelezi, Mavumengwana kaNdhlela, chief of a section of the Ntuli, and Hamu kaNzibe, had not.

Indeed, Mtshayankomo expressly depicted the Mnyamana faction as supportive of Shepstone. He recorded Mnyamana as describing Shepstone as "a good man, one who pisses with his legs apart; he plants one leg on the other side

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[40]In his account Shepstone claimed that Masiphula died before the party reached Mlambongwenya, while Mtshayankomo has him alive for Shepstone's arrival at Mlambongwenya. Mtshayankomo was present at Mlambongwenya at the time, and, as the son of Mpande's leading *imbongi*, was likely to have been aware of developments within royal circles. At least two possible explanations present themselves: that Shepstone was implicated in Masiphula's death and chose to distance himself from Masiphula in his report by saying that Masiphula died before he arrived at Cetshwayo's *ikhanda* (military establishment); or that the confrontation described by Mtshayankomo actually happened outside Mlambongwenya, at, for example, the Makhosini.

of the Thukela, and the other in the Zulu country!"[41] He described Masiphula, supported by Ntshingwayo kaMahole of the Khoza, as being opposed to Shepstone. It was Masiphula who had interpreted the buck omen (see above p.230) which appeared to Mpande prior to his death to mean that Shepstone was maneuvering on behalf of Mbuyazi. On that occasion Masiphula was reputed to have prophesied that Shepstone "will destroy the land."[42]

Masiphula's interpretation was opposed by other of Mpande's councillors and by Mpande's diviners. In turn, Mpande was reported to have predicted Masiphula's death.

> You too will die, Masipula; you will die the day that I die. They [the sons of Mpande] will kill you.[43]

Whether Mpande was truly prescient when he prophesied that Masiphula would be killed by the royal claimants, or if, as it seems, the prediction motif is merely a rhetorical strategy typical of this kind of historical narrative which is used to account retrospectively for developments which occurred after the occasion of the prophecy, the story of the buck itself speaks of challenges to the succession conflict that raged on the eve of the coronation. The rival claimant was not,

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[41]*JSA*, vol.4, p.127, Mtshayankomo.

[42]*JSA*, vol.4, p.109, Mtshayankomo.

[43]*JSA*, vol.4, p.109, Mtshayankomo.

however, the long dead Mbuyazi--who featured in Mpande's vision--but rather Hamu, the son of Nzibe, fathered by Mpande. The prophecy also stressed the involvement of Shepstone in these disputes.

After the show of strength at Mlambongwenya between Shepstone and Masiphula, an open quarrel broke out between the two sides. "We went to sleep," Mtshayankomo noted, "in the knowledge that the *izinduna* were quarrelling."[44] At some point in these proceedings Hamu accosted Cetshwayo declaring, "You shall never rule the country...So you are destroying the Kingdom? You will never rule it."[45] Cetshwayo then went to the home of "his father," Masiphula, where he consulted *izinyanga* who divined--yet another form of preordination--that he was being plotted against by Mnyamana and Hamu, but that nothing was done about it because the two chiefs were too powerful. Following this, Mtshayankomo ascribed Masiphula's death, by poisoning, to the rival faction. "That", said Mtshayankomo, "was when the split occurred between Hamu and Cetshwayo, with Hamu claiming that Cetshwayo would never hold the *umkosi* ceremony, scheduled

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[44]*JSA*, vol.4, p.126, Mtshayankomo.

[45]*JSA*, vol.4, p.126, Mtshayankomo.

some months after the installation, at which Cetshwayo would have been finally recognized as the new king.[46]

While the chronology of Mtshayankomo's narrative presents difficulties, its overall thrust is clear, and it discusses a set of events that have been lost from historical view only because they were unsuccessful, rather than because they lack significance. The testimony, together with the holding of the early preemptive ceremony, suggests that Mnyamana and Mavungena hoped to install Hamu in Cetshwayo's stead.[47]

Hamu, on the eve of the coronation looked very powerful, and was a strong rival candidate. It would seem that Masiphula moved to preempt a challenge from Hamu by conducting the ceremony earlier than expected, and as a result, was poisoned by his opposition. That there was no investigation over the remarkable timing of his death is testimony to the delicate balance of forces which prevailed in the few days around the two ceremonies. Precisely what Shepstone's role in all of

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[46]*JSA*, vol.4, p.127, Mtshayankomo.

[47]Binns, *Last Zulu King*, p.61 (based on J. Dunn, *Cetywayo and the Three Generals*, Pietermaritzburg, Natal Print and Publishing Co., 1886) noted a tension at the preemptive ceremony between Cetshwayo and factions under Hamu, Mnyamana and Ziwedu. Also SP, file 9, item 51, Socwatsha, 29 March, 1914. Socwatsha related how Shepstone insisted on being shown Cetshwayo's "younger brother" before the coronation. Eventually Zibhebhu was produced and it was explained that he was not a son of Mpande but belonged to a collateral house.

this was, and what options he toyed with, are unknown, but it seems likely that Mnyamana assumed that Shepstone would as readily install Hamu (or Mbuyazi had he been alive) in Cetshwayo's place. Indeed, the promotion of "own" candidates rather than recognized heirs was a feature of the way in which Shepstone controlled chieftaincy in Natal, and doubtless he would not have hesitated to play the same game with one leg across the Thukela. Annexation of the Zulu kingdom by the British was not a possibility at this time, but, as will be shown below, the establishment of British influence in the Zulu kingdom would have benefited Shepstone significantly. So anxious were the Zulu leaders about Shepstone's intentions that, according to one informant, all the things used at the coronation were burned "as it was thought they might in some way have come in contact with Mbuyazi and so contaminated."[48]

In summary, Cetshwayo's position both within the Zulu kingdom and in relation to his powerful neighbors made it imperative for him to secure the backing of a powerful external party for his candidacy. In addition, Shepstone's involvement in the coronation served to inhibit any plans which the Transvaal Boers might have

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[48]SP, file 9, item 51, p.4, Socwatsha.

had of placing their protégé, another son of Mpande's, Mthonga, in the kingship.

Shepstone's rationale

Shepstone's participation in the coronation had no direct benefits for Natal, beyond the intangible but powerful assertion of Natal's involvement in the definition of Zulu sovereignty. At this time, the Zulu kingdom was important to Natal because of the promise which it held out. One possibility which it offered was a source of land for the growing African population of Natal, and land was a question that preoccupied all of Natal's inhabitants, and Shepstone in particular. By 1860 the African population of Natal began to spill out of the areas designated for their habitation, settler disaffection grew, exacerbated by Shepstone's opposition to increases in the hut tax. When the project for a southern reserve, and a subsequent plan to annex Moshweshwe's Sotho kingdom, both proved stillborn, Shepstone began to cast glances north of the border to alleviate the pressures on Natal's landed resources.

This was part of the context of his involvement in the affairs of the Zulu kingdom long before the

coronation. Another component was the growing importance to Natal of conditions internal to the Zulu kingdom, especially those which were viewed as being behind the tide of refugees from the Zulu kingdom who were moving into Natal. The settlers' perception of instability in the Zulu kingdom made it of interest to Shepstone to try to influence developments north of the Thukela to Natal's advantage.

The coronation invitation thus came at a time when Shepstone was facing problems within Natal which encompassed settler anxieties over land and labor shortages, as well as worries about a Zulu invasion of Natal. Shepstone calculated that settler demands and fears would be assuaged by the demonstration of imperial influence in Zulu affairs. He maintained that it was vital for the British government to be seen to be influential in Native Affairs both in and beyond Natal. Discussing the invitation he argued that

> ... a calm consideration of the circumstances never admitted of a doubt that, if the Government of Natal declined this opportunity, it must fall from its high position over the Natives and become the sport of all the alarms and uncertain panics which are so serious and evil to Governments no longer capable of sufficiently influencing the politics of their neighbours.[49]

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[48]"Report of the Expedition," p.7.

Shepstone saw the coronation as a means of acquiring "a good deal of additional influence and real power, not only over the Zulus, but over all the other native powers of South Eastern Africa," for, as he put it, "the power to control the Zulus includes that of controlling all the rest."[50] Such influence meant the possibility of ensuring the conditions necessary for the safe passage of workers from further north, a point of pressing importance in the labor-hungry colony, as well as offering an opportunity to persuade the Zulu to allow Natal to annex a strip of land that at once would contain the Transvaal, preventing it from obtaining an outlet to the sea, and would offer an extension of the land available for the occupation of the Natal African population.[51]

Demonstration of a capacity to exert influence over Zulu affairs was designed not only to calm settler fears, but also to make contumacious subjects in Natal wary of rebellion, as well as closing off their opportunities to look north for external Zulu support. Terror of a general uprising permeated settler consciousness in Natal, and Shepstone himself feared the consequences of

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[50]SNA, 1/7/6: Shepstone, Memorandum, 3 March 1873. Quoted in Etherington, "Anglo-Zulu Relations," p.30.

[51]Guy, *Heretic*, p.223.

forcing the large numbers of Africans spilling out of the locations back onto reserved land. By April 1873, it was clear to the Natal administration that developments amongst the Hlubi people under Chief Langalibalele in northern Natal were heading for a showdown. When Langalibalele failed to ensure that all guns in his area were registered, and refused on three occasions to appear in Pietermaritzburg before the Supreme Chief, all the worst fears seemed to be coming true. Langalibalele's next move was to open discussions with a range of other African leaders within Natal and beyond the borders, including the Zulu rulers, and it was widely believed that this issue could spark off more widespread resistance.[52] Shepstone's approach was to put off dealing with Langalibalele until after the coronation. Shepstone had always feared the possibility of the African populations of Natal combining against the numerically smaller colonial establishment, and sought to put a stop to the contagion of revolt. Demonstration of influence north of the border was one way of asserting imperial hegemony.

The Harding Commission of 1852-3 into the condition of the "natives" had made it clear that the colonists saw

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[52]W. R. Guest, *Langalibalele: The Crisis in Natal, 1873-1875*, Durban, Department of History and Political Science, University of Natal, 1976, pp.28-30, 36-7.

a direct link between what they understood to be African bloodthirstiness and cruelty, an aversion to labor, and Zulu power. It was autocracy, chieftainship, militancy and discipline, they implied, that kept people out of wage labor. The Zulu power north of the Thukela stood as a symbol of all this. A weaker Zulu power, it was argued, would result in more labor for Natal, and this translated into the representation of the Zulu power as ruthless and capricious--as warranting intervention. The same ruthless power was represented as holding women in an untenable position of subordination, causing their labor power to be held captive in the homesteads. Cumulatively, this amounted to a moral outcry emanating from Natal concerning repression and directed at its powerful Zulu neighbor, an outcry that was translated at the time of the coronation into a call from the Natal colonists for the extension of what might be termed "civil liberties" north of the Thukela.

Shepstone was able to deploy the necessary influence by making his participation in the coronation contingent on Cetshwayo agreeing to the extension of these "civil liberties." He began by making his embarkation on the coronation expedition dependent on an undertaking from the Zulu authorities that there would be no "indiscriminate shedding of blood." This thrust was

further developed in the set of laws which he put forward at the coronation and which embraced the principles of open trials for all facing a possible death penalty, no executions without a right of appeal and the consent of the king, and the substitution of milder sentences for less serious crimes.[53] As Shepstone had no power to enforce the laws, they were clearly designed with an eye to public opinion in Natal. In part, the regulations offered the possibility of halting the flow of people into Natal. They were also put forward in response to missionary pressures, and as such have generally been interpreted as an attempt by the Natal administration to ameliorate the despotism of the Zulu king.

In a subtle analysis of the coronation oaths, Richard Cope has suggested that the interpretation of the laws as being directed against the Zulu king is the product of the way they were interpreted by the British High Commissioner, Sir Bartle Frere, on the eve of the Anglo-Zulu War. To read the coronation laws as prefiguring subsequent imperial designs on the Zulu territory is, however, to allow subsequent events and subsequent reinterpretations of the coronation to obscure the contemporary rationales for the coronation. Cope suggests rather that the coronation laws should be seen

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[53]"Report of the Expedition," p.82.

as a strategy to reduce the power of senior Zulu chiefs.[54] Cope marshals a wide body of evidence to demonstrate that relations between Cetshwayo and his senior councillors had been strained for some time and that "the despotism to be ameliorated was that of the chiefs rather than the king."[55] Thus while Shepstone sought to placate the Natal settlers with the coronation oaths, he effectively bolstered the principle of centralized power in the Zulu kingdom.

Cope's analysis of the oaths as directed against the powerful chiefs raises the question of why it was that Shepstone allowed his participation in the coronation to shore up the power of the Zulu monarchy. The answer to this puzzle lies in Shepstone's conception of native administration.

Shepstone and the Natal Native Administration

In 1846, after an already impressive career in the Cape civil service, Shepstone was appointed Diplomatic Agent to the African population and Justice of the Peace

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[54]R. Cope, "Political Power within the Zulu Kingdom and the 'Coronation Laws' of 1873," *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, 8, 1985, pp.11-31.

[55]Cope, "Coronation Laws," p.15.

in the new colony of Natal. A key feature of Natal in this period was the steady growth in its African population, as refugees from earlier upheavals sought to return to historical lands. Shortly after his arrival, Shepstone joined the Commission for Locating the Natives, the decisions of which body were to set the course of Natal Native Policy for much of the nineteenth century in the mould of what became known as the "Shepstone system." The first principle of the system was that Africans should be taxed to cover the costs of their administration and this led to the introduction of the hut tax in Natal. Secondly, despite widespread settler opposition, Natal Africans were recognized as the original inhabitants of the land and over two million acres were set apart for African occupation. Shepstone insisted, moreover, that the land so designated be arable and capable of supporting the communities located on it. He believed that African societies should be maintained separately from colonial Natal and, in the early 1850s, he devised a scheme to remove with as many Africans as possible to an area between the Mzimkhulu and Mzimvubu rivers, south of Natal. Lieutenant Governor Pine, who opposed many of Shepstone's attempts to secure African lands, approved this scheme, but higher authorities vetoed it.[56]

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[56]SNA 1/8/1, Letterbook, T. Shepstone, "Report on the Native

Shepstone also believed that "native law and custom" should be preserved as far as possible, "to save the soul of the people."[57] In particular, Shepstone upheld the institutions of chiefship, polygamy, and *lobola*. He viewed the maintenance and manipulation of chiefship and other existing forms of social organization and control as essential to successful administration in the face of strict fiscal constraints. Shepstone recognized that polygamy and *lobola* arrangements were fundamental to homestead production, for they were the bases of labor power within the homestead, and they regulated relations between homesteads. Moreover, Shepstone was supported by powerful rentier interests who wished to keep Africans tenants on the land and sufficiently productive so as to meet rents.[58]

When the Charter of 1856 established representative government in Natal, the Native Department was exempted from control of the legislature. Since Africans

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Population of Natal," 20 September, 1851.

[57]Quoted in R.E. Gordon, *Shepstone: The Role of the Family in the History of South Africa, 1820-1900*, Cape Town, A.A. Balkema, 1968, p.131.

[58]For a penetrating analysis of the significance of polygamy and *lobola* in homestead production, and the impact of the rentier faction see H. Slater, "The Changing Pattern of Economic Relationships in Rural Natal, 1838-1914," in S. Marks and A. Atmore (eds.), *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*, Longman, Harlow, 1980, pp.148-170; and "Land, Labour and Capital in Natal: The Natal Land and Colonisation Company, 1860-1948," *Journal of African History*, 16, 2, 1975, pp.257-83.

contributed the greater part of the Colony's revenue, £5000 a year was set aside by the Charter for "native purposes," effectively making the Secretary for Native Affairs (SNA) independent of the legislature and solely responsible for the African population of Natal. Missionaries disapproved of this policy, which put Africans under the direct control of the SNA, and of the existence of a separate code of "native law," because adherence to "native law" sanctioned institutions such as polygamy to which they were implacably opposed. Many colonists also objected to the amount of land made available under the system to Africans, and they complained incessantly about a lack of labor.

As Secretary for Native Affairs under the system which he put in place, Shepstone, assisted on a day to day level by a network of "native magistrates"--that is European magistrates with jurisdiction over Africans--who dispensed justice by using their "knowledge of the customs of the natives,"[59] became the primary interlocutor between the African and European communities for much of the nineteenth century.[60] Not only did he

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[59]Shepstone, cited in N. Etherington, *Preachers, Peasants and Politics*, London, Royal historical Society, 1978, p.15.

[60]Guy, "Colonial Officials," p.154. The Governor of Natal assumed the role of Supreme Chief over the Africans and he could use this position to appoint chiefs and thereby check the power of hereditary ones.

play Shaka at the coronation to establish Natal's influence in the Zulu kingdom, and establish connections with the Swazi kingdom by accepting the bride sent to him by the Swazi rulers (though he gave her in marriage to his head *induna*), but he was also called upon constantly to explain to the European inhabitants of Natal the significance of any new developments in the African communities around them. Although he kept out of the public eye, Shepstone was perceived by the Natal settlers as their bulwark against being overwhelmed by Africans. It was Shepstone who provided the analyses that assuaged the worst settler fears. This is not to say, however, that he was beyond their criticism.[61] The acts of interlocution were a primary premise of the Shepstone system, and depended on knowledge of African ways of thinking and acting: the system thus placed a high premium on "the native expert," and Shepstone himself was widely recognized as the most "expert" of all.

Ultimately Shepstone envisaged that using their knowledge, he and his local magistrates would come to replace the chiefs as the rulers of African communities. Thus, when settler fears that the "native magistrates" would represent African interests in opposition to

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[61]For Natal settler attitudes to Shepstone see, for example, *Natal Mercury*, 1 January, 1857, 24 September, 1857, 1 October, 1857.

settler interests forced the replacement of "native magistrates" by resident magistrates (ie. magistrates with jurisdiction over blacks and whites within a given area), Shepstone argued that this undermined the essence of his system.[62] Shepstone's conception of "native magistrates" and the possibility of their taking over from chiefs demanded a form of acceptance of indigenous culture and custom that was the opposite of that advocated by the missionaries and settlers, for it involved a limited number of white colonial officials crossing, as it were, into an African world, and ruling through the use of the cultural logic of that world, modified where necessary "to suit the circumstances of the Colony and the character of civilized Government."[63] A familiarity with African society was thus fundamental to his system, and was to be demonstrated and enacted in endless displays of knowledge and ceremonials of power, of which the coronation was but the most elevated.

Shepstone believed that the success of the colonial project depended on the maintenance of the fabric and institutions of native life. Such maintenance demanded in turn that their fundamental nature be closely analyzed and well understood. The key concept in Shepstone's

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[62]Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.22.

[63]Shepstone, cited in Etherington, *Preachers*, p.15.

understanding of native administration was strong centralized government. Furthermore, Shepstone found in the Zulu monarchy a model for his own administration. This, I suggest, underlay his willingness to assume the mantle of Shaka.

Shepstone and the researching of the Shakan past

When Shepstone became the Secretary for Native Affairs, "Shaka" was the name of one among many relatively little-known African chiefs. It was only with the Anglo-Zulu war that the Zulu achieved a special recognition in the eyes of the British public. What was known about the first Zulu king in the mid-nineteenth century was ambiguous: the image of Shaka that prevailed in settler and missionary literature was of the Zulu king as a cruel tyrant amongst his own people, but as the one Zulu monarch who had been good to early white visitors to his kingdom. In general, Shaka was at once favorably compared to his successor Dingane, who had been responsible for the death of the Boers at the battle of Ncome river (known to the settlers as the battle of Blood river), and caricatured as a monster.

In September 1863, at the behest of the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, John Scott, Shepstone embarked on a project to collect information on the historical grounds for African land claims in Natal. In an excellent discussion of Shepstone's research and his methods, John Wright concludes that, while Shepstone consulted earlier written sources, "...Shepstone's histories were the product mostly of the testimony given him by his own informants."[64]

Wright establishes that Shepstone conducted historical interviews with about fourteen informants, and used the data gleaned as the bases for two documents which he drafted in 1863-4.[65] Although Shepstone was not conducting research on the reign of Shaka, the two documents provide a clear image of how Shepstone viewed the figure of Shaka in the mid-1860s.

Shepstone's first document was a history of the Natal "tribes," the other an account of the rise of the

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[64]J.B. Wright, "The Dynamics of Power and Conflict in the Thukela-Mzimkhulu Region in the late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries: A Critical Reconstruction," unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1989, p.106.

[65]Enclosures in Despatch no.34, Scott to Newcastle, 26 February, 1864, published in *Correspondence Relating to Granting to Natives in Natal of Documentary Tribal Titles to Land*, Sessional Papers nos. 22 and 23 of the Natal Legislative Council, 1890, and as far as can be ascertained, first published in the report of the a Cape government commission in 1883.

Zulu power. The first comprises short histories of ninety-three groups resident in Natal before the reign of Shaka. Most of the groups discussed were described as having been attacked and dispersed by Shaka, or by another power itself displaced by Shaka. As such, Shepstone's investigations gave him a picture somewhat different from the settler stereotype which ascribed all devastations to Shaka. As Wright, who is concerned to trace the origins of the mfecane stereotype, puts it,

> Shepstone's researches indicated to him that the established notion of the tribes of Natal as virtually all having been dispersed or annihilated by Shaka's Zulu armies needed a certain degree of modification. The testimony which he collected from some of his informants suggested that many of the tribes had been broken up, or at the very least disturbed, not by the Zulu but by one of at least four non-Zulu groups of 'refugees' from north of the Thukela, and one from the Natal midlands.[66]

Thus, in Shepstone's document the extermination which occurred was ascribed as much to the actions of "other tribes"[67] as to the Zulu. The "driven-by-Chaka" motif was nonetheless very strong in his informant's accounts,[68] but, significantly, for the purposes of the

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[66]Wright, "Dynamics of Power and Conflict", p.107.

[67]"Enclosures," item 29, p.610.

[68]The "driven-by Shaka" motif is a trope that occurs in recorded African oral tradition. See *JSA*, vol.4, pp.279, 285 (recorded in *isiZulu* in Stuart's notes) Ndukwana, but also see p.326 where Ndukwana says that Shaka did not scatter the nations but unified them. This then raises the issue of the extent of Stuart's interpolations in the traditions. See *JSA*, vol. 4, Ndongeni where the phrase "driven by Tshaka" occurs in a paraphrased version of Ndongeni's testimony. While the phrase would seem to be Stuart's, Shaka-as-disperser is the

present discussion, they were relatively bare of the atrocity stories that occur in many contemporary settler accounts. Shaka was presented as an irresistible invading force rather than a monstrous savage. Natal was shown to have been devastated, and to have become, in contrast to the Zulu kingdom, a uncultivated wilderness where cannibalism was rife[69] and "universal anarchy" reigned.[70] The set of oppositions with which Shepstone built up his narrative were not those of "the West"/"civilization" and "the Other"/"barbarism," but of the Zulu kingdom/order and the rest, specifically Natal/chaos. These particular oppositions can be sourced directly to African oral texts of the late nineteenth century.

The second document, "Historic Sketch of the Tribes Anciently Inhabiting the Colony of Natal, as at present Bounded, and Zululand," was based on the evidence presented in the first document and gave an account of the rise of the Zulu power that focused on Shaka. Shaka's

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substance of, and not an overlay on, whole testimonies. See, for example, *JSA*, vol. 4, testimony of Mqaikana. Also see *JSA*, vol.1, p.5, Baleka, p.183, Jantshi, p.298, Lunguza. This suggests that we need to take seriously, but not uncritically, Shepstone's statement that "The above short sketches were written down from the lips of the narrators, and, as near as possible, in their words."(p.153)

[68]See, for example, "Enclosures," items 5, p.604, 29, p.609, 57, p.615.

[70]"Enclosures," item 43, p.613. Also see NAD, Sh.P., A96, vol.90, "General Historical," p.11.

rule was described as autocratic and "uncompromising,"[71] but, on the whole, the narrative was concerned with Shaka's military successes and the expansion of the Zulu kingdom. While it is true that these two documents were the main sources of the mfecane "devastation hypothesis," it is worth noting that they were generally free of the sensationalism that marked the accounts of earlier writers like Isaacs and Godlonton.[72] Instances of despotism were not represented as wanton savagery, but as linked to processes of rule:

> The large tribes who had been the first to disturb the Aboriginal inhabitants of Natal, in their endeavours to pass through the country now known by that name, to escape from Chaka, having been overtaken and dispersed by Chaka's armies in their new residences, and their Chiefs mostly killed, now found further flight useless, and the great body of their population returned and became subjects to the Zulu King, who distributed them among his head men and chief officers, and incorporated the young men into his army as soldiers...[73]

Thus, for Shepstone, the mfecane did not, as Comaroff and Comaroff have argued for colonizers generally, "confirm the savagery of Africa,"[74] so much as offer a discourse for the discussion of questions of the nature of effective domination in an African setting. The

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[71]"Enclosures," p.622.

[72]R.Godlonton, *A Narrative of the Irruption of the Kaffir Hordes*, Grahamstown, Meurant and Godlonton, 1836.

[73]"Enclosures," p.626.

[74]Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, p.169..

"Historic Sketch" was overwhelmingly a narrative about the establishment of Zulu sovereignty and the extension of Zulu control of new territories and peoples.

While peoples were "overtaken and dispersed" and chiefs "mostly killed," Shepstone's accounts are remarkable for the extent to which they were not faithful to the stereotype of Shaka present in much contemporary missionary and settler literature. The two accounts certainly were Shepstone's constructions, but the unusual concern which they manifest with questions of sovereignty do not have a precedent in previous settler histories. As a "native administrator" Shepstone certainly had more reason to be concerned with questions of sovereignty than most of his fellow white Natalians. But, as contemporary African narratives concerning Shaka from other sources make clear, he was not simply seeing in the accounts collected a possible reading that could be twisted to suit his own purposes. African accounts of Shaka were themselves fundamentally concerned with matters of sovereignty and the nature of power and domination.[75]

The "Historic Sketch" opened, not with a chronicle of historical events, but a distinctly anthropological discussion of the nature of African sovereignty and

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[75]See above, chapter four.

government before Shaka. The account went on to focus on the political and military changes brought about first by Dingiswayo, and later, Shaka, culminating in a short review of the reign of Dingane. Throughout, the central theme was a concern with how power was wielded in the Shakan kingdom. This was the framework for all allusions to Shakan aggressiveness and autocracy.

With the production of Shepstone's two documents in 1863-4, the first glimmerings of a whole new way of discussing Shaka began to enter colonial productions of Zulu history. Although Shepstone's two documents were not published until 1888 and 1890, they were influential in shaping colonial thinking at the time of their preparation, and they foreshadowed a more expansive exploration and enactment of the connections between Shaka and the notion of sovereignty which Shepstone was to engage in the coronation of Cetshwayo.

The new politics and world view pioneered in the campaign against slavery placed colonial administrations under pressure to find new systems of administration free of direct coercion but also capable of executing the colonial project. The institution of wage labor was one option, and a number of studies have examined this choice and its impact on colonized societies. Shepstone resolved

the dilemma posed in a different way--through recourse to an African model of domination. Essentially Shepstone found in Shaka a model of ruling the African population of Natal that allowed him to circumvent the liberal principles of government increasingly entrenched in Britain but prohibitively expensive to implement in the cash-strapped Natal colony. In a way that was fundamentally at odds with prevailing notions of individual rights, but justifiable as an indigenous system, Shepstone sought to make all members of a chiefdom responsible for actions of individuals, including the chief, and *vice versa*.[76] Shepstone understood punishment of the innocent along with the guilty to be a feature of cheap administration. Likewise, the system of forced labor, or *isibhalo*, which was introduced into Natal, was problematic in times of anti-slavery. Shepstone was able to justify all of these aspects of his administration as features of Shakan times and as appropriate to the government of ex-subjects of Shaka.

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[76]It should be borne in mind that Shepstone was raised in the Eastern Cape and entered the colonial service at a very early age. He spoke fluent Xhosa as a boy and was, from early on, familiar with the norms and practices of African society. These personal factors are part explanation for this recourse to an African model of government.

The terms in which Shepstone described Shaka's administrative problems, mirrored almost exactly Shepstone's own position,

> The policy of Chaka saw his peculiar position as despotic ruler of a people composed almost wholly of conquered tribes, compelled him to mass them as much as possible around him, to intermingle them as much as possible, and so rule them as to destroy their old associations and hence he would not permit the occupation of the entire country he conquered.[77]

My reading of Shepstone's treatment of Shaka is very different from that of Daphna Golan, who talks about Shepstone "de-emphasizing Shaka," and fighting "to break the dominance of Shaka's heirs, the royal family in Zululand."[78] Shepstone did, at a much later point, work with the colonial authorities in trying to rein in Zulu royal power, but, in principle, he held an opposite position to theirs, namely, that a strong central power modeled on the Shakan regime was essential to the control of the Zulu kingdom, and the African population of Natal. This underlay an almost obsessive interest on Shepstone's part in the reign of Shaka.[79] It also explains his support of Cetshwayo against his most powerful councillors through the coronation oaths.

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[77]Natal Archives Depot, Shepstone Papers (Sh.P.), vol.76, p.15. Also see vol. 82, "Historical Notes," p.24, and "Powers of Chiefs," p.136.

[78]Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," p.32.

[78]See also Sh.P. vol. 79, pp.17-18.

When Shepstone was offered the opportunity "as Chaka" to install Cetshwayo, he understood it in terms very different from that of playing the part of a "savage monster." Rather, he perceived that the invitation offered him the possibility of intervening directly in matters of Zulu sovereignty. It was, Shepstone recognised, an opportunity loaded with possibilities. To recognise the possibilities and to explore them required a grasp of the cultural logic of the African population of Natal and the Zulu kingdom, and the role therein of Shaka. This, it seems, Shepstone had, by 1873, achieved in substantial measure.

We have already discussed why it was the Cetshwayo wished Shepstone to be present at the coronation. We turn now to analysis of the reasons why Cetshwayo and his advisors wanted Shepstone to be present as Shaka. We noted that Cetshwayo feared the promotion of rival candidates by neighboring powers like the Boers and British. The invitation to the British to participate in Cetshwayo's coronation was a device to secure British recognition of Cetshwayo. The danger was that by inviting Shepstone across the Thukela, he would use the opportunity to install an alternative candidate. As we have seen, Cetshwayo's greatest rival was Hamu. As the genealogical the son of Nzibe, Hamu was not of the direct

line of accession through Shaka as traced through Dingane and Mpande. Significantly, if a son of Nzibe were to gain the kingship, it would deny the legitimacy of Shaka's own accession. By designating Shepstone "as Chaka," the invitation specifically made it difficult for him to install Hamu, whose very candidacy was framed in terms opposed to the house of Shaka. This interpretation is supported by evidence that Cetshwayo sought in a host of other ways to stress his connections to Shaka, including the act of reviving the homesteads of Shaka which had died out.[80]

In describing Shepstone as Shaka, the Zulu envoys also referred to the role which Shepstone had earlier played in 1861 at Nodwengu as witness to the nomination of Cetshwayo as Mpande's heir. It is to a discussion of the events of 1861 that we now turn to grasp the significance of Shepstone assuming the mantle of Shaka for the coronation.

Shepstone: "Father to the King's children."

In a memorandum prepared in 1873, prior to his departure on the coronation expedition, Shepstone

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[80]SP, file 66, item 8, p.4, Socwatsha.

explained his designation in the Zulu invitation "as Chaka" as the consequence of a series of events that occurred twelve years earlier. Since the battle of Ndondakusuka in 1856 (a battle which claimed the lives of Mbuyazi and five other sons of Mpande), Cetshwayo had emerged as a powerful, and increasingly restless, contender for the succession. In 1861, in a bid, as Shepstone put it, to "tranquillize" the situation in the Zulu kingdom, he had put pressure on Mpande to recognize the prince as his heir, and travelled to Nodwengu to be present at the ceremony of nomination. On his way to the nomination, Shepstone was asked to delay about ten miles outside Mpande's residence.

> In the discussion that took place it was admitted that in deference to the position of Supremacy occupied by the British Government towards the Zulus, as laid down by Chaka when he sent his Embassy to the Cape some thirty years before, and in consideration of the position I held in Natal, the highest salute should be used but the difficulty presented itself, that this was the Zulu royal salute, and had never been used in Zululand except to the Sovereign: to overcome this difficulty it was decreed that I should be looked upon as Chaka, that is, that I should personate and take that Chief's rank, and thus become, according to their view, entitled to receive the salute they were anxious to give.
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> Accordingly when I reached Panda's residence I found a regiment drawn up, and although evidently against the grain--for the country had just emerged from fierce revolution--the regiment saluted me as it would have saluted the King.[81]

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[81]BPP, c.1137, "Memorandum by the Secretary for Native Affairs,

Shepstone argued that his presence at the nomination in 1861 was designed by Mpande to "afford pressure enough to carry such an unheard of measure [the nomination] with the Nobles."[82]

Norman Etherington has dismissed Shepstone's claims that he had received the *bayete* salute as one who stood in Shaka's place, and that it was this that caused him to be invited back to crown Cetshwayo in 1873, as "mostly nonsense."[83] In some senses he is right. Shepstone almost certainly embellished his accounts of his visit to Nodwengu, and the invitation to Shepstone to participate in the subsequent coronation was the result of important contemporary political developments both in the Zulu kingdom and in Natal, rather than a consequence of events in 1861. To dismiss Shepstone's claims is, however, to lose sight of the intricate and developing logic of the various appeals to the past made by a range of actors involved in these events, their connections to contested issues of sovereignty, and the complex emergence of Zulu historiography at this time.

June 11th, 1873," p.25.

[82]"Memorandum," p.25.

[83]N. Etherington, "Anglo-Zulu Relations 1856-1878," in A. Duminy and C. Ballard (eds.) *The Anglo-Zulu War: New Perspectives*, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1981, p.19.

Indeed, while the only account of the 1861 encounter which directly corroborates Shepstone's version of his designation "as Chaka," is the messengers' request of 1873,[84] there are a host of narratives which discuss the logic and meaning of Shepstone's presence at the earlier nomination, and debate his status as a participant in the act of naming Cetshwayo as the heir. These texts themselves require close reading. Five accounts in particular, other than Shepstone's memorandum and the Zulu messengers' statements, open themselves to closer examination.[85]

1.Rider Haggard's *Cetywayo and His White Neighbours*.

This widely-read account of the annexation of the Transvaal and the Anglo-Zulu War contained a dramatic rendering of the nomination.[86] Haggard noted that

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[84]Other subsequent accounts of the 1861 account provide circumstantial evidence of recognition of the basic elements of Shepstone's memorandum and the messengers' statements. See, for example, Cetshwayo's letter to Sir Hercules Robinson, Governor of the Cape, 29 March, 1881, in Webb and Wright, *A Zulu King Speaks*, p.43, where Cetshwayo's account of the 1873 coronation records that Shepstone, on that occasion, received the *bayete* salute, thereby suggesting that he might well have been considered to be entitled to it twelve years earlier. Also see SP, file 19, KCM 23467 (20030), "Results of inquiries made of Zulus as to Sir Theophilus Shepstone having been regarded by the Zulu nation as representing Tshaka."

[85]My list is not exhaustive, but illustrative of the range of available narratives. See also R. Cope's review of Mpande and Cetshwayo's messages in 1857-1860 to Shepstone to visit the Zulu kingdom. ("Shepstone and Cetshwayo," pp.6-7.)

[86]This section of Haggard's book follows closely the structure and language of the various official reports of the time, and suggests that he made considerable use of them. (See Shepstone's own accounts in two official reports, Shepstone to Scott, and Shepstone to Scott (Confidential) both of 22 June, 1861, GH 338.) It is likely that some

Cetshwayo was at first opposed to the nomination ceremony and planned to kill Shepstone. Surrounded by a hostile crowd, Haggard wrote, Shepstone sat still for two hours, showing no fear, until at length he rose, and as Haggard put it, said,

> I know that you mean to kill me; it is an easy thing to do; but I tell you Zulus, that for every drop of my blood that falls to the ground, a hundred men will come out of the sea yonder, from the country of which Natal is one of the cattle-kraals, and will bitterly avenge me.[87]

"From that day," Haggard opined, "his name was power in the land."[88] In this version Haggard represents Shepstone as deploying the device of prophecy in a manner similar to that of its use in indigenous narratives. Likewise Haggard himself uses the device of prophecy justifying subsequent events--in this case the Anglo-Zulu War--by reference to what was predicted in the past in

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of the details which do not appear in the reports were based on descriptions Shepstone related during the period Rider Haggard worked closely as his secretary, or from Osborn, or another member of Shepstone's staff with whom Haggard spent long periods and whom he credits with having given him much information, F. Bernard Fynney. (See D.S. Higgins, *Rider Haggard: The Great Storyteller*, London, Cassell, 1981, p.22) Haggard refers also to an account of the nomination which appeared in the *London Quarterly Review*, 1878. This account by a writer not identified by Haggard purported to have been heard from Cetshwayo himself, includes a quote from the latter, that "Sompseu is a great man: no man but he could have come through that day alive". (Quoted in H.R. Haggard, *Cetywayo and his White Neighbours*, first published in London, Trubner, 1882, edition with new material, 1888, third edition, London, Trubner, 1890, p.10.) For another romantic account of the period see C. Barter, *Stray Memories of Natal and Zululand*, Pietermaritzburg, Munro Bros., 1897, pp.11-2.

[87]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.9. Haggard repeated the prophecy in slightly different words in his dedication to Shepstone which prefaced a later novel, *Nada the Lily*, London, Longmans, 1892.

[88]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.9.

the same way as Mtshayankomo had done in his oral account. Haggard also reproduced almost intact Shepstone's own argument regarding his investiture "as Chaka" in order for the *bayete* salute to be rendered.

In 1877 Haggard had accompanied Shepstone on his trip to annex the Transvaal and the two men struck up a friendship that lasted until Shepstone's death in 1893. From the mouth of his "beloved friend and Chief"[89] Haggard heard "many a story of savage Africa," of which this was likely to have been one.[90] Claiming that he enjoyed the special confidence of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Haggard noted further that Shepstone would "sometimes even unfold to me the secret spring of his actions."[91] The version of the nomination produced by Haggard seems thus to offer insight into the interpretation which Shepstone put on his presence at the 1861 meeting, over and beyond that which appears in his explanatory memorandum of 1873. The "secret spring"

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[89]H.R. Haggard, *Days of My Life*, edited by C.J. Longman, London, New York, Longman, Green and Co., 1926, vol.1, p.68.

[90]In addition, in the preparation of his published account, Haggard consulted all the relevant official publications. (Haggard, *Days of My Life*, vol.1, pp.76, 204.) For a sense of Haggard's reading of the Blue Books see his letter to his father, 18 August, 1875, in which he comments on his reading of the Blue Books pertinent to the Langalibalele affair, saying, "It is not easy to get at the truth when it is hedged round by such a mass of contradictory evidence." (*Days of My Life*, pp.47-48).

[91]Haggard, *Days of My Life*, pp.68, 76.

which Haggard's account reveals is the question of sovereignty contained in the crucial line, "From that day his name was power in the land," or, as Haggard put it in another version written in 1912, "From that day forward, Shepstone had personal sovereign rights in Zululand. Thus he could have ordered anyone to be killed or have declared war or peace."[92] What Haggard's versions make explicit is that Shepstone's account of the nomination sought to explore connections between his designation as Shaka, and questions of sovereignty. A number of other accounts of the events of 1861 are concerned with the same question of sovereignty, but take different forms.

2.Bishop Schreuder's version:[93] In his account, Bishop Schreuder, of the Norwegian Mission Station at Ntumeni, does not mention any investiture of Shepstone with the mantle of Shaka, but does record an exchange between Cetshwayo and Shepstone that was centrally concerned with issues of sovereignty. Schreuder depicted Cetshwayo as challenging the Secretary for Native Affairs, and asking Shepstone why he had come to Nodwengu. When Shepstone replied that he had come to acknowledge Mpande's

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[92]Haggard, *Days of My Life*, p.71. The right to carry out an execution or to declare war, as well as the rights to hold the *umkhosi*, to call up young men to form an *ibutho*, and the possession of an *isigodlo*, were all marks of sovereignty in the African societies of nineteenth-century south-east Africa.

[93]Quoted in Ballard, *John Dunn*, p.98.

successor, the prince, according to Schreuder, replied, "..we do not thank you for that, the Zulus can settle that for ourselves, and we have settled it." The meeting broke up, Schreuder continued, in "great excitement."[94]

3.Cetshwayo's own version: In his brief discussion of the nomination of 1861 with members of the Cape Commission on Native Laws and Customs in 1881, Cetshwayo acknowledged Shepstone's presence at the nomination but specifically resisted all attempts to suggest that Shepstone influenced Mpande's decision regarding the succession.[95]

4. An Account by Makuza kaMkomoyi of the Cebekhulu:[96] The account by Makuza described how, after the battle of Ndondakusuka, the young Cetshwayo began to marshall fighting men, and to challenge the authority of Mpande. According to Makuza, Mpande then enlisted the "protection" of the British. Shepstone accordingly

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[94]Ballard, *John Dunn*, p.98

[95]"Cetshwayo's Evidence to the Cape Government Commission on Native Laws and Customs", 1881, reproduced in Webb and Wright, *A Zulu King Speaks*, p.80, also p.88, where he discusses the procedure by which a chief goes to a king to point out his heir.

[96]Makuza's father, Mkomoyi, was a member of Dingane's izimPohlo *ibutho* stationed at Bulawayo, while Makuza himself was a member of the Mbonambi *ibutho*, born about 1848. (*JSA*, vol.2, p. 165, Makuza.) The Mbonambi fought for Cetshwayo against Mbuyazi at Ndondakusuka. (*JSA*, vol.4, p.129, Mtshayankomo.) Bhejana kaNomageje, chief of the Cebekhulu, was the senior *induna* at emaNgweni, an *ikhanda* built by Mpande and allied to Cetshwayo. (*JSA*, vol.4, p.387, editors' note 89.)

arrived at Nodwengu, Mpande's capital, and "reproved" Cetshwayo for his misbehaviour towards his father. Makuza related that Cetshwayo "regarded Shepstone as an outsider" and rejected his right to have a say in the succession.[97]

5.An account by Lothuluni kaZucu of the Lamule:[98]

Lothuluni likewise began his account of the nomination of 1861 with reference to the battle of Ndondakusuka in 1856. Because Mbuyazi's body had not been found after the battle, it was believed that he had not died but that he had been placed in a wagon and taken away by the Europeans.[99] Lothuluni ascribed to Cetshwayo a fear that the British would try to make Mbuyazi, or possibly Mkhungo, another son of Mpande's living in Natal, the new Zulu king. This was the preface to Lothuluni's

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[97]*JSA*, vol.2, pp.165-6, Makuza.

[98]Published in James Stuart, *uKulumetule*, London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1925, chapter one ("*Mhla uSomsewu eLand' abantwana (ba ka Monase) ku Cetshwayo*") Stuart's long-term informant, Socwatsha kaPhaphu collected this account from Lothuluni at the request of A. J. Shepstone, possibly as part of Shepstone and Stuart's researches on Sir Theophilus. (See below, p.466) Stuart first recorded the story on 16 August, 1913 (SP, file 54, item 9, p.1) and again three years later, on 15 April, 1916. (SP, file 58, item 24.) I am persuaded that the two accounts represent two recordings rather than the subsequent transcription of earlier notes partly because of slight differences in the texts, but more significantly because Stuart had notes of a discussion of another topic under the same date as the second text. (see p.47). There are no discernible differences between the two sets of notes, nor are there differences to which I can accord any significance for this discussion between the notes and the published version, with the excception of the detail of the black rock rabbits discussed in note 106 below.

[99]"*ba m fak' engoleni; ba muka naye*" Stuart, *uKulumetule*, p.7.

description of Shepstone's trip to Nodwengu as a deliberate attempt to put a stop to the rumours about the succession. If Shepstone recognized Cetshwayo as the heir, Lothuluni suggested, it would add tremendous weight to the latter's claim, since it was the British who were rumoured to be harbouring rival claimants.

In Lothuluni's account, Shepstone was recorded as having proceeded first to Mpande, who sent him on to Cetshwayo. This account described Shepstone as saying that he "ruled them all."[100] At this point in Lothuluni's narrative, Shepstone's *induna*, Ngoza, was accused of entering the royal *isigodlo* (the quarters of the king's wives and the women, often given in tribute, in the king's establishment, to which no men other than the specially designated personnel had access).[101] Shepstone and Ngoza maintained that Ngoza had entered the *isigodlo* in order to pass a message on to the sisters of Mkhungo, and that Cetshwayo had been appraised of this in advance. Lothuluni related how at this moment Hamu and Zibebhu (later challengers to the rule of Cetshwayo) came forward, and asked who would "give anything after a fight to a defeated enemy?" Shepstone was recorded as stilling

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[100]"*Kepa-ke mina, ndi ni pete nonke,*" (Stuart, *uKulumetule*, p.9); and "*be ndi zo kala nje, ningobami nonke*" (Stuart, *uKulumetule*, p.11).

[101]A similar account regarding the *isigodlo* appears in Dunn, *Cetywayo and the Three Generals*, pp.30-31.

them saying "Keep Quiet. When I reply, I will be replying for you as well. It may happen that tomorrow you will come to me, asking for support against Cetshwayo." Shepstone was thus represented by Lothuluni as prescient of coming struggles waged by Hamu and Zibebhu against Cetshwayo, and the account of the visit was laden with indications of his involvement in the support of rival claimants in the succession.[102] In other words, Lothuluni depicted Shepstone as maneuvering to gain influence in the Zulu kingdom by manipulating existing lines of contestation and tension over questions of sovereignty, and in high dramatic form going so far as to send his *induna* into the very heart of the contested kingship, the *isigodlo*, in which the sons of the king were officially resident.[103]

In this account, when Shepstone tried to defend Ngoza, Cetshwayo told him to keep quiet and spat on the ground in front of him. The assembled forces were then credited with wanting to kill Shepstone, but were held

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[102]Ndukwana kaMbengwana of the Mthethwa offered a slightly different account. In his version, Shepstone and his *induna*, Ngoza, went to Nodwengu to fetch the sisters of Mbuyazi, whom Mpande was prepared to hand over, but Cetshwayo was not. Ndukwana, who makes no mention of Shepstone's presence as being connected to the nomination of the heir, noted that a fight nearly broke out over this (*JSA*, vol. 4, p.275, testimony of Ndukwana, recorded by James Stuart in 1900. Also see *JSA*, vol.3, p.105, Mgidhlana.)

[103]A similar account regarding Ngoza's penetration of the *isigodlo* appears in Dunn, *Cetewayo and the Three Generals*, pp.30-31.

back by the *izinduna*. At this point, the account repeated the prophecy detailed by Haggard. Shepstone was recorded as saying that for the Zulu surrounding him to kill a "white rock rabbit"[104] would be to bring massive retribution down on themselves. When he left, Lothuluni related, the *izinduna* gathered at the door of Masiphula's hut and discussed Shepstone's display of courage.

> None of these words would have been uttered by anyone else. He spoke them because he was brave and unafraid. He has no fear. He is not afraid to die. They all expressed astonishment and discussed the matter in private saying, "Hau! What a courageous insect."[105]

All of the accounts, representing a range of perspectives supportive of, and opposed to, Shepstone, accord Shepstone a significant role in the nomination and explore questions of sovereignty. The last incident in Lothuluni's account highlights Shepstone's personal bravery, and functions in the same way as does the moment

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[104]"*imbil' emhlope*" (Stuart, *uKulumetule*, p.13.) In the version of Lothuluni's account originally delivered to Stuart by Socwatsha, the "white rock rabbit" is counterposed to "black rock rabbits", with hyena's choosing to kill the latter but not the former.(SP, file 54, item 9, p.5.)

[105]"*Onke la magama omunye wa ye nga se kuwa-kuluma. U wa kulume ngob'e ne sibindi, e ng'esabi. Ka nalo uvalo. Ka kw-esab' ukufa. Ba babaza bonke; ba fakan' imilomo. Ba-ti: 'Hau! Isilokazana si ne sibindi!'*" (Stuart, *uKulumetule*, p.14.) The use of *isilokazana* is a pun on the term "*isilo*" meaning, literally a wild beast, but also used as a title for the king. The pun was repeated in another form in the account on which this version was based, that given to Stuart by Socwatsha, in which the *izinduna* also used the word *isilwane* (unearthly creature) to describe Shepstone. (SP, file 54, item 9, p.6.) The pun draws attention to Shepstone's aspirations to be the transcendant political authority. My thanks to Johnson Sithole for illuminating discussions on this point of translation.

in Haggard's narrative where Shepstone is depicted as facing down the angry Zulu host. This scene is cast in the same style as stories about Shaka himself, and the accrual to him of power through personal bravery. The recording of the nomination as an instance in which Shepstone achieved recognition, as a result his individual courage, by both Haggard--who was presumably narrating the tale in terms similar to those in which he heard it during his South African visit as a member of Shepstone's staff, and Lothuluni, an African source, is an indication of the extent to which Shepstone both sought to, and indeed succeeded in, building his authority in the eyes of colonial and indigenous society in terms that echoed that of powerful Zulu leaders like Shaka.

The five accounts representing a range of perspectives supportive of, and opposed to, Shepstone, accord Shepstone a significant role in the nomination. On the question of Shepstone's involvement in the nomination, all the accounts, regardless of whether they are derived from retrospective analyses of the events of 1861 or contemporary accounts, concur that the central matter at issue was that of sovereignty. They view the nomination as a struggle over the issue of transcendant political authority and identify Shepstone as a central

witness to the nomination--this being the case in both the accounts which sought to deny the occasion as a moment of British sovereignty, and those who wanted to advance it as that.

A significant number of the versions identify ongoing tension between Mpande and his heir, and the existence of a threat posed by Cetshwayo both to Mpande and to the overall stability of the kingdom.[106] This suggests that it is likely that Shepstone's involvement in the nomination was actively solicited by Mpande. Shepstone's presence was of further interest to the Zulu ruling house because Natal had long been viewed as a supporter of rival claimants. In addition to those already discussed, another son of Mpande, Mkhungo, who was referred to by the latter as "the future king (most probably)."[107] When, in 1859, Colenso made his first exploratory trip to the Zulu kingdom in the company of Shepstone, it was widely viewed as the preliminary to a challenge to Cetshwayo's right of succession.[108] There

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[106]See *JSA* vol.4, p.62, testimony of Mtshapi for a claim that Cetshwayo was pointed out by Mpande to "the white people [who] cut a distinguishing mark on his ear". Also see testimony of Makuza who talks about the Boers making an ear notch. (*JSA*, vol.2, p.165.)

[107]Quoted in Etherington, "Anglo-Zulu Relations," p.16.

[108]Guy, *Heretic*, p.88; Etherington, "Anglo-Zulu Relations," p.16.

are thus reasons for thinking that Shepstone's presence at the nomination, and his designation as Shaka, would certainly have served a number of purposes for Mpande, and possibly even for Cetshwayo, despite the latter's disputes with Shepstone regarding the meaning of his presence.

The designation of Shepstone "as Chaka" had the further significance of speaking to an important aspect of the late Mbuyazi's claim to the succession, the debate over his biological paternity. Mbuyazi was Mpande's son born of Monase, a woman given to him by Shaka. Claims were made that Monase was a member of Shaka's household who became pregnant by Shaka, and was then passed on to Mpande.[109] In other words, supporters of Mbuyazi claimed that he was the biological son of Shaka. Indeed, Mpande was quoted as saying "Is not Mbuyazi the son of Tshaka, the king of the earth?"[110] The investiture of Shepstone with the mantle of Shaka for the 1861 nomination of Cetshwayo, whether made in 1861, or only retrospectively in 1873, by implication, allowed the claim to a Shakan connection or sanction, which Mbuyazi had previously enjoyed, to accrue to Cetshwayo.

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[109]Brooks and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.95, information attributed to Professor L.Nyembezi. Also see SP, file 9, item 51, p.2, Socwatsha. (29 March, 1914)

[110]*JSA*, vol.4, p.301, Ndukwana.

Likewise, it was impossible for Shepstone "as Shaka" to install Hamu whose candidacy would have had to be predicated on the illegitimacy of Shaka's own succession. Cetshwayo had thus in wishing to see Shepstone journey north "as Chaka," sufficiently strong motivations to outweigh the possible capital Shepstone could make out his investiture with the mantle of highest sovereignty.

Shepstone, for his part, was equally keen to play the part of Shaka. He was alert to the possibilities of stretching the significance and meaning of Shaka in connection with the issue of sovereignty, notably the idea that Shaka had recognized British sovereignty over the Zulu. In his explanation of his designation "as Chaka," Shepstone added the gloss that the *bayete* salute was to be given to him in 1861 at least in part "in deference to the position of supremacy occupied by the British Government towards the Zulus, as laid down by Chaka when he sent his Embassy to the Cape some thirty years before."[111] He went on to note that "It will be seen hereafter that the Zulus still consider this declaration of the Chief, whose memory they most respect, to be sacredly binding upon them."[112] Likewise, in his report of the coronation, Shepstone carefully constructed

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[111]"Memorandum," p.25.

[112]"Report of the Expedition," p.4.

British claims to a form of sovereignty over the Zulu through reference to Shaka. He prefaced his report of the coronation expedition, with a short sketch of the founding of the Zulu power by Shaka and preceding installations and successions. Shepstone's Shaka, whose "home rule had been relieved by acts of generosity and statesmanship" was not the villain that his Dingane--"who lacked most of his predecessor's genius, all of his generosity, but none of his cruelty"--was. Shepstone went on to describe Mpande as "faithful and true to the declaration before described, as made by his great predecessor, Chaka."[113]

The precise nature of this sovereignty was left vague, but was cast in broadly paternal terms that accorded with the messengers' salutation of Shepstone as "Father to the King's children," with Mpande and Cetshwayo's descriptions of themselves as children of the Natal government,[114] and with Shepstone's own understanding of his position in Natal African society. Indeed, Shepstone characterized his role in the coronation as the fulfilling of a "parental duty."[115] An African contemporary of the Secretary for Native

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[113]"Report of the Expedition," pp.4,5,6.

[114]SNA 1/7/6, Message from Cetshwayo, 29 February, 1876, p.244.

[115]"Memorandum," p.26.

Affairs, Lazarus Xaba, recalled that Shepstone invariably conducted himself as a grand patriarch, addressing everyone in *isiZulu* as "my child."[116] He surrounded himself with the trappings of Zulu kingship including a praise singer and a snuff-box bearer, presided over Zulu dances and gave African women in marriage to his loyal African henchmen.[117] Shepstone was, by this time, already adept at identifying and appropriating to British sovereignty key African institutions and symbols. The annual First Fruits ceremony, for example, was made the prerogative of the Supreme Chief in Natal.[118] Assuming the mantle of Shaka was but another enactment of Zulu conceptions of sovereignty in a panoply that Shepstone was increasingly at home with. As Shaka at the coronation, Shepstone gave dramatic definition to himself as the transcendant political authority. In the manner that he represented his part in the coronation, Shepstone was constructing himself in the eyes of the distant colonial authorities in terms of his ability to read the situation, and to understand the native mind; in short, he was establishing his status as the expert who was

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[116]Lazarus Xaba, interviewed by James Stuart, quoted in Gordon, *Shepstone*, p.179. Also see p.165.

[117]Guy, *Heretic*, p.198; N. Etherington, *Rider Haggard*, Boston, Twayne Publishers, 1984, p.3. Also see Frances Colenso (alias Atherton Wylde), *My Chief and I*, London, Chapman and Hall, 1880, pp.68-71.

[118]Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, pp.20-21.

almost part African. His Zulu name--Somsewu--by which he was even known amongst the colonists, symbolized his position.

Paternalism was a characteristic of colonialism generally, and has been the subject of a number of analyses which look at the way in which colonial subjects were "infantilized." Shepstone's paternalism took its particular form of expression from the indigenous African model, and was, as has been shown above, conferred on, as much as asserted by, Shepstone, as a result of very particular political developments culminating in the coronation. Moreover, it was a form of paternalism in which responsibilities, as much as rights, were actively insisted on. Thus, Cetshwayo wanted Shepstone as "father" in order to enmesh him in paternal responsibilities.

Whether the installation of Hamu rather than Cetshwayo would have altered Shepstone's analysis of the connections between Shaka and sovereignty is impossible to say. But which ever way he played it, for or against Shaka, Shepstone's reading of the necessity of talking about sovereignty in terms that referred to Shaka prevailed and indeed, took hold more widely in Natal colonial discourse. When in later years the British

authorities removed Cetshwayo and sought to promote other chiefs, they were obliged to do so by arguing against the self-same notion of sovereignty which the figure of Shaka stood for.

Guy has argued that Shepstone failed to recognize the ways in which the Zulu rulers sought to manipulate him,[119] but my reading suggests, on the contrary, that he grasped many of the complex logics on all sides, the significance of the questions of sovereignty, the possibilities of their public enactment and the power of prophecy in conceptualizing the relationship between the past and present, and adroitly set all of these points to work in his own interests. Likewise, Cetshwayo recognized that the invitation to Shepstone to crown him "as Chaka' would prove irresistible to Shepstone's Great White Chief mentality. Cetshwayo himself used the prophecy of Shaka and the matter of his foresight in sending an embassy to the Cape as the justification for arguing for a special relationship between the British and the Zulu kingdom. The tussles that ensued were highly contested and the moves sophisticated, with each side demonstrating remarkable cognizance of the cultural logic and political imperatives of the other.

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[119]Guy, *Heretic*, p.85.

In contrast to the charge that imperial agents "sought, methodically, to 'make history' for people who they thought lacked it; to induct those people into an order of activities and values; to impart form to an Africa that was seen as formless; to reduce the chaos of savage life to the rational structures and techniques that, for the Europeans, were both the vehicle and the proof of their own civilization,"[120] Shepstone adopted the history of the people whom he sought to dominate, moulding his arguments to its form and logic. The Shepstone system annoyed the colonists precisely because it inhibited the imposition of a work ethic, monogamy, a need for clothing, commodities and civilization. Shepstone distinguished between the chaos of disrupted Natal characterized by "cannibalism" and other forms of savagery, and the order and rationality of the Zulu kingdom. So much form did he discern in the Zulu kingdom and in Zulu history, that he sought to adapt it to his own purposes. Where Comaroff and Comaroff depict the missionary encounter with the Tswana as "the meeting of two worlds, one imperial and expansive, the other local and defensive,"[121] Shepstone was embroiled in a situation that saw the meeting of two imperiums, and

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[120]Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, p.14, emphases in the original.

[121]Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, p. 171.

which gave its own special shape to the encounter of colonizer and colonized in the Zululand-Natal region.

Shepstone's understanding of "native administration" was thus founded on the capacity to enter in the African world which he sought to control. Fundamental to this intention was the acquisition of knowledge of the world to be penetrated. Welsh described Shepstone as showing "considerable anthropological insight"[122] in his assessment of African institutions. The Shepstone system placed a heavy premium on information-gathering about colonial peoples and the development of "expert" knowledge of African societies.

Through his historical researches, and his attempts to use Zulu history to provide a model for colonialism, Shepstone was responsible for the introduction into colonial productions of Zulu history--whether favorable to or denigratory of Shaka--of a new way of representing Shaka. Where many analysts of imperial practice have focused on how imperialist discourse remade African culture, the events and interpretations discussed in this chapter call our attention to the way in which African cultural logic shaped imperialist discourse.

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[122]Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.172.

In the foregoing analysis we see Shepstone in a number of persona. We see him as the colonial bureaucrat preparing reports and justifying his actions in correspondence as well as suppressing rebellion and making law within Natal; at the same time we see him straddling the worlds of the white colony and the African populations of Natal and the Zulu kingdom. In this persona Shepstone repeatedly represented the one world to the other, in each instance offering his perspective as an expert view into the heart of things. Finally we see him as "Shaka" or the great *induna* of the Natal Governor, the "Supreme Chief." In each of these persona, Shepstone drew on the cultural logics of both worlds in different combinations, sometimes imperfectly and sometimes with great adroitness, combinations in some ways constrained and in other ways highly flexible.

The "Shepstone system" of native administration disposed Shepstone to a recognition, and subsequently the attempted appropriation of, a key convention of the representation of Shaka in African texts concerned with Zulu history and the Zulu power. The coronation was an occasion of shared communicative praxis between Natal officials and the Zulu leaders, the source of which was African texts on sovereignty. Shepstone's readiness to be Shaka, and to use Shakan rule as a model for his

administration is a position at odds with the idea of ideas prevalent at the time seeing Africans as less than human, as bestial, and Africa as feminised--"seductively helpless."[123] Shepstone represented the Shakan kingdom as active, aggressively male, and ultimately as something to be emulated--not as a utopia inhabited by noble savages, but as a sensible, pragmatic system. The Africans whom Shepstone was dealing with were not part of nature, they were part of culture, and it was a culture that Shepstone sought to grasp in its fullest complexity.

The Comaroffs view mid-nineteenth century thought--"the opposition between white civility and black savagery, adult reason and child-like passion, the saved and the fallen, the heroic active male and the passive female"--as "a tightly knit cultural cloth, [whose] internal pattern seldom unravelled."[124] The Shepstone story tells a different tale. And it was not only Shepstone who differed from the colonial stereotype delineated by the Comaroffs.

Shepstone was at odds with the larger settler population of Natal, but he had devoted followers within his administration, including the compiler of the major

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[123]Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, p.116.

[124]Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and revolution*, p.125.

historical record[125] of the time, Natal magistrate John Bird. Bird concurred fully with Shepstone's emphasis on the importance of knowing more about the African population and, like Shepstone, recognized their right to be in Natal.[126] Shepstone also had a close friend and ally at this time among the Natal missionaries, John William Colenso, Bishop of Natal. Colenso shared Shepstone's concern with the protection and preservation of African institutions and made it part of his life's work to protect the Zulu kings and to come to know as much as possible about Zulu politics. Indeed, he published widely on Zulu affairs. In 1859, he recorded a conversation between Cetshwayo and a missionary named Oftebro, in which the latter suggested that a possible reason for an outbreak of disease in the Zulu kingdom was punishment for Cetshwayo having killed so many people. Cetshwayo replied, "But that is our custom, and how should a great chief maintain his power except by putting offenders to death or eating them up?" to which comment Colenso added the following relativist gloss: "Are there sins committed among Christian people because it is the custom, or because it is necessary to maintain one's place in society? Are Ketchwayo's sins really more

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[125]Bird, *Annals of Natal*,

[126]Sh.P, vol.86, letter by J. Bird, Pietermaritzburg, 1 August, 1885 to Shepstone.

guilty in God's sight than these?"[127] Indeed, in this, Colenso demonstrated that he both shared Shepstone's view of the nature of political authority in the Zulu kingdom, and accepted it in a Zulu context.[128] Like Shepstone, Colenso was receptive to and recognized the power of the logics of the African communities around him, even attributing his controversial biblical criticism to the logic of an African convert. Likewise, although Colenso disapproved of polygamy in principle, he attempted to show that his interpretation of the bible revealed no scriptural basis for condemning it amongst the Zulu.[129]

A core of other officials and scholars believed that fluency in the local languages and intensive research into local history and indigenous institutions were essential to effective governance. They included, amongst others, the philologist Wilhelm Bleek and his patron, the Cape Governor, Sir George Grey. Together

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[127]J.W. Colenso, "First Steps of the Zulu Mission" in J.W. Colenso, *Bringing Forth the Light*, (ed.) Ruth Edgecombe, Pietermaritzburg and Durban, University of Natal Press and Killie Campbell Africana Library, 1982, pp.74-5.

[128]Also see the similar argument made in Frances E. Colenso and E. Durnford, *History of the Zulu War and its origins*, London, Chapman and Hall, 1880, p.14, in which the authors note in defence of the Zulu system of political authority that "to rule a nation without any assistance in the form of gaol or fetters, capital punishment must needs be resorted to rather more frequently than in our country where, indeed, it is not long since we hung a man for stealing a sheep, and for other acts far short of murder."

[128]R. Thornton, "This Dying Out Race: W.H.I. Bleek's Approach to the Languages of South Africa," *Social Dynamics*, 9, 2, 1, 1983, pp.1-10,

Bleek and Grey asserted powerfully the need for in-depth local research within colonial administration. Their researches had massive implications, not least of all in that they defined new peoples. The work reflected the attitudes of the recorders and was drawn into the service of the colonial project. At the same it was also the conduit by means of which the ideas of the colonized were filtered into colonial practices.

Where the latest work on the "historical anthropology of cultural confrontation"[130]--focuses on the question of why some cultural forms were incorporated into the everyday world of the colonized while others were contested or rejected, this chapter looks at the opposite process, the incorporation of certain African cultural forms into the world of the colonizers. This incorporation was not the consequence of African resistance, but, rather, a result of the recognition by the colonial bureaucracy of the strength and suitability of African ideas. It reminds us that the colonization of consciousness involved much more than the imposition of some or many European capitalist cultural forms. It may be that this was very specific to the Zululand/Natal area and that it explains the resilience there of precolonial identity and forms of consciousness.

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[130]Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, p.xi.

One of the basic arguments of the chapter is that the process of cultural confrontation was by no means as one sided in terms of cultural transfer as is often thought, and that an anthropology of the colonial encounter is incomplete without investigation of the cultural forms adopted by the agents of imperial domination. This chapter reveals the appropriation of a key symbol of the African precapitalist world, and its incorporation into the heart of early indirect rule.[131]

[131]The Comaroffs do allow that "some of the ways of Africans interpolated themselves, again detached and transformed, into the habitus of the missionaries," but the point is not developed, nor are the processes by which this might have happened explored in depth. (Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, p.18.

Chapter Six

"No King in our country:" Theophilus Shepstone, the Anglo-Zulu War and the making of Rider Haggard's Shaka, 1874-1893

"An aggressive exhibition of bloodletting and plunder"

On his return from the coronation, one of the first things that Shepstone had to deal with was the simmering resistance of Langalibalele and the Hlubi in northern Natal.[1] In October, 1873, Shepstone sent an ultimatum to Langalibalele to appear in Pietermaritzburg within fourteen days. In the face of the ultimatum, the Hlubi chose flight, but Shepstone was determined to make an example of what he regarded as Langalibalele's contumacy. The Shepstone system of native administration was fundamentally autocratic and demanded instant and complete obedience, and Shepstone's power within the

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[1]The main studies of the Langalibalele affair on which I have relied are F. Colenso, *History of the Zulu War and its Origin*, London, Chapman and Hall, 1881; Guest, *Langalibalele*; Norman Herd, *The Bent Pine: the Trial of Chief Langalibalele*, Johannesburg, Ravan, 1976; J. Wright and A. Manson, *The Hlubi Chiefdom in Zululand-Natal: a History*, Ladysmith Historical Society, Ladysmith, 1983; Guy, *Heretic*.

system depended on his ability to impose his will on its subjects arbitrarily and immediately.

The Natal authorities marshalled a large force considerably in excess of what was needed, with the objective of making an example of the Hlubi. Shepstone, fresh from his success "as Chaka" in the Zulu kingdom, was not loath to deploy, as he viewed it, African forms of despotic justice--of the kind conventionally associated with Shaka--to serve as a deterrent to the rest of the African population of Natal. As John Wright and Andrew Manson show, the outcome of this showdown, namely, the dismemberment of the Hlubi community, was decided on by Shepstone before the campaign commenced, and long before the trial that found Langalibalele guilty of treason.[2]

The campaign which ensued was initially a disaster for the marshalled colonial forces. One detachment suffered severe reverses at the hands of the Hlubi, and, for the first time in the history of the colony, whites were killed in a war with blacks. The campaign took a new and increasingly vicious turn when the government forces devastated the Hlubi location, smoking refugees out of the caves where they were sheltering, and killing

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[2]Wright and Manson, *The Hlubi Chiefdom*, pp.65-6.

and plundering at will. The survivors were placed in forced labor and Hlubi cattle were confiscated. Eventually Langalibalele and his forces surrendered in Basutoland. The authorities then dismantled the Hlubi chiefdom, both as a vivid lesson to other African chiefs, but also to allow settlers access to the much-coveted territory which the defeated chiefdom had occupied, and to make available the labor of the now dispossed Hlubi. In short, the chiefdom was destroyed. The neighboring Ngwe, who had sheltered Hlubi cattle, were equally hard-hit. It was, as Guy put it, "an aggressive exhibition of blood-letting and plunder."[3]

In this way, in late 1873, Shepstone wielded power in a manner that was every bit as "Shakan" as the system of Zulu rule which he had described in the "Historic Sketch" compiled in 1863-4. In January 1874, a trial that was a "mockery of justice"[4] ensued, at which the Governor, Sir Benjamin Pine in his role as Supreme Chief, pronounced that the trial itself was a mercy for under "native law," the accused would already have been killed.[5]

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[3]Guy, *Heretic*, p.202.

[4]Wright and Manson, *The Hlubi Chiefdom*, p.73.

[5]BPP, c.1025, no.45 enc.48.

At this time the friendship between Shepstone and Bishop Colenso ruptured. Colenso, for a long time Shepstone's supporter in matters of native policy, was outraged by the atrocities committed in the course of the Langalibalele campaign, the harsh retributive moves of the administration, the authoritarianism of the Secretary for Native Affairs, and the arbitrariness of the legal proceedings. Wyn Rees, editor of Frances Colenso's *Letters from Natal*, argued that all his life Bishop Colenso resisted tyranny.[6] Thus, he opposed Shepstone "as Shaka." Colenso may have accepted "Shakan" forms of government as appropriate north of the Thukela,[7] but he did not accept them in colonial Natal. Specifically, he objected to the concentration of judicial, legislative and administrative powers in the hands of the Secretary for Native Affairs. In short, Colenso protested the demonstration of despotic rule by Shepstone.

As Colenso's protests grew more strident, the Colonial Office in London became uneasy about the obvious travesties of British notions of justice being committed

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[6]Wynn Rees, *Colenso Letters from Natal*, Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, 1958, p.330.

[7]Also see the similar argument made in Colenso and Durnford, *History of the Zulu War*, p.14, in which the authors note in defence of the Zulu system of political authority that "to rule a nation without any assistance in the form of gaol or fetters, capital punishemnt must needs be resorted to rather more frequently than in our country where, indeed, it is not long since we hung a man for stealing a sheep, and for other acts far short of murder."

by the Natal authorities.[8] The Shepstone system had, over the years, refined despotic rule in a form described as being based on African custom and Shakan precedent--forced labor through the *amabutho*, arbitrary justice, the holding of a whole community responsible for the actions of individuals, and so on. In the course of the Langalibalele affair all of these features revealed themselves fully in the public gaze, and were painfully at odds with notions of governance current in Britain.

The prevailing liberal view required that courts be neutral--which Langalibalele's was not--and that the accused have access to legal representation--something which Shepstone tried to avoid. Indeed, the Langalibalele affair called into question the whole system of native administration both with regard to its legitimacy and its practicalities in the eyes of the imperialists and the colonized.[9] By the 1870s the colonial authorities were talking about the necessity of extending the Colony's coercive capacity, and were looking to the expansion of Natal's police and military. A fundamental contradiction between, on the one hand,

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[8]For the rift between Colenso and Shepstone, and Colenso's campaign on behalf of Langalibalele, I have relied on Guy, *Heretic*, chapter 13, as well as Rees, *Letters from Natal*, Part iii; Guest, *The Crisis in Natal*, chapter V; Herd, *The Bent Pine*, chapters five, six, seven and eight.

[9]My argument here draws heavily on Guy, *Heretic*, chapter 13.

the (admittedly adapted) African worldview which underlay the Shepstone system, notably the importance therein of displays of power, and the manipulation of a politics of fear, and, on the other hand, the colonial world wrought by the politics of empire and invested with notions of "civilization," had emerged into the open. The core of the contradiction focused on issues that were at the heart of each system, their respective notions of sovereignty and governance. Whereas the British system, its inequalities and coercive aspects notwithstanding, conceived of itself as based on equality, individual liberties and civil rights, the Zulu system, as epitomized by Shaka, was presented in official accounts as highly organized and explicitly authoritarian, militarized and despotically controlled.[10]

In 1875 recognition of the problem at the heart of Natal's native administration led to the recall of the Governor of Natal, Sir Benjamin Pine, and his replacement by the colonial troubleshooter, Sir Garnet Wolseley, fresh from his latest triumph of crushing the Asante in West Africa. The crisis would also have had repercussions for the Secretary for Native Affairs, but for the fact that it was at precisely this moment that Shepstone was swept up in the latest plans of the

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[10]See Rees, *Letters from Natal*, pp.309-10.

Secretary of State for Colonies, Lord Carnarvon. Carnarvon viewed Shepstone as the ideal agent to carry out a proposed confederation of South Africa. Thus, for the moment, the Shepstone system remained in place while plans for the annexation of the Transvaal took precedence in the affairs of southern Africa.[11]

"Spilling the water on the ground"

In 1877, Carnarvon, pushed towards a federation of South Africa by ordering Shepstone to annex the Transvaal. When Shepstone instructed young Henry Rider Haggard, then a member of his staff, to raise the British flag over the Transvaal, Shepstone's relations with the house of Shaka shifted decisively in a new direction.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the Zulu rulers had been prepared to pay the heavy price of Shepstone's participation in the coronation in order to secure British support in their dealings with the Transvaal. The British had, for much of 1870s, failed to meet their undertaking to act on Zulu appeals for mediation in their border conflict with the Transvaal

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[11]For a discussion of Carnarvon's confederation plans, and the role envisaged therein for Shepstone, see Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, pp.44-6.

Boers. In 1878, a Zulu deputation met with Shepstone to discuss the border dispute, and found him reluctant to support their claims. In his narrative of these events as set down in 1881, Cetshwayo complained to the government about this lack of support, and revoked his recognition of Shepstone's paternal status:

> Then Usicwelecwele [Sigcwelegcwele, one of Cetshwayo's senior *izinduna*] stood up and said, "Is it so then, Mr. Shepstone, that after two men have been friends, and then one of them dies, and leaves his son fatherless, that the reviving [sic] man ought to be harsh with the son of the deceased? This Cetewayo whom you have come to trouble and not to help is Mpande's son, and Mpande was your friend."

According to Cetshwayo, Shepstone responded saying,

> "I have only come to talk about the boundary of the country, but the English nation will come and put matters right for you. Go and tell my child these words, because I know that he will understand me."

Cetshwayo continued,

> Umbedjana...stood up and said, "Mr. Shepstone, we do not understand you." Mr. Shepstone then got in a rage and said, "Who is that that calls me by my name, and does not address me by saying 'King'?" Then the other chiefs said, "No king in our country; although a man may be king, we chiefs call him by his name."[12]

For Cetshwayo, Shepstone was "no more a father, but a firebrand."[13] The interview concluded when a shot, by an

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[12]"Cetshwayo's letter to the Governor of the Cape, 29 March, 1881, in Webb and Wright, *A Zulu King Speaks*, pp.49-50.

[13]Colenso, series 1, p.81, reprinting a message from Cetshwayo to Bulwer in BPP, c.2000, quoted in Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p.47.

unnamed party, was fired at Shepstone, the bullet of which passed through his hat!

With annexation, the Transvaal Boers became *de jure* British subjects. From the British point of view a powerful, independent Zulu state threatened the federation by introducing the problem of the Zulu-Boer boundary into already troubled relations between the Boers and Britons. In the changed circumstances of the confederation scenario, an independent and militarized Zulu kingdom, under a powerful leader, constituted a new kind of problem, and threatened regional unity.[14] Or, to put it another way, it was precisely the Shakan system--which Shepstone had recognized as fundamental to order in the Zulu kingdom, which he had sought to help Cetshwayo uphold when the oaths were originally proclaimed, aspects of which he had emulated in his own administration, and the legitimacy of which he had sought to harness to his own purposes--which was now deemed to be anachronistic, and the chief threat to a new regional vision. In particular, the British authorities were anxious about the specifically Shakan legacies of a powerful

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[14]Guy, *Heretic*, p.255.

centralized leadership with a "drilled" and obedient army.[15]

Shepstone was thus obliged to reject the Zulu delegation's land claims, and presented them with a sudden ultimatum. Cetshwayo was ordered to make reparations for border infringements against the Transvaal and to accept revolutionary modifications in the social and political institutions of the Zulu kingdom.

The British High Commissioner, Sir Bartle Frere, cited Shepstone's coronation of Cetshwayo as a partial justification of the ultimatum to the Zulu people. He accused Cetshwayo of breaking the "laws" proclaimed by Shepstone at the coronation. The demand in the ultimatum for adherence to the coronation "laws," as well as a call for the lifting of restrictions on marriage and the disbanding of the standing army--generally considered to be the two chief Shakan innovations--struck at the heart of the Shakan system, and thus at Zulu power. The Colonial Office in London, was, however, reluctant to

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[15]Also see Colenso's comments on the significance of the "drilled" Zulu army in C. Vijn, *Cetshwayo's Dutchman: Being the Private Journal of a White Trader in Zululand during the British Invasion*, translated from the Dutch and edited by J.W. Colenso, originally published London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1880, reprinted New York, Negro Universities Press, 1969, p.112, as well as the quotes which Colenso cites on p.154.

take on a war with the Zulu at this stage, and required further persuasion by the officials on the spot in Natal.

At this point the representation of Zulu history, and of Shaka specifically, in colonial discourse, shifted dramatically. Whereas in 1873, Shepstone had seen fit to install Cetshwayo "as Chaka," on the eve of the Anglo-Zulu War, the High Commissioner, Frere, prepared a long analysis of the violent course of Zulu history set in motion by Shaka, and sustained by Cetshwayo. He presented Cetshwayo as "anxious to emulate the sanguinary fame of his uncle Chaka,"[16] whose "history is written in characters of blood,"[17] and criticized him for trying to break "loose from all restraint and re-establish the regime of Chaka's unmitigated barbarism."[18] He accused Cetshwayo of trying to achieve this through the maintenance of regulations "directed to forming every young man in Zululand into a celibate Man-destroying gladiator."[19] The analysis underpinning the tirade was unmistakably Shepstone's.[20] But if the outburst was informed by his understanding of the nature of Zulu

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[16]BPP, c.2318, p.214.

[17]BPP, c.2381, p.183.

[18]BPP, c.2260, p.25

[19]Quoted in Guy, *Heretic*, p.269.

[20]Guy, *Heretic*, p.263.

power, and if, in some respects Frere and Shesptone employed a similar language in discussing the reign of Shaka, Frere's version of the Zulu past, and the evaluation which it contained, was made in a very different register to that of Shepstone. For Frere, Shaka's reign was chaotic and dangerous; for Shepstone, it was, above all, a reign of order and restraint. Nonetheless, the Secretary for Native Affairs could well see how that order itself might now be a threat to the proposed confederation. He could also see how the lack of it would disrupt native administration. Shepstone was caught on the horns of a dilemma.

The excessively short deadline attached to the ultimatum ensured that war between the Zulu kingdom and the British empire broke out in early 1879. When, at Isandlwana, the Zulu forces got the better of their aggressors, London--initially chary of the war--threw its efforts into breaking the Zulu power, and placed its faith in Britain's favorite soldier, Sir Garnet Wolseley.

One of Wolseley's first moves was to announce that the British were not at war with the Zulu people, but with their brutal and tyrannical king. Once the war was won, Wolseley moved to depose the king, and, as he

expressed it, to give the Zulu their freedom.[21] Wolsley depicted Cetshwayo as "influenced at times by drink and almost always by the crafty cruelty and craving for power he inherited from his fiendish ancestor, Chaka."[22]

The British victors did not annex Zulu territory, but dismantled the unitary kingdom created by Shaka, replacing it with thirteen chiefdoms ruled by British appointees, including prominent members of the Zulu royalty who were attached to clans collateral to the royal clan, notably Hamu kaNzibe and Zibhebhu kaMaphitha. Members of the house of Shaka were largely stripped of power and influence. In a rushed, but symbolic, cavalcade, the British paraded the captured Zulu king across Zululand *en route* to exile in the Cape and incarceration there in the Castle.[23]

The authorities depicted the settlement as a return to the pre-Shakan status quo, although the thirteen new chiefdoms bore little relation to pre-Shakan political divisions. Within one of them, in the Mthethwa region, a

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[21]A. Preston (ed.), *The South Africa Journal of Sir Garnet Wolseley, 1879-80*, Cape Town, A.A. Balkema, 1973, entry for 19 July, 1879, p.59.

[22]"Wolsley's Journal," entry for 21 June, 1879, p.40.

[23]My discussion of the post-war settlement draws on Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, chapter five.

separate initiative to assert a pre-Shakan legitimacy developed around one Sitimela who claimed to be a descendant of Dingiswayo, the Mthethwa chief under whose paramountcy Shaka rose to power. The colonial authorities were not disposed to tolerate this challenge to the settlement and repressed Sitimela's initiative.[24]

The thirteen appointed chiefs struggled to exercise their new authority, and when Hamu and Zibhebhu attempted to do so, they were fiercely resisted by groups within their new chiefdoms who had been closely associated with the deposed royal house. Civil war broke out in Zululand at the end of 1881 between a revived Usuthu royalist party, led by the closest relatives of the exiled king and the king's son, Dinuzulu, and a faction headed by the Mandlakazi leader, Zibhebhu. The result was chaos and bloodshed across the country.

The British Resident, Melmoth Osborn (known--like Shepstone--by a Zulu name, "Malimati"), did not technically have the authority to intercede in the conflict, although he increasingly overstepped his powers to assist Zibhebhu against the house of Shaka. His position symbolized the absence of a central authority

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[24]Sitimela claimed to be a grandson of Dingiswayo's. See Haggard, *Cetywayo*, pp.39-41.

under the new settlement, and he increasingly sought to arrogate to himself such powers. For much of the 1880s, Osborn--as the man on the spot, the local Zulu expert--was to be the main interlocuter between the Zulu and the British officials.[25] As Frances Colenso wrote in 1888, Osborn was himself "creeping up into the place of tyrant, absolute and supreme."[26]

Shepstone--whose own reputation as an expert in African affairs continued unchallenged, except, that is, by Colenso--attacked the 1879 settlement. Although he now asserted that Zulu society consisted of a number of "tribes" yearning "for their ancient and separate existence, relieved of the terrible incubus of the Zulu royal family,"[27] Shepstone claimed that the settlement which replaced one tyrant with many, would lead to "anarchy of a dangerous kind."[28] He sympathized with the difficulties which Osborn faced and advocated instead the implementation of his original system, rooted as it was in notions of the vesting of power in a single Supreme Chief. He wanted Natal and Zululand to be treated

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[26]On Osborn, see Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, pp.82-3.

[26]Frances S. Colenso to Harriet Colenso, late 1888, in Rees, *Letters from Natal*, p.423.

[27]BPP, c.5331, encl. in 13, "Memorandum by Sir Theophilus Shepstone," 12 August, 1887, p.31.

[28]Quoted in Guy, *Heretic*, p.303.

together, and placed under the control of a British Resident, with white magistrates in every district assisting local chiefs. In other words, Shepstone, ever the pragmatist, recognized that British interests were in conflict with the present royal house, and, as at Nodwengu in 1861 and Mlambongwenya in 1873, had no objections to seeing it supplanted by another branch of the family more amenable to imperial designs, or even by a white Supreme Chief. What he did object to and considered foolhardy, was the authorities' failure to adhere to the *principles* of the Shakan system.

Shepstone's advice was not taken in 1879, and although he effectively retired from public life after 1880, he continued to work behind the scenes to promote his vision of native policy. He achieved this through what the Colensos called the "Shepstone clique." Guy identifies the members of the clique as Osborn, the special commissioners to Zululand--successively in 1880s, Sir George Pomeroy Colley, Sir Henry Bulwer and Sir Arthur Havelock--as well as Shepstone's brother John, and his son, Henrique.[29]

In the face of the ongoing upheaval north of the Thukela, Shepstone began to lobby for the reinstallation

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[29]Guy, "Colonial Officials," p.155.

of Cetshwayo. He argued that authority in Zulu society had to be clearly defined and located in a single source. Indeed, Shepstone had not been part of Frere's vilification campaign against Shaka, although he had been severely critical of Cetshwayo. He remained alert to the enormous symbolic importance of the figure of Shaka in the African communities concerned. In 1879, for example, he was telling Wolseley, that "...Dingaan was a far greater monster than Chaka: that whilst the nation generally look back with pride to the memory of the latter as being a great king and organizer, no-one even refers to Dingaan except with horror."[30] He also stressed the considerable power of the Shakan legacy within the Zulu kingdom.[31] Shepstone was careful to link the reinstallation to the excision from Cetshwayo's authority of a strip of southern Zululand, which would be open to settlement by Natal Africans, another cause for which Shepstone had long lobbied.

In 1883, when the British authorities agreed to Cetshwayo's return, Shepstone momentarily emerged from retirement to sally forth across the Thukela to Mthonjaneni once again, to supervise the restoration. This time, however, the arrangements were not conducted

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[30]Wolseley, *Diary, 1879-89*, entry for 8 August, 1879, p.78.

[31]See Guy's discussion, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p.160.

by the British in the name of Shaka. Rather, the authorities specifically continued to discredit the legacy of Shaka. Likewise, those chiefs who had gained positions and territory with the 1879 settlement, resisted the reinstallation of the king through the assertion of pre-Shakan allegiances. Ntshingwayo kaMahole, the Khoza chief, one of the thirteen appointees in terms of the 1879 settlement, said he would have nothing to do with the house of Shaka.[32] Resistance to the attempt to excise a section of the kingdom was, in turn, stated in terms of the inviolability of the Shakan inheritance. As Batakati kaMnyamana put it, when asked to indicate to the authorities the extent of his domain, "How can I divide the land, when it is all the land of Tshaka?"[33]

In 1883 Cetshwayo landed on the Zululand coast and was met by Shepstone. The whole enterprize was greeted with extreme suspicion, with most people, as Shepstone put it, expecting "that we should present some counterfeit instead of Cetywayo himself." Once again, Cetshwayo refused the offer of a carriage to convey him

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[32]BPP, c.3466, p.158, enclosure, Osborn to Bulwer, 28 December, 1882, reply by Ntshingwayo, p.287.

[33]KCAL, Colenso papers, "The course of political events in Zululand, from October, 1881, to 16 June, 1883. Official, Colonial and Zulu Statements," p.436.

to the first camp on the way to the Mthonjaneni. In the walk to the camp, Cetshwayo began to challenge Shepstone's version of the restoration, passing out the message to his supporters who saw him *en route* that the proposed partition should be disregarded. This challenge continued, much to Shepstone's annoyance, for the rest of the trip.[34] When the first senior Zulu royal, Dabulamanzi, came to meet Cetshwayo, the occasion was marked by what Shepstone describes as the "dancing of Chaka's war dance."[35] Finally, the restoration party arrived at Mthonjaneni, the high spot overlooking the Makhosini where Shepstone had camped in 1873. Whereas on the previous occasion Shepstone was eager for the ceremony to take place in the Makhosini and was steered away from the Zulu heartland by Cetshwayo, this time, Cetshwayo, anxious about the small show of support at the various stops on the journey up from the coast, wanted the proceedings to take place in the Makhosini. Shepstone pleading heat, advocated the high ground of the Mthonjaneni.[36]

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[34]BPP, c.3616, enclosure, Sir T. Shepstone to the Governor of Natal, Sir Henry Bulwer, Feb. 27, 1883, Report of the Re-Installation of Cetshwayo, pp.40-42.

[35]Report of the Re-Installation, p.45.

[36]Report of the Re-Installation, p.46.

In contrast to the high pomp with which Shepstone enacted the coronation, the British role in the restoration was subdued, or, as Frances Colenso bitingly remarked, "every effort was made by Sir T. Shepstone (and sons and parasites) to take the gloss off the affair..."[37] Nonetheless, the struggle over the meanings and the significance of various ceremonies and their locations which ensued echoed the earlier ceremony. Once again, the Makhosini rituals of kingship were conducted secretly and independently of the authorities and prior to Shepstone's formal reinstallation of the king,[38] and a story was told that Shaka's spirit, in the form of a snake was seen crossing the Thukela, on a journey up from Shaka's grave south of the Thukela, and signifying the return of the king's *idhlozi* (spirit) to the Zulu kingdom.[39] This time, Shepstone waited eleven days at Mthonjaneni (as opposed to the seven day delay in 1873) before issuing an ultimatum that he would leave if the leading Usuthu (the supporters of the royal house) did not present themselves for the restoration ceremony.

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[37]Frances S. Colenso to Mrs Lyell, 13 January, 1883, Rees (ed.), *Letters from Natal*, p.369.

[38]"Report of the Re-Installation," p.49.

[39]Colenso papers, "Political Events," p.353b.

The notables finally arrived and a short ceremony took place in the course of which Shepstone again read out a set of rules demanding observance of prohibitions on controlling the timing of marriage, on execution without "fair and impartial trial" and on the practices of witchcraft and "smellings out," as well as a ban on the *butha'*ing of regiments. These rules, in contrast to the coronation oaths which were directed at the assertive Zulu notables, struck at the heart of the power of the Zulu monarchy. They were described as a return to the "good and ancient customs...known and followed in the days preceding the establishment by Shaka of the system known as the military system."[40] The controls over marriage and the over the *amabutho* were the basis of royal power as constituted by Shaka.[41] Shepstone did his duty, playing the role that only he could play, and re-installed the Zulu king. But he did so caught in a double bind. Having Cetshwayo back in place was fundamental to his policy, but as the decade proceeded, and as the settlement eroded royal power, his vision of the administration of Zululand through a strong central king was becoming increasingly impossible to implement.

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[40]Binns, *The Last Zulu King*, appendix c.

[41]BPP, c. 3466, p.79, encl. report by Bulwer, quoted in Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p.157.

At the restoration ceremony Shepstone also announced the boundaries of the curtailed area which was to be under Cetshwayo's jurisdiction, as well as the limits of the reserved territory over which he was to have no say. Zibhebhu remained independent of Cetshwayo, and received compensation in the form of new territories in exchange for land which he was obliged to give up in terms of the revised settlement. Henry Francis Fynn was appointed British Resident with Cetshwayo. Shepstone, ever conscious of the role of performance in the political discourse of the Zulu kingdom then enacted his own withdrawal from Zulu affairs. He reputedly began by saying in *isiZulu*, "You see that I have been coming here to the Zulu country for a long time with government laws. You will not see me again because I am now weary of the government's work."[42] He went on to liken himself to an ox that has pulled a wagon for a long time and then is released and put out to graze. He ended: "It will not be inspanned again." And indeed, that was the last time Shepstone would play a part in the drama of colonialism.

Two months later, in March 1883, Zibhebhu defeated the Usuthu in a bloody battle and shortly afterwards attacked the royal homestead. The king went into hiding and a number of the highest Zulu officials were killed.

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[42]Stuart, *uKulumetule*, pp.179-80.

Cetshwayo died in 1884, and Zibhebhu and Hamu continued to devastate the northern areas of the country. By this time, Carnarvon's dream of confederation had ended in humiliation for the British when the colonial forces were routed by Boer commandos. The contending parties in Zululand took advantage of the divisions. The Usuthu enlisted the aid of Boer fire power in exchange for the land north of the Mhlathuze, and were finally able to counter Zibhebhu. At this point the British stepped in, opened negotiations with the South African Republic and the two powers partitioned Zululand between them, with the British formally annexing their section in 1887.

With annexation, the authorities tried to institute a form of the Shepstone system in Zululand, but without the strong central figure that was its lynchpin. Resistance to the newly appointed magistrates continued to disrupt the territory. The authorities were most concerned about the recalcitrancy of Cetshwayo's heir, Dinuzulu, and the regent, Ndabuko, in the Ndwandwe district, where the magistrate reported they were defying his authority. In November 1887 the Governor travelled to Zululand to reprimand Dinuzulu and Ndabuko for continued intransigence and to fine them for activities since annexation. He declared,

> Dinuzulu must know and all the Zulus must know that the rule of the House of Shaka is a thing

> of the past. It is dead. It is like water spilt on the ground. The Queen now rules Zululand and no-one else.[43]

Continued violence finally led to British troops entering the territory and the removal of the Usuthu leaders. The British authorities accused Dinuzulu of being in revolt against them, tried him and sentenced him to ten years imprisonment on the island of St. Helena.

In the years before the attempted confederation, Shepstone had operated under tight fiscal constraints. He relied on imagination, pageantry and symbolic acts of sovereign power in order to assert his influence north of the Thukela, and to bolster his authority in colonial Natal. He effectively harnessed the image of Shaka to his project. With confederation and the Anglo-Zulu War, sheer coercive weight replaced the dramaturgical and interior, emic approach to domination. In the course of the war, the British authorities resolved to break the power of the Zulu royal house and sought to justify their intervention in the independent Zulu kingdom. To do this, they embarked on a campaign to discredit and annul the symbolic power of the image of the first Zulu king. This campaign, which Shepstone was critical of, and which he believed to be unworkable, was a corollary of

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[43]BB, enclosure 2 in 37, p.64, Governor, Sir Arthur Havelock to Dinuzulu and Ndabuko.

confederation which he supported. In the face of this contradiction Shepstone restored Cetshwayo on terms fundamentally at odds with the system of native administration which he advocated.

The authorities' plan to discredit Shaka was foiled in two ways: firstly, the image of Shaka enjoyed a widespread appeal beyond that which they, with the exception of Shepstone, recognized, and was not easily banished from the consciousness of the inhabitants of the former Zulu kingdom. Secondly, the "pre-Shakan" settlement which they sought to impose on the territory, lacked a central authority, which led to widespread instability across the territory. Ultimately the British were forced by the conflicts which resulted to annex Zululand, and eventually, to restore Cetshwayo. As Shepstone had recognized, the prospect of government without a central figure posed problems beyond the capacities of the local administration to deal with. Indeed, European powers generally did not have the power to conquer, rule and exploit their colonies without tapping into existing centres of power and making symbolic use of indigenous conceptions of power. Moreover, those indigenous ideas were in themselves too potent and too resilient to be excised in the way that the British hoped they coould be.

Where Shepstone looked to the Zulu past and found in Shaka a model for the Natal Native Administration, in the the course of events leading up to and following the Anglo-Zulu war, Shaka and Shakan times were transformed into a metaphor for contemporary politics. The thrust of the argument thus far in this chapter is that the metaphor did not simply involve an image of Shaka as a tyrant, but rather it had compressed into it a much richer complexity of meanings incorporating Shepstone's positive evaluations, Frere's negative ones, as well as echoes of pragmatism which underlay the restoration.

Zulu: "a household word"

The Anglo-Zulu war altered fundamentally Europe's appreciation and understanding of the Zulu people and the Zulu kings. With the war "the Zulu" achieved a distinct and recognizable identity in the eyes of the British. It was an identity which, in the new era of mass circulation, the popular press was--for the first time--key in giving shape to.[44] Illustrated weeklies sent their artists off to Zululand, some of the first photographs date from this period, and publishers commissioned heroic portraits. As Fred Fynney put it in

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[44]Martin, "British Images of the Zulu," chapter six.

a lecture given in about 1880, "'Zulu' has become almost a household word."[45] Indeed, it was as though the act of being written about established the existence of a distinct people, "the Zulu." On the whole, the press tended to follow Frere's line, that the Zulu people had to be freed from the cruelty and despotism of Cetshwayo and the legacy of the tyrant, Shaka. This theme was pursued in a host of books, articles, pamphlets, lectures and other ephemera that followed the war. Colonists, officials and military personnel who served in the war all had their say.[46]

Yet at the same time as the tyranny and the despotic savagery of the Zulu rulers was emphasized, the defeat of the British at Isandlwana also led British writers to explore themes of the exceptional abilities of the Zulu, especially their remarkable military system, their display of discipline, unity, courage, which commanded respect and admiration. Queen Victoria herself described the Zulu as "the finest and bravest race in South

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[45]A.B. Fynney, "The Rise and Fall of the Zulu Nation", published in *Zululand and the Zulus*, Pietermaritzburg, Horne Bros., 1884, reprinted Pretoria, The State Library, 1967, p.1.

[46]See, for example, H.H. Parr, *A Sketch of the Kafir and Zulu Wars: Guadana to Isandlwana*, London, Kegan Paul, 1880; W.E. Montague, *Campaigning in South Africa: Reminiscences of an Officer in 1879*, London, W. Blackwood & Sons, 1880; W. Ashe and E.V.W. Edgell, *The Story of the Zulu Campaign*, London, Low, Marshe, Searle and Rivington, 1880.

Africa."[47] This emphasis on the exceptional qualities of the Zulu was echoed elsewhere in the empire where defeated but challenging enemies--worthy foes like the Asante, the Ghurkas, or the "Fuzzy-Wuzzies" who broke the British square--came to be admired. Insofar as this admiration focused on the military system, it followed closely Shepstone's own analysis of Zulu power. But, the post-war regard was also based on grounds more limited than the admiration which Shepstone accorded the Zulu system. Where Shepstone favored the despotism of the Zulu kings, the post-war admiration was solely for the drilling and the discipline of the Zulu army.

There were, of course, some opposition views, notably those voiced by clerics like Colenso. Colenso's understanding of the Zulu kingdom was qualitatively different from that expressed in the official pronouncements of the Anglo-Zulu war. With the support of the Aborigines' Protection Society (APS), and through the media of his own printing press at Bishopstowe, letters to the London papers and APS pamphlets,[48] Colenso took issue with Frere's account of Zulu history which depicted Cetshwayo's rule as a reversion to the Shakan

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[47]Quoted in Martin, "British Images," p.287.

[48]See, for example, F.W. Chesson, *The War in Zululand: a Brief Review of Sir Bartle Frere's Policy*, London, King, 1879. Also see *The Aborigines Friend*, 1879.

model and as a reaction to the mildness of Mpande's reign. He argued that Frere had been

> unceasing in his efforts to blacken Cetshwayo's character and to make him appear odious in the eyes of Englishmen, who would never have endured, as they have done hitherto--very reluctantly, it is true, and with grave misgivings--that such things should have been done in their name in these parts, if they had not been led to suppose that the Zulu King was really the loathsome monster which Sir B.Frere has persistently represented him to be.[49]

Colenso's approach was to expose Frere's tactics and to defend Cetshwayo, and not to enter into debate about the earlier kings.

Bishop Colenso died on 20th June, 1883, and from then on, his arguments were developed and carried forward by his family. Frances Colenso, in her account of the Zulu War, written together with Anthony Durnford, argued that Cetshwayo had made great advances since the times and practices of his predecessors, Shaka and Dingane, and

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[48]Vijn, *Cetshwayo's Dutchman*, preface by Colenso, pp.vii-viii. See also Frances S. Colenso to Mrs Lyell, 19 January. 1879, in which Mrs. Colenso notes in response to the allegations of Zulu cruelty that "Cetewayo of course has no prisons nor other material for dealing with criminals, and those who break the 6th (and 7th) commandment in Zululand have to be knocked on the head, but I venture to say that more blood was shed, and that innocent blood too, here in Natal 5 years ago when the Langalibalele rebellion occurred...than has been shed in Zululand since C. was crowned." (Rees, *Letters from Natal*, p.340.) See also Frances S. Colenso to Mrs Lyell, 1 January, 1882: "I am not sure that monarchy as paternal government, checked as it is by the Indunas, the hereditary councillors of the King, is not quite the best, perhaps the only form of government for people on the Zulu level."(p.359) F. S. Colenso to Mrs. Lyell, 14 March, 1882, discussing the lies about the Zulu monarchy put about by Frere and others, comments, "You cannot think how much time and what pains have been expended in this house searching into everything connected with the history of Cetewayo and of Zululand, before, during and since the last war."(p.363)

like Bishop Colenso, she gave scant attention to historical background, according the most space to events leading up to the war. She refused Frere's argument that the origins of the war lay in Shaka's legacy.[50] In a lecture on Zululand, Harriet Colenso covered Shaka's reign only briefly, noting however that the first Europeans soon began "to dissipate the idea of his celestial character."[51]

Interest in the Zulu kingdom waned after their defeat at Ulundi, and then, in 1882, experienced a recrudescence when Cetshwayo visited London to plead for his restoration. Rider Haggard's book, *Cetywayo and His White Neighbours*, was timed to coincide with the visit and inaugurated Haggard's career as one of the foremost and most prolific representers of "the Zulu" outside of Zululand. By this time, Haggard had already published three reports founded on his experiences in South Africa, and begun to establish himself as a knowledgeable commentator on the country. His first article, "The Transvaal," was published in *Macmillan's Magazine* in May, 1877. In it Haggard gave a brief account of the

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[50]Colenso and Durnford, *History of the Zulu War and its Origin*, p.9.

[51]H.E. Colenso, "Zululand: Past and Present," lecture given to the Members in the Memorial Hall, 1st October, 1890, and published in *The Journal of the Manchester Geographical Society*, 1890, p.5.

territory's history and made the case for annexation.[52] His second article was a description of "A Zulu War Dance" published in *The Gentleman's Magazine*.[53] Haggard based this account on his direct experience of a dance which he had attended as a member of Sir Henry Bulwer's staff at the homestead of Chief Pakati.[54] In September of the same year, a third article appeared in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, an account of the visit which he undertook as a member of Shepstone's staff to the Pedi chief, Sekhukhuni.[55]

Haggard then moved back to England and wrote *Cetywayo and his White Neighbours*. The book was a carefully researched presentation of recent political developments in south-east Africa. Haggard criticized the division of the Zulu kingdom into thirteen chieftaincies, advocating instead a return to the Shepstone system. He argued that the "laws" which were proclaimed at the coronation were in no way binding on the independent Zulu king.[56]

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[52]"The Transvaal," *Macmillan's Magazine*, XXXVI, May, 1877, pp.71-9.

[53]"A Zulu War Dance," *Gentleman's Magazine*, CCXLIII, July, 1877, pp.94-107.

[54]Higgins, *The Great Storyteller*, p.20; "A Visit to the Chief Secocoeni," *Gentleman's Magazine*, CCXLIII, pp.302-18.

[55]"A Visit to the Chief Secocoeni", *The Gentleman's Magazine*, September, 1877.

[56]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.12.

In this work, Haggard was critical of aspects of colonial policy towards the Zulu kingdom, but he defended the Secretary of Native Affairs and the Shepstonian system:

> It is very clear that things cannot remain in their present condition. If they do, it is probable that the Resident will sooner or later be assassinated; not from any personal motives, but as a political necessity, and some second Chaka will rise up and found a new Zulu dynasty, sweeping away our artificial chiefs and divisions like cobwebs.[57]

The book opens with a discussion of the possibility of Cetshwayo's restoration. "To understand the position of Cetywayo," Haggard writes, "both with reference to his subjects and the English Government, it will be necessary to touch, though briefly, on the history of Zululand since it became a nation, and also on the principal events of the ex king's reign."[58] Naturally, Haggard begins with Shaka, the "African Attila" whose "invincible armies...had slaughtered more than a million human beings."[59] If Haggard's Shaka was "the presiding genius of a saturnalia of slaughter," his methods of government and warfare were nonetheless "most effective."[60] Detailing the first Zulu king's achievements, Haggard

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[57]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.52.

[58]Haggard, *Cetewayo*, p.3.

[59]Haggard, *Cetewayo*, p.3.

[60]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.3.

concluded that "the result was, that though Chaka's armies were occasionally annihilated, they were rarely defeated and never ran away."[61] For Haggard, the Zulu military system was "was the universal-service system of Germany brought to absolute perfection."[62]

Haggard's study acknowledged the pressures of this system on Cetshwayo, notably the link between killing and the maintenance of authority, but Haggard refused to countenance the Colensos' argument that this constituted a defence of Cetshwayo.[63] "To admit that the Zulu king has the right to kill as many of his subjects as he chooses, so long as they will tolerate being killed is one thing, but it is certainly surprising to find educated Europeans adopting a line of defence of these proceedings on his behalf that amounts to a virtual expression of approval, or at least of easy toleration."[64] In these respects Haggard's rhetoric echoed that of the war-mongering officials seeking to "liberate" the country from the tyranny of the Zulu kings. But Haggard's criticism of Colenso was contradictory, for elsewhere, Haggard makes practically

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[61]Haggard, Cetewayo, p.4.

[62]Haggard, Cetywayo, p.21.

[63]Haggard, Cetywayo, pp.5, 13, 23.

[64]Haggard, Cetewayo, p.14, also see p.54..

the same judgement as Colenso.[65] Haggard also disputed another claim about Cetshwayo, Sir Garnet Wolseley's assertion that Cetshwayo's rule was built up "without any of the ordinary and lawful foundations of authority, and by the mere vigour and vitality of an individual character."[66] Haggard believed that Cetshwayo's authority was based on a combination of the legacy of Shaka and the present king's own abilities--the relevance of ability being itself a Shakan legacy--as well as a perception within the Zulu kingdom of the need for a strong central authority. Haggard further acknowledged that vast numbers would rally to the side of Cetshwayo's legal heir.[67] For Haggard, writing in 1882, the choice was either that the British government would have to step in as a clearly defined political authority or Cetshwayo would have to be restored and "allowed to rule in his own fashion or not at all."[68] Thus he reproduced Shepstone's analysis of the nature of political authority in the Zulu kingdom, and acknowledged its potential powers.

In 1888, a second edition of *Cetywayo and His White Neighbours* appeared, with a new introduction. In the new

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[65]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, pp.18, 19, 35.

[66]Wolseley, quoted in Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.35.

[67]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.54.

[68]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.56.

introduction Haggard, discussing the annexation of Zululand to the British Crown in 1887, invoked the Shepstonian conception of the peculiar nature of Zulu political authority,

> In the Zulu people the Queen will, I am convinced, find subjects as loyal and as devoted as any she owns...and for so long as it [the Zulu country] is ruled as Zulus expect to be ruled, with firmness and without vacillation, there is little fear of serious disturbance.[69]

Like Shepstone, Haggard viewed the dispossession of Africans of their lands by white farmers as "little short of wicked,"[70] and he manifested the same relativism with regard to the identification of savagery and civilization. Again, like Shepstone, this was cast in the typically evolutionist language of the day.

> I could never discern a superiority so great in ourselves as to authorise us, by right divine as it were, to destroy the coloured man and take his lands. It is difficult to see why a Zulu, for instance, has not as much right to live in his own way as a Boer or an Englishman. Of course, there is another extreme. Nothing is more ridiculous than the length to which the black brother theory is sometimes driven by enthusiasts. A savage is one thing, and a civilised man is another; and though civilised men may and do become savages, I personally doubt if the converse is even possible. But whether the civilised man, with his gin, his greed, and his dynamite, is really so very superior to the savage is another question, and

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[69]Haggard, *Cetewayo*, p. xlviii. Also see pp.45-6, where Haggard noted, "It must be remembered that when once they have found their master, there exists no more law-abiding people in the world than the Zulu, provided that they are ruled firmly, and above all, justly."

[70]Haggard, *Cetewayo*, p.liii.

> one which would bear argument, although this is not the place to argue it...Savagery is only a question of degree.[71]

In the new introduction to *Cetywayo and His White neighbours*, Haggard condemned the war against the Zulu as "unjust"[72] but indicted Cetshwayo for offences against his own people "whom he ruled with considerable cruelty."[73] For Haggard, by 1888, Cetshwayo was "a man of some virtues and many faults, who inherited much of his great-uncle Chaka's ferocity without his genius."[74]

Later in the same year that *Cetywayo and His White Neighbours* was published, Haggard wrote two essays for *The South African*, on "The Restoration of Cetywayo," and "Some Aspects of the Native Question in the Transvaal,"[75] which made many of the same arguments as the book. Effectively, the Anglo-Zulu war created an interest in the Zulu. Haggard fed that interest, but he fed it not with Frere's version of Zulu history and of Shaka, but that of his "old friend and chief," Shepstone, overlain perhaps, with some of the post-war sentiments of the Zulu

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[71]Haggard, *Cetewayo*, third edition, p.liii.

[72]Haggard, *Cetwayo*, p.xiii.

[73]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.xiv.

[74]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.xxix.

[75]*The South African*, 28 September, 9 November, 1882.

as worthy foes. This was the view which Haggard relayed to a readership hungry for tales of Africa.

While *Cetewayo and his White Neighbours* was influential, it was in the realm of popular romance that Haggard really suceeded in entrenching Shepstone's Shaka. In 1884, Haggard published *The Witch's Head*, which rehearses in fictional form a number of his arguments in support of Shepstone. The book features Shepstone, whom Haggard described as "the white t'Chaka" and "father of the Zulus,"[76] as well as the battle of Isandlwana, while the model for another of the characters, Mr. Alston, was Melmoth Osborn, and the book includes sections of Haggard's real-life conversations with Osborn.[77] The book was well-received, selling thousands of copies, and appearing in numerous editions.[78]

In September 1885, Rider Haggard published his most famous romance, *King Solomon's Mines*.[79] Haggard wrote the book in six weeks in response to Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. It was soon heralded as

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[76]H.R. Haggard, *The Witches Head*, London, Spencer Blackett, 1884, p.182.

[77]Higgins, *The Great Storyteller*, London, Cassell, 1981, p.22.

[78]Higgins, *The Great Storyteller*, pp.70, 71, 115; P.B. Ellis, *H. Rider Haggard: A Voice from the Infinite*, London and Henley, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978, pp.96-7.

[79]H. Rider Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, London, Cassell, 1885.

"The Most Amazing Story Ever Written."[80] Stevenson himself commented on Haggard's remarkable "command of the savage way of speaking,"[81] the young Winston Churchill was "absorbed" by the tale, while the former prime minister, Sir William Gladstone, was another of its fans.[82] In 1887, Haggard published *She*, the story of a quest which leads three British travellers to the land of the cannibalistic Amahagger ruled by Ayesha, She-who-must be-obeyed, an immortal and beautiful white queen reigning in the interior of Africa. This book, too, was an instant bestseller.[83]

While none of Haggard's earliest novels were set in the Zulu kingdom, Zulus figure prominently in them, either as fine and special individuals, as acknowledged models for the fictional communities in the novels, or even as the pole which defined their opposite, people of the sky/heavens (Zulu) as opposed to people of the rock (Amahagger), or the orderly, well-trained Zulu set up in opposition to the cannibalistic Amahagger.[84] In the

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[80]Ellis, *A Voice from the Infinite*, p.1.

[81]Ellis, *A Voice from the Infinite*, p.101.

[82]Ellis, *A Voice from the Infinite*, p.102.

[83]Ellis, *Voice from the Infinite*, p.104.

[84] *King Solomon's Mines* is set somewhere north of Zulu country and the Kukuanas are depicted as a branch of the Zulus (p.251) Their society is imagined in terms of a host of very "Zulu" social and political institutions, and demonstrates features strongly akin to the

latter opposition we detect a direct echo of Shepstone's use of the Natal/cannibalism and Zulu kingdom/social order oppositions. In 1887, Haggard introduced his first fully developed Zulu character--Umslopogaas "the bravest Zulu of them all"[85]-- into his latest novel, *Allan Quartermain*.

"The novelist of indirect rule"--Shepstone style

In an analysis of *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, literary scholar David Bunn posits that Haggard "invents an African landscape so as to explore a model of colonial development."[86] While Bunn is primarily concerned with the significance of this for the ideological conflation in colonial fiction of the image of woman and the image of Africa, his proposition has implications for the understanding of Shaka as presented in Haggard's novels. Bunn argues that *King Solomon's Mines*, and the other novel which he looks at briefly, *Allan Quatermain*, chart the development of British indirect rule in Africa. "As

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practice of *ukuhlonipha*, the giving of the *bayete* salute and so on. Haggard mentions the similarity in the introduction, saying he wishes he could go into the differences, but that he cannot.

[85]Etherington, *Rider Haggard*, p.44.

[86]D. Bunn, "Embodying Africa: Description, Ideology, Imperialism, and the Colonial Romance," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Northwestern University, 1987, p.iv.

such," he concludes, "they are an historically specific account of the structures and strategies that put imperialist ideology into practice."[87]

Norman Etherington, who also considers the connections between the image of women and Africa in Haggard's work, describes Haggard as "the novelist of indirect rule."[88] Etherington argues that the "Shepstonian ideal of good imperial government was never absent from Haggard's mind when he wrote about relations between captive nations and their conquerors,"[89] and suggests this sophisticated perspective as the resolution to the contradictions which many critics have identified in Haggard between his overtly imperialist politics and the anticolonialist stances of many of his novels.

Bunn and Etherington correctly point to the exploration of themes of imperialism in Haggard's novels, but fail to explore the way in which Shepstone's version of colonial rule differed from that of indirect rule elsewhere. They are not alert to the extent to which colonial discourse drew on early African discourses, notably the connection between Shaka and questions of

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[87]Bunn, "Embodying Africa," pp.204-5.

[88]Etherington, *Rider Haggard*, p.104.

[89]Etherington, *Rider Haggard*, p.104.

sovereignty. Specifically, they neglect the impact on Haggard's novels of African narratives as transmitted and translated through Shepstone. They fail to explore the significance in Haggard's works of the entry of Europeans deep into African society beyond the easy identification of their journeys as "penetration," and they miss the intertwining of indigenous and colonial logics which is reflected in the novels.

In *She*, for example, the novelist explores the nature of rule by an outsider--the immortal white Ayesha--over a local African society. Political authority in Ayesha's case is based on the awe which she inspires. Like Shepstone, who lacked the coercive and financial means to establish a real basis for his power, Ayesha had no standing army. She asks of her British visitors, "How thinkest thou that I rule these people? I have but a regiment of guards to do my bidding, therefore it is not by force. It is by terror. My empire is of the imagination."[90]

In *King Solomon's Mines*, the Englishmen--Alan Quartermain, Sir Henry Curtis and Captain Good--penetrate deep into Kukuanaland, involving themselves in local

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[90]H.R. Haggard, *She*, in *Three Adventure Novels of H. Rider Haggard*, Dover Publications, New York, Dover Publications, 1951, first published in London, Longmans, Green, 1887, p.134.

politics and ultimately becoming a important force in the overthrow of King Twala. They install in his place a member of their own party, Umbopa, the long absent rightful heir. Like Shepstone at Nodwengu, the three Europeans are treated like "kings" from the time of their arrival. They are greeted with the royal salute, and gain the power over life and death. Finally Haggard has the newly installed Umbopa rehearse Cetshwayo's restoration oaths.

In 1892 Haggard published *Nada the Lily*. The idea for this book originated with Haggard's friend and critic, and one time co-author, Andrew Lang, who wrote in the *Scots Observer* at much the same time as he was urging Haggard to write this piece, "how delicious a novel all Zulu, without a white face in it, would be!"[91] *Nada the Lily* is an "all Zulu" book about the reign of Shaka told "in a popular shape."[92] "An attempt has been made in these pages," writes Haggard in the preface, "to set out the true character of this colossal genius and most evil man,--a Napoleon and a Tiberius in one--..."[93] The novel tells the story of the origins of one of Haggard's most

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[91]Quoted in M. Cohen, *Rider Haggard: His Life and Works*, London, Hutchinson, 1960, p.187.

[92]Haggard, *Nada*, p.ix.

[93]Haggard, *Nada*, p.ix.

popular characters (already encountered in the novel *Allan Quatermaine*) Umslopogaas.[94] In *Nada the Lily*, Shaka is portrayed as both a bloodthirsty tyrant and as a noble and able leader, one who would "always save the life of a brave man."[95] Haggard narrates how Baleka, a paramour of Shaka's, conceives the king's child and pleads with his mother, Nandi, to help her save the child from the death that is the fate of all the king's progeny.

One of Shaka's senior councillors, Baleka's brother, Mopo, is drawn into the plan to save the child. When his wife gives birth to twins, Mopo exchanges the body of his own stillborn son for that of the king's son whom he has been ordered by Shaka to kill. Shaka's son, the child "Umslopogaas" is then reared as Mopo's son, and brother to the other twin, Mopo's daughter, the wondrously beautiful Nada, after whom the book takes its title.

In this way, Haggard invents a real heir for Shaka, and uses his descent from the Zulu king to invest him with exceptional abilities which make him able to achieve astonishing things in the course of the novel. In this

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[94]In fact, the real Umslopogaas on whom this character was modelled was Shepstone's head attendant, and a son of the Swazi king, Mswati II.

[95]Haggard, *Nada*, p.47.

story, Haggard explores the notion of traditional leadership: both the charismatic leadership of Shaka, and its transformation into inherited leadership as invested in Umslopogaas. Shaka's power is, on the one hand, ordained. Haggard--employing the technique from the oral traditions--has the young child Shaka fortell his own greatness early in the book. His status is also represented as a consequence of his own bold deeds, and his capacity to provide decisive leadership. Likewise, Umslopogaas, whose royalty is inherited, demonstrates the same abilities and daring, a point which Haggard has Shaka recognize in the book, saying, "Why this calf is such another one as was dropped long ago in the kraal of Senzangacona...As I was, so is this boy."[96]

Over time, the Zulu king's power and authority came to be invested with a new legitimacy: after Shaka's death, Haggard has Mopo note, there were "many in the land who loved the memory of Chaka...For now that Chaka was dead, people forgot how evilly he had dealt with them, and remembered only that he was a great man, who had made the Zulu people out of nothing, as a smith fashions a bright spear from a lump of iron."[97] Mopo, like Shepstone, is a kingmaker, who advises Shaka on how

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[96]Haggard, *Nada*, pp.52-3.

[97]Haggard, *Nada*, p.179.

to trick his witchdoctors, who hides the rightful heir, kills Shaka, and plays Mpande off against Dingane, to bring down the latter. Haggard, like Shepstone, suggests that Zulu terrain is appropriately searched for concepts of sovereignty that might be useful for colonial rule. The reading of power in *Nada the Lily* is strongly Shepstonian. Unlike the despotism of Ayesha in *She*, Shaka, while cruel, is also benevolent and capable. The novel explores the way in which the Shepstone system sought to reach into a Zulu world to discover the principles by which it might best establish its authority. As in Shepstone's texts, the oppositions in Haggard's novels are not those typical of much late Victorian literature.

When completed, *Nada the Lily* was serialized in the *Illustrated London News*[98] as well as the *New York Herald*,[99] and the book appeared in May, 1892. Haggard dedicated the book to Shepstone. Investing him with yet another paternity, and addressing Shepstone by his Zulu name, as "Sompseu, my father," Rider Haggard invoked the ~~tale~~ of how Shepstone "first...mastered this people of the Zulu" by outsitting the Zulu at the nomination of Cetshwayo:

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[98]*Illustrated London News*, 2 January-7 March, 1892.

[99]*New York Herald*, 3 Jan-1 May, 1892.

> Thus, Sompseu, your name became great among the people of the Zulu, as already it was great among many another tribe, and their nobles did you homage, and the gave you the *Bayete*, the royal salute, declaring by the mouth of their Council that in you dwelt the spirit of Chaka.[100]

In this way Haggard established Shepstone's expertise on "the Zulu," and on questions of sovereignty, and through it, his own authority to write about Shaka, and the Zulu. Haggard sent a copy to Shepstone who wrote back, "I need not say how gratifying to me that gift was; nor how deeply touching to me the kind words of the Dedication were. Indeed, you give far more credit than I am entitled to. Your kindly expressions, however, vividly brought to mind a whole chapter of the pleasant past between us, the exact counterpart of which will, I suppose, never occur to any other two."[101] It was to be the last communication between the friends, for on 23 June, 1893, Shepstone died.

The dedication to Shepstone of *Nada the Lily* makes explicit its Shepstonian legacy: the connections between the novel and issues of administration, sovereignty and Shaka. The novel was at once a recognition of the power of the image of Shaka and an imaginative exploration of

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[100]Haggard, *Nada*, dedication, p.v.

[101]Shepstone to Haggard, 13 July, 1892, quoted in Haggard, *Days of My Life*, vol.2, p.23.

its possibilities in distinctly Shepstonian terms. Thus the novel entrenched the legacy of Shaka. As Mopo said in the novel:

> Many of the great chiefs who are friends to me hate Dingaan and fear him, and did they know that a son of Chaka lived...he may well climb to the throne upon their shoulders. Also the soldiers love the name of Chaka, though he dealt cruelly with them, because at least he was brave and generous. But they do not love Dingaan, for his burdens are the burdens of Chaka but his gifts are the gifts of Dingaan; therefore they would welcome Chaka's son if once they knew him for certain.[102]

Umslopogaas's various adventures cause him to lose a taste for power, though had he wished for it, he would have got it. Instead he ended up fighting on the side of Mbuyazi against Cetshwayo at the battle on Ndondakusuka. Through his support of Mbuyazi, Umslopogaas, as Shaka's real heir, lends the sanction of the direct line of Shaka to Mbuyazi's claim to the kingship. In the novel, the machinations of Mopo, the statesman, on behalf of Umslopogaas, the son of Shaka, ended at the battle of Ndondakusuka, the point at which, in real life, the machinations of Shepstone, the statesman, regarding the Zulu succession, began. The novel is filled with imperial longing for a real alternative to existing house of Shaka, as well as a typically Shepstonian acknowledgement of its symbolic power. Indeed, the telling of the story that Haggard records in *Nada the*

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[102]Haggard, *Nada*, p.254.

Lily takes place on the grave of Shaka, where the elderly Mopo has retired.[103]

In placing the narrator, Mopo, on the grave of Shaka, Haggard demonstrates an understanding of the significance of Shaka which the colonial authorities at the time of Anglo-Zulu War lacked, but which Shepstone grasped in full measure. But *Nada* was not just a novel shaped by the concerns of early Natal native policy. The story of *Nada the Lily* also rehearsed later views of Zulu politics: Shaka was portrayed as a tyrant "who slaughtered more than a million human beings."[104] Haggard's imagery constantly invoked upheaval and wanton butchery. In Shaka's domain, even the sun sank "redly, flooding the land with blood. It was as though, Haggard continued, "all the blood that Chaka had shed flowed about the land Chaka ruled."[105] Indeed, the story was so gory it caused an outcry at the time of its publication.[106] The representation of Shaka as a bloodthirsty tyrant thus justified his murder in the book by Mopo. The echo in the novel of imperial arguments to justify intervention in the Zulu kingdom on the eve of

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[103]Haggard, *Nada*, pp.1, 6.

[104]Haggard, *Nada*, editor's (i.e. Haggard's) note, p.5.

[106]Haggard, *Nada*, p.161.

[106]Haggard, *Days of My Life*, vol.2, p.18.

the Anglo-Zulu War is unmistakable. But Haggard's Shaka was also a gifted leader of ability, a king who succeeded, in Kipling's terms, in "drilling" men. He had a "military organisation, perhaps the most wonderful the world has seen."[107] Through his novels, Haggard entrenched in the popular mind the image of the Zulus as natural fighters. As it was put in *King Solomon's Mines*, "There are two things in the world as I have found it which cannot be prevented: you cannot keep a Zulu from fighting or a sailor from falling in love upon the slightest provocation." Shaka's perfectly trained regiments were depicted by Haggard as the source of his power and his kingship, and his own daring, confidence and abilities were part of the legitimacy of his kingship. This depiction was partly the legacy of the post-war fascination with "the Zulu," but, it also had origins in Shepstone's understanding of the first Zulu king and his system of administration.

The version of Shaka which Haggard promoted was not his invention. It was an image shaped in the course of three developments. The first was Shepstone's enactment of Shaka in the development of a model for Natal native policy; the second, the invocation of Shaka-the-tyrant as the reason for British involvement north of the Thukela;

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[107]Haggard, *Nada*, p.ix.

and the third, a return to the emphasis on Shaka as a source of order and discipline, in strong echo of Shepstone's original view of the first Zulu king.

Haggard's *Nada* demonstrates a recognition that the questions of power and sovereignty were harnessed inextricably to Shaka, and as such, captured, not just the dilemmas of indirect rule, but the peculiar problems posed by Shepstone's unique apprehension of the logic of Shaka and its ideological power. The novel develops the implication of Shepstone's views of Shaka and establishes the Zulu king--"one of the greatest geniuses and most wicked men who ever lived"[108]--as a fully ambiguous figure in relation to power and sovereignty.

The burden of my argument here is that the ambiguity that characterizes many accounts of Shaka, and which has been variously ascribed to the contributions of twentieth-century authors like Thomas Mofolo, Ernst Ritter or Mazizi Kunene, derived originally from African oral texts, and indigenous political developments. This ambiguity was taken up and given a particular shape by Shepstone. His appropriation of Shaka as the basis of Natal native policy in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the rejection of Shaka in the period

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[108]Haggard, *Nada*, editor's note (i.e. Haggard's note) p.5.

leading up to the Anglo-Zulu war, and the post-war admiration of the Zulu, were all part of the fashioning of that image. All of these processes made Haggard's Shaka deeply ambiguous.

Haggard's writings were profoundly influenced by his visit to South Africa,[109] and his close friendship with Shepstone and the other "native experts" who were part of the annexation party that made the trip to Pretoria with Shepstone in 1877.[110] He acknowledged them repeatedly as the sources of many of his tales: Osborn's eyewitness account of the battle of Ndondakusuka, for example, was used in a later novel.[111] Haggard admired Osborn's fluency in *isiZulu* and credited him with an intimate knowledge of the "Zulu" mode of thought. From Fynney, Haggard heard tell of a great witchfinding which he used as the basis for the witchhunt scene in *King Solomon's Mines*. For Fynney, Shaka, "the Lion of the Zulu Nation,"[112] had "great ability as a general"[113] and he

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[109]See also Norman Etherington, "South African Origins of Rider Haggard's Early African Romances," *Notes and Queries*, 24, 1977, pp.436-8.

[110]On Haggard's contact with Fynney and the influence of Fynney on his work see Haggard, *Days of My Life*, vol.1, pp.56, 76; Ellis, pp.37, 43; Higgins, *The Great Storyteller*, pp.19, 22, 74, 99.

[111]Higgins, *The Great Storyteller*, pp.18, 22-23.

[112]Fynney, *Zululand and the Zulus*, p.4.

[113]Fynney, *Zululand and the Zulus*, p.5.

viewed Shaka's establishment of his political authority in admiring terms:

> After destroying the head of a tribe, Tyaka showed great consideration for the people, supplying them liberally with cattle, and, whilst dreaded, he was said to have a liberal hand, and to be a benefactor to those with small kraals, so that each day found him adding numbers of subjects to his already large following, and thus increasing his power. It may be a matter of wonder that such a man could gain esteem; but he did, and was literally worshipped. He did all he could to re-assure those whom he conquered.[114]
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> Tyaka's character appears to have been one which was an enigma even to the Zulus themselves, for as one of his old indunas once explained to me, it was impossible even to say with him what the next move would be. He said, "...He was a strange man, nay, a *silwana* (a wild animal), but we Zulus loved him for all that." He never allowed a brave man to go unrewarded, or a coward to go unpunished...[115]

Furthermore, Fynney saw Shakan atrocities, such as the killings which followed the death of Nandi, as clever strategies employed by Shaka.[116] Fynney was thanked by name in the preface to *Nada the Lily*, and Haggard consulted his writings, as well as D. Leslie's *Among the Zulus and Amatongas*,[117] Bird's *Annals of Natal*[118] and

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[114]Fynney, *Zululand and the Zulus*, p.7.

[115]Fynney, *Zululand and the Zulus*, p.9.

[116]Fynney, *Zululand and the Zulus*, p.11

[117]D. Leslie, *Among the Zulus and AmaTongas*, first published Glasgow and Edinburgh, Edmonston and Douglas, 1875, republished New York, Negro Universities Press, 1961.

[118]Bird, *Annals*.

relevant official documents.[119] Indeed, Haggard wrote of *King Solomon's Mines* in 1894, "It would be impossible for me to define where fact ends and fiction begins in the work, as the two are very much mixed up together,"[120] and he noted that many readers took books like *King Solomon's Mines* to be true accounts.[121]

The ambiguity of Shaka as portrayed in *Nada the Lily* raises another theme which Haggard's books explore, the relationship between savagery and civilization. Etherington has argued that the consistent identification of the European past with the African present which pervades the earlier novels like *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, is played out in parallel between the "all Zulu" novel, *Nada*, and the book which Haggard wrote immediately before it, *Eric Brighteyes*, in which all the characters were white, and the plot very similar to *Nada the Lily*. Etherington argues that the similarities were not just a consequence of Haggard's use of a formula, but were a consequence of his preoccupation with the theme of common humanity.

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[118]Higgins, *The Great Storyteller*, p.131.

[120]Quoted in Higgins, *The Great Storyteller*, p.71.

[121]Haggard, *Days of My Life*, vol.1, p.242.

Etherington further suggests that Haggard's popularity as a novelist was the result of his ability to give

> unique expression to a powerful mythology which sprang up after Darwin and which still grips the imaginations of large numbers of people in all walks of life. The basic ideas that people harbor within themselves vestiges of mankind's wild primitive past, and that the discovery of those hidden facets of the personality is akin to a journey from civilized Europe into darkest Africa, can be expressed in complex "serious" literature as variously as it can in "trashy" best-sellers or movies.[122]

In other words, the interior core of European man is equated with the African savage. With this argument, Etherington is developing Margaret Atwood's view of Haggard's work as a journey into the unknown region of self, the unconscious, and a confrontation with what lurks there. For Freudians or Jungians, Haggard is understood to have dredged up eternal truths from within his own psyche. Thus Etherington attributes the potency of Haggard's romances penned between 1885-1892 to their unique metaphorical expression of late Victorian concepts of evolution, psychology and anthropology. For those writers, Haggard's treks into Africa were forays into the unconscious unknown self. Etherington's arguments are compelling. However, this chapter suggests that Haggard's internal explorations operated within limits and constraints which were located outside of the

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[122]Etherington, *Rider Haggard*, p.113.

unconscious, and which were historically established. Thus Haggard's specific dualities must be seen as a reflection or legacy of Shepstone's views and as a replaying of Shepstone's dilemmas. My argument here is that, as much as the novels were inventions of "an other" in order to know the self, so too were their form and content the product of a particular historical process. To make this point is not to exclude Etherington's argument, but to suggest that it needs to be considered in the light of a historicized image of Shaka.

The origins of Haggard's ideas, and the close analysis of their content, is a crucial exercise because the impact of Haggard's writings was enormous. More than any other writer, then or now, Haggard was responsible for establishing the popular images of Shaka and the Zulu people. *Cetewayo and his White Neighbours* was widely read and informed a host of important opinion makers, men like Lord Carnarvon, Lord Randolph Churchill, and Haggard's old associate from the annexation days, Marshall Clarke.[123] The reprinted section alone sold over thirty thousand copies.[124] The critics were unanimous in their praise of *King Solomon's Mines* and *The Spectator* devoted an editorial to the book, nominating it

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[123]Haggard, *Days of My Life*, vol.1, pp.206-7.

[124]Haggard, *Days of My Life*, vol.1, pp.207-8.

the most exciting book ever published in a modern language.[125] It was the first African story to find a wide readership. Within three months of publication, the publishers, Cassells, had had to reprint it four times, and it sold twelve thousand copies in the first twelve months. In Haggard's lifetime more than 650,000 copies were printed, and to this day it has never been out of print.[126] In 1887, Haggard was almost certainly the country's best-paid novelist, and his works were widely read and extraordinarily popular. They were also prescribed for school use.[127] *King Solomon's Mines* inspired over a dozen film versions, and other of his stories were produced in a host of editions, as well as made into films, stage productions, radio serials, an opera and even a ballet, not to mention the various comic book versions.[128] A line from *Nada* inspired Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Books*, and even Stevenson noted how much he liked Haggard's depiction of Shaka.[129] Among the over one hundred translations of Haggard's works, *Nada*

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[125]Higgins, *The Great Storyteller*, p.83; *The Spectator*, lviii, Oct.1885; Ellis, *A Voice from the Infinite*, pp.101-2.

[126]Ellis, *Voice from the Infinite*, p.101.

[127]Higgins, *The Great Storyteller*, p.121. For a discussion of the sales of Haggard's books, see Cohen, *Life and Works*," pp.231-8; Bunn, "Embodying Africa," pp.158-60; Ellis, *Voice from the Infinite*, pp.101, 108, 117.

[128]Etherington, *Rider Haggard*, pp.56-7.

[128]Cohen, *Life and works*, pp.207, 212.

the Lily was eventually translated into Zulu in 1954, and *King Solomon's Mines* into Afrikaans.[130]

In addition to his writings, Haggard was for a time Chairman of the Anglo-African Writer's Club, and co-director and editor of a weekly newspaper called the *African*. He was offered the job as *The Times* war correspondent to South Africa in 1900.[131] This he declined, but accepted an offer from the *Daily Express* to write a series of articles on "The New South Africa" after the war was concluded. The series never materialised for the publishers agreed with Haggard who concluded after visits to South Africa in 1901 and 1902 that it was too depressing.[132] Haggard enjoyed thus a reputation as both an expert on the affairs of southern Africa as well as one of the premier writers of romance.

With their "phenomenal print-runs" and acclaimed illustrated editions,[133] Haggard's writings influenced generations of later readers and writers as well. Their ranks included Edgar Rice Burroughs, Edgar Wallace, C.S.

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[130]F.L. Ntuli, *Umbuso kaShaka*, Marianhill, Marianhill Mission Press, 1954; Cohen, *Life and Works*, pp.232-3.

[131]Ellis, *A Voice from the Infinite*, pp.152-3, 158.

[132]Ellis, *A Voice from the Infinite*, p.160.

[133]Ellis, *Voice from the Infinite*, pp.179-181.

Lewis, J.R. Tolkein, Laurens van der Post, D.H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, Stuart Cloete, and Graham Greene, as well as a later coterie of science fiction writers. King Edward VII, for example, preferred Haggard to Hardy.[134] As Morton Cohen comments, "Haggard's impact upon his time was probably greater than has been estimated. Almost every tale of wild adventure in strange lands that appeared after *King Solomon's Mines*--and they appeared by the hundreds--showed the Haggard stamp."[135] Haggard also influenced subsequent fictional renditions of Zulu history such as Sol. T. Plaatje's *Mhudi*,[136] E.A. Ritter's *Shaka Zulu*, Peter Becker's *Rule of Fear, Chaka the Terrible* by Geoffrey Bond, and Schoeman's *Phamphatha the Beloved of Shaka*.[137]

More difficult to evaluate is Haggard's influence on the writings of the academy. Three points can be made in this connection. Firstly, there are clear indications that books like Ritter's *Shaka Zulu* which were themselves influenced by Haggard have, in turn, been drawn on by historians. Indeed, until recently, Ritter's text was

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[134]Etherington, *Rider Haggard*, pp.115-6; Cohen, *Life and Works*, pp.230-1.

[135]Cohen, *Life and Works*, p.230.

[136]S. Gray and T. Couzens, "Printers and Other Devils: the texts of Sol. T. Plaatje," in *Research in African Literatures*, 9,2, 1978, pp.198-215.

[137]Malaba, "Shaka as Literary Themes," chapter five.

cited in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.[138] Secondly, many early scholars, and not a few contemporary ones, read Haggard's adventure stories in their youth. In 1895, Haggard was elected to the Atheneum Club for distinguished scientific and literary authors, between a quarter and a third of whose members at the time were members of the Royal Anthropological Institute.[139] Finally, Haggard, who became a member of the Royal Colonial Institute in 1916,[140] influenced directly the colonial officials on whose reports and records much academic history is based. In coming chapters we will look in detail at the influence of Haggard on one particular official, James Stuart. Stuart is an especially significant indicator of the influence of Haggard, for he both read and enjoyed Haggard's novels, and also established a friendship with him. Moreover, Stuart, in his turn, influenced significantly both writers of texts which are much cited by historians--the work of the Rev. A.T. Bryant being a case in point--and increasingly, through the Stuart Archive, professional historians.

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[138]D. Wylie, "A Dangerous Admiration: E.A. Ritter's *Shaka Zulu*," *South African Historical Journal*, forthcoming.

[139]H. Kucklik, *The Savage Within: The Social History of British Anthropology, 1885-1945*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p.65; Haggard, *Days of My Life*, vol.2, p.121.

[140]Higgins, *The Great Storyteller*, p.228.

Graham Greene captured the power of Haggard's writing very nicely when he commented, "Far more than Scott, Haggard gave us a sense of History."[141] His visions of Africa, and of "the Zulu" were the bases of those of thousands of readers. Morton Cohen summed it up, "Zulus could not be otherwise than Haggard pictures them."[142] One of the chief architects of a vision of Africa and of its introduction to a British public, it was Haggard who was responsible for entrenching in popular form what was essentially Shepstone's view of the Zulu people, Zulu history, Zulu sovereignty and the figure of Shaka.

Conclusion

In engineering the Zulu war, against the express wishes of the Colonial Office in London and in the face of the strenuous opposition of the Colensos and the Aborigines Protection Society, officials on the spot in Natal found themselves under considerable pressure to

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[141]Quoted in W. Katz, *Rider Haggard and the Fiction of Empire: A Critical Study of British Imperial Fiction*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987, p.1.

[142]Cohen, *Life and Works*, p.229.

provide strong vindication for their aggressive actions. The line of justification which they opted for was the representation of Cetshwayo as an oppressive and cruel tyrant, and the designation of the war as a campaign against the king for the freedom of the Zulu people. When direct evidence of Cetshwayo's despotism proved hard to come by, the officials invoked instead a generalized notion of the tyranny of the institutions of the Zulu monarchy as established by Shaka and the military system on which its power rested. This led to the creation of an elaborate literature of vilification--unmatched since the vitriolic writings of Isaacs in the 1830s--on the subject of Shaka, his descendant, Cetshwayo, and the Zulu system. Drawing on Shepstone's own analyses, the authorities identified the Shakan military system, represented as intact and ready for activation by Cetshwayo, as the root of the problem. The aim of the propaganda campaign, and the war, was not merely the removal of Cetshwayo, but also the disabling of the chief institutions of Zulu power. The campaign was both ideological and coercive.

The image of the Shakan legacy which officals like Frere promoted did not go unchallenged, and, while widespread during the war and in the immediate aftermath thereof, was soon reshaped by ongoing developments. The

major direct challenges came from the Colensos and their associates, who did not offer a different representation of Shaka so much as accuse Frere of gross misrepresentations, defend Cetshwayo against specific allegations and expose the real reasons behind the war.

The first occurrence to cause a modification of the offical campaign of vilification derived from the the battle of Isandlwana where the defeat of the British by the Zulu, and the manifest bravery and discipline of the Zulu forces throughout the war, earned the admiration of commentators, and captured the imagination of the British public. The offical image was thus tempered by a notion of the Zulu as a noble and worthy enemy, exceptional amongst the African peoples of southern Africa. "A remarkable people the Zulu," said Disraeli, "they defeat our generals; they convert our bishops; they have settled the fate of great European dynasty" [the last a reference to the death of the Prince Imperial of France in the Anglo-Zulu War]. The same discipline which evoked this admiration was increasingly mobilized as a reason for annexation, as the Zulu were represented as ideal subjects, accustomed to firm control. In this way, an attempt was made to reharness the Shakan legacy, which Shepstone had promoted as part of Natal native policy, to

the post-conquest ideological project of the implementation of colonial rule.

"Prophecy," wrote Haggard in 1888 in the new introduction to *Cetywayo and His White Neighbours*, "is a dangerous thing."[143] Haggard went on to note that, while some of the predictions of that book had been shown over time to be misplaced, a central prediction was correct, his concluding remarks to the chapter on Zulu history, where he wrote,

> On the whole, I am of the opinion that the Government that replaces Cetywayo on the throne of his fathers will undertake a very grave responsibility, and must be prepared to deal with many resulting complications.[144]

Shepstone's adoption of certain African conventions in the representation of Shaka did more than simply bring Shaka into the imperial repertoire. It brought a host of associated symbols, meanings, and narrative devices peculiar to African oral tradition and the renditions in those forms of the story of Shaka. Haggard followed Shepstone in bringing into western fiction narrative devices from Zulu texts. Appropriating the device of prophecy into the heart of his stories, Haggard entrenched in a mutated form, one of the core explanatory

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[143]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.xi.

[144]Haggard, *Cetywayo*, p.xiii.

devices of African oral histories. *Nada the Lily* opens with a prophecy from the child Shaka,

> I am little today, and my people are a small people. But I shall grow big, so big that my head wll be lost in the clouds; you will look up and you shall not see it. My face will blind you; it will be bright like the sun; and my people will grow great with me; they shall eat up the whole world.[145]

And the narrator, Mopo, remarks that the last words he ever heard Shaka utter were also words of prophecy: "the whites will come and take away your royalty."[146] Likewise, Mopo's own mother foretells through a dream the killing of Shaka. These prophecies, like the one which Shepstone uttered dramatically at the 1861 nomination, drew directly on a narrative trope from African oral tradition. Indeed, Mopo constantly prophesies in the novel, and offers visions of doom and judgement.[147] Haggard further depicts Mopo as playing a key role in the setting of Shaka's trap for the false diviners--themselves credited with the ability to forsee--ironically only to be "smelt out" himself.

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[145]Haggard, *Nada*, pp.9-10.

[146]Haggard, *Nada*, p.181, also see p.10.

[147]Haggard, *Nada*, p.86.

In 1911, Rudyard Kipling read his story, *The Man who would be King*, to his close friend, Rider Haggard.[148] This tragicomical story, like many other of Kipling's works, brings together "separate worlds and dimensions into confrontation and to set up a creative tension between them."[149] Where the quote from Kipling which heads part two of this study introduces the plan for such a confrontation--in which the western world will try to overcome the eastern one--this chapter shows that this simple imperial agenda was, in a sense, confounded by Shaka, who had already drilled his men. Shaka had no sons. Unlike Dravot, the man in Kipling's story, who would be king, Shaka tolerated no heirs. Dravot refused to abide by his original contract with his partner, Peachey Carnehan, not to get involved with women, even when Peachey reminded him that the "Bible says that King's ain't to waste their strength on women, specially when they've got a raw new Kingdom to work over."[150] The central issue for both Kipling and Haggard, and before and behind them, Shepstone, was the nature of imperial power in such a confrontation. Having taken up

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[148]M. Cohen, *Rudyard Kipling to Rider Haggard: The Record of a Friendship*, London, Hutchinson, 1965, p.69.

[149]E. Stokes, "Kipling's Imperialism", in John Gross (ed.) *The Age of Kipling*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1972, pp.90-98, this quote p.93.

[150]Kipling, "The Man who would be King," p.185.

Zulu despotic rule, Shepstone tried to be the "White t'Chaka," but the problem remained of the appropriate heir for Shaka. Shepstone coronated Cetshwayo, but might easily have accepted a usurper. Effectively, Shepstone saw himself as Shaka's figurative heir. Haggard, in turn, invented Umslopogaas, only to have him eschew power. Under different conditions and much later in time, separate development and apartheid nominated, in their turn, their own paramount chiefs.

In his study of moments of cultural contact between natives and outsiders in the Marquesas, Dening notes that "model and metaphor are transpositions, readings of experience, products of consciousness. Their distinction," he continues, "lies in the fact that metaphors are understood and models are imposed."[151] Initially Shepstone entered into the experience of the Zulu kingdom, and sought to share in the metaphors of power that prevailed there. Over time, he translated those metaphors into a model for despotic authority which became the basis of the Shepstone system. Where the metaphor of Shaka was originally open-ended--an instrument for the daily understanding of issues of power and authority, capable of accommodating paradoxes and contradictions--as a model it became closed, static,

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[151]Dening, *Islands and Beaches*, p.186.

structured and simple. Shepstone imposed his model--much as Shaka imposed his rule--and Shaka became thus a means to power. Developments around the Anglo-Zulu War and the subsequent Zulu civil war brought about the transformation once more--although in changed form--of Shaka into a new kind of political metaphor, in other words, a way of talking about power, in the new context of direct colonial domination backed by increased military power.

Chapter Seven

James Stuart and the origins of an Idea

Between 1897 and 1924 James Stuart recorded the testimonies of nearly two hundred informants on a range of topics concerning the history of the Zulu and neighboring peoples. Within the large corpus of material collected are hundreds of pages of notes on the reign of Shaka.

Stuart, a fluent Zulu linguist who was at first a court interpreter, subsequently a resident magistrate and finally a native administrator, sought out informants across south-east Africa whom he believed to be especially well-informed on historical matters. The notes of his interviews, variously in English and *isiZulu*, or a mixture of both languages, frequently appear to be verbatim accounts of his discussions.[1]

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[1] In many instances the interviews are recorded in the first person, i.e. the voice of the informant. In some cases Stuart used a shorthand form of recording a conversation and wrote up the interview afterwards. In a number of instances both the rough notes and the subsequent transcriptions survive, providing a clear indication of Stuart's methods. (See, for example, file 59, nbk 34, pp.40-9 for the rough notes of an interview with Ndukwana and compare with the transcript done the following day, file 53, pp.124-9 and file 73, p.76.) Stuart further made note of when he wrote up accounts some time after an interview. (See, for example, file 59, item 32, pp.36, 38. In this

Stuart meticulously dated all his notes and transcripts, supplied the names of his informants, noted down biographical information about them, and frequently recorded the circumstances under which the interviews took place. In many instances Stuart explicitly distinguished between his own views and the information given by his informants,[2] and cross-referenced to other sources which he considered relevant.[3] Stuart often went back over his transcripts with the informant in order to check and revise the text.[4] The result of his labors, preserved as the Stuart collection in the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban, and, since 1976, gradually available in published, translated and annotated form as

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instance Stuart interviewed Socwatsha kaPapu on 27 August, 1909, and wrote up the the interview the following day. In a margin note to himself Stuart observed, "This account will have to be checked having been written from memory.") These features are not confined to the examples cited here but are characteristic of the Stuart collection as a whole.

[2]See, for example, SP, file 60, item 3, pp.12-13 where a line drawn in the margin marks off Stuart's own thoughts from the body of text given by Socwatsha. Also see SP, file 70, item 9, interview of 6 January, 1902, where Stuart meticulously notes that one of those present disagreed with the main informant. Again, these features are not confined to the examples cited here but are characteristic of the Stuart collection as a whole.

[3]See, for example, SP, file 59, item 32, pp.34, 38; file 58, item 25, p.24; file 58, item 22, p.1, Socwatsha. See also *JSA*, vol.1, p.177, Jantshi, where Stuart has inserted into Jantshi's testimony of 12 February, 1903 a cross-reference to information given to him by Socwatsha in April 1916. These features are not confined to the examples cited here but are characteristic of the Stuart collection as a whole. I am grateful to John Wright for providing me with a collated photocopy of the entire original Socwatsha testimony.

[4]See, for example, file 70, item 9. Stuart interviewed Socwatsha on 29 December, 1901, and recorded from him the *izibongo* of Cetshwayo. He then went over his written version with Socwatsha on 5 January, 1902, finally marking the praises "checked and revised," and initialing them. Evidence of this procedure occurs throughout the collection.

the *James Stuart Archive*--of which four volumes are already in print, and two further volumes are planned--is potentially the single most important source for the reconstruction of the precolonial history of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region.

The status and value of the Stuart collection as such a source has been thrown into doubt by, on the one hand, the corpus of work dealing with the invention of Africa by colonial writers,[5] and, on the other hand, by the recent debate over the mfecane. The work on the construction of the colonial subject suggests that the researches of officials like Stuart were aimed at the extension of colonial controls. Thus Golan depicts Stuart as recording African oral tradition in order to ensure "control over the Zulu in times of rapid social change and increasing migration into the towns."[6] For Golan, such acts of "preservation" paradoxically "promoted the destruction of native legal and cultural systems...and the distort[ion] of its history."[7]

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[5]See the discussion of this body of work in chapter two.

[6]Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," pp.51, 58-9.

[7]Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," p.5. Also see p.57. While Golan is sharply critical of Stuart's distortions and manipulations in service of a colonial agenda, in practice she makes no attempt to allow for his impact on the oral traditions which she discusses in part three of her thesis.

In his "case" against the mfecane, Julian Cobbing takes this argument one step further. He implicitly eschews the use of African sources because he believes that none are yet extant. He dismisses the testimonies collected by Stuart as fundamentally "tainted" by their recorder.[8] For Cobbing, Stuart, more than any other single writer, was responsible for the creation of the image of Shaka that sits at the heart of the mfecane stereotype. The *Archive*, in his view, is poisoned not only by Stuart, but also by earlier white writers of Zulu history who shaped the range of "historical fantasies" that informed Stuart's approach, and, indeed, in published form is further adulterated by the present editors.[9] The "Zulu voice" in the testimonies recorded by Stuart, Cobbing argues, "is drowned by those of the 1830s, 1900s and 1980s shouting in unison."[10]

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[8]This view of Zulu oral tradition is spelt out at length in Cobbing, "A Tainted Well."

[9]While Cobbing dismisses Stuart's informants' versions of Shaka, he does concede that under certain (unspecified) circumstances the *Archive* may yield historical data. ("Tainted Well," pp. 116-7) Cobbing has been criticized previously for condemning Fynn's *Diary* as a "forgery" and then citing data from it, without qualification or explanation, in support of a particular substantive point made elsewhere in his argument.(Hamilton, "'The character and objects of Chaka'," p.43, note 17)

[10]"The Tainted Well, " p.135.

Cobbing is obviously correct, but far from novel,[11] in emphasizing the impact on such testimonies of all the parties involved in their transmission. Scholars making use of the Stuart collection need to exercise extreme care in how they utilize its rich contents. As a preliminary move they must come to grips with the presence in the testimonies of Stuart himself.[12] In this chapter, and the one following, I make a start on this task. The two chapters show that Cobbing's evaluation of the *Archive* and his discounting of its many Shakas, is marred by two significant oversights. The first is that while it is indeed true that Stuart was fascinated by Shaka--he delivered dozens of lectures in Natal, and in Britain, on the subject of the Zulu monarch, and constantly directed his informants onto the topic of Shaka--the range of variant opinions in their recorded statements, and the extent to which their texts differ from Stuart's own synthesized versions, are strongly

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[11]Vansina, *Oral Tradition*; D. Henige, *Oral Historiography*, London, Longmans, 1982; Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*; P. Curtin, "Oral Tradition and African History," *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, 6, 1969, pp.137-55.

[12]Not only do they need to evaluate the impact of early settler and missionary accounts on Stuart and possibly on some of his informants, but they must also take account of the "chain of transmission" of the stories within African society. The conventional notion that written sources are somehow more reliable than oral ones, or at least subject to less change, is currently subject to a new and penetrating critique. Oral and written texts alike are seen to be products of equally creative activities. See Cohen, "The Undefining of Oral Tradition."

suggestive of the integrity of his recording techniques.[13] As such, they can be regarded as representative of contemporary African opinion and narratives to a far greater extent than Cobbing supposes.

Secondly, Cobbing fundamentally misunderstands Stuart when he describes him as "a representative and influential product of an unpleasant generation," whose "thought exemplifies the pathologies of colonial society which had internalised all the assumptions of the superiority of white civilisation and the rights of naked power common to the generation that produced the First World War."[14] Cobbing portrays Stuart as a racist native administrator who supervised "land seizures, taxation and *chibalo* [sic] labour," who "usurped" the powers of chiefs, crushed rebellion and "crudely denigrat[ed]" the Zulu people in print.[15] Cobbing claims that Stuart's motive for collecting so prodigious a body of oral tradition was to answer "the central riddle [as to] how ... the native [was] to be dispossessed of his land, set to work, administered, controlled, set apart, ordered around, treated as a child, impoverished, and dehumanised

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[13]Stuart never published anything on Shaka beyond the accounts in his five Zulu readers, *uTulasizwe*, *uHlangakula*, *uBaxoxele*, *uKulumetule*, and *uVusezakiti*, London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1923-6.

[14]Cobbing, "Tainted Well," p.120.

[15]Cobbing, "Tainted Well," p.161.

without the white man (and his wife) having their throats slit."[16] This evaluation takes no account of the complexity of Stuart's career, nor of the highly contested development of the native policies of the early twentieth century, and the tremendous ambiguity of the positions of their early formulators.

On the contrary, investigation of the vast residue of the unpublished Stuart papers--his private correspondence, draft manuscripts, and his notes to himself--reveals that Stuart was disenchanted with prevailing "native policies," that he objected to *isibhalo* labor levies and the dispossession of people from their land, and that he evinced a powerful commitment to giving Africans a say in their own affairs-to allowing them to be heard in their own words. In terms strongly reminiscent of modern scholars concerned with the view "from below," yet also captive to the discourse of his times, he objected to the keystone of imperialism:

> This question of the contact between the civilized and uncivilized races receives its expression almost entirely from the civilized themselves. The whole controversy is an *ex parte* affair--conducted by the civilized against one another, instead of by civilized and uncivilized. The uncivilized man's voice is never heard. In any case, it cannot be detected amidst all the Babel of talk that is

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[16]Cobbing, "Tainted Well," p.122.

> constantly going on, most by people who know nothing of the situation as it is from the Native's point of view. In a question of this kind surely the voice of the people primarily concerned is of the greatest importance.[17]

Stuart lobbied publicly in lectures, publications and committee submissions for changes in Natal native policy directed at addressing African grievances. In significant ways, Stuart was painfully at odds with the prevailing sentiments of his fellow colonists.[18]

Jamie and the Grand Old Men

On December 16, 1886, Emmeline Stuart purchased a diary for her nineteen-year old son, Jamie, just returned from completing his schooling in England.[19] In the first entry, the young Stuart recorded that earlier that year, in August-September, he had taken passage aboard the *SS*

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[17]SP, file 42, item xxi.

[18]The material presented here is but a selection of my researches on Stuart. Assessment of Stuart demands examination of the spirit of the age and the situating of Stuart in the complex social and political landscape of Natal in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It requires a sketch of the social and cultural forms that shaped his world and full exploration of his many activities and their significance and effects. That would be a study in its own right. Indeed, I have a manuscript for a combined study of Stuart and of native policy in this period in preparation. In this and the next chapter I have focused on those aspects of Stuart's life and work most directly germane to the treatment of Shaka in the Archive and in Stuart's own writings.

[19]SP, "Diaries" of James Stuart, three unaccessioned files. See Stuart's "Diary" for 1887. On Stuart being called "Jamie" by his family, see Esme Stuart, *I Remember*, Pietermaritzburg, private publication, 1984.

Tartar to South Africa from England. One of the passengers on board ship was Rider Haggard's friend and informant, Fred Fynney,[20] the fluent Zulu-speaker who had been Natal Chief Interpreter for a number of years and a member of Shepstone's annexation mission to the Transvaal. Fynney was the first of a host of Natal's acknowledged "native experts" that Stuart was to come to know, to admire, but also on occasion, to challenge.

Soon after Stuart settled in on his mother's farm, Highbury, near Richmond, another prominent figure in the Natal native administration with whom he was to have a long association, arrived to stay with the Stuarts and to conduct court in the area.[21] This was John W. Shepstone,[22] brother of Theophilus whom John replaced as Secretary for Native Affairs in 1877. John Shepstone too, was a fluent Zulu linguist, and, as the SNA, was deeply enmeshed in the concerns of native administration. Through Fynney and John Shepstone, the young James Stuart was introduced to the complex world of African affairs under British imperial rule.

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[20]S"Diary" for 1887, p.1.

[21]"Diary," entry for 27 January, 1887.

[22]John was the second husband of Stuart's maternal grandmother. (Esme Stuart, *I Remember*, p.5) He was known in IsiZulu as "Mlejane."

Within four months of John Shepstone's visit, on 14 May, 1887, Zululand was formally annexed to Britain. As we have already seen, another of Rider Haggard's old friends and mentors from the time of the annexation of the Transvaal, Melmoth Osborn, was appointed Resident Commissioner and Chief Magistrate of Zululand.[23] The events and struggles over the Zulu kingship which ensued following annexation were, except insofar as they were reported in the press, beyond the purview of Stuart, who makes no mention of them in his chronicle of daily activities at Highbury. Jamie spent most of his days assisting the district surgeon carry out a vaccination program on the local African population. Stuart used the opportunity which his work provided for daily contact with Africans to recover a childhood knowledge of the Zulu language. A significant proportion of his wages went on books to while away the evenings. The young Stuart sent off to the local booksellers, P. Davis and Sons, for an eclectic mix: he ordered every Zulu language book available (including a prayer book, Rev. Grout's *Zulu Grammar*--probably his first introduction to the *izibongo* of the Zulu king, Shaka--a Zulu dictionary and the *Zulu Royal Reader*), and leavened this pedagogical pursuit with adventure tales like *King Solomon's Mines*, an advertisement for which, alongside that for

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[23]"Diary," entries for May, 1888.

Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, was published in his diary. He circulated *King Solomon's Mines* enthusiatically among his friends, as well as Haggard's "Long Odds,"[24] which he pronounced "pretty good."[25]

Stuart pursued his linguistic studies diligently, and by April, 1887, began for the first time to record sections of his diary in *isiZulu*.[26] Growing confidence in his ability to speak *isiZulu*, and a keen interest, even at this early stage, in African affairs, prompted Stuart to apply to the office of the Secretary for Native Affairs for a post as an interpreter.[27] Initially nothing seems to have come of this, for, in February 1888, he took a job in the Post Office in Pietermaritzburg. Stuart's deepening interest in African politics at this time is revealed by his taking out of a subscription to John Tengo Jabavu's King Williamstown publication, *Imvo Zabantsundu*.[28] The stated aim of the paper was the free public expression of African views and

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[24]A section of Rider Haggard's *Allan's Wife*, serialised in *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. liii, February, 1886. Also see Higgins, *The Great Storyteller*, p.89.

[25]"Diary," see in particular the entries for 25 March, 14 November, 1887.

[26]"Diary," see entries for 9 April and 4 November, 1887, and 20 January, 1888.

[27]"Diary," entries for 9, 22 and 29 April, 1887.

[28]"Diary," entry for 23 November, 1887.

the forging of closer bonds between blacks and whites.[29] At the time when Stuart took out his subscription, *Imvo* was in the forefront of protest against the limitation of African franchise in the Cape. During this period Stuart also established contact with a number of Natal Africans, and forged enduring relationships which were to be formative of his understanding of the history and political concerns of the African population of Natal and Zululand. One such friendship was with Dhlozi kaLanga, who later assisted Stuart in his historical researches.[30] Another was with Jantshi kaNongila who became an important informant of Stuart's.[31]

Stuart, who felt "like a fish out of water"[32] in Pietermaritzburg society, was bored and frustrated in his work at the Post Office. He was thus delighted when, in May, he received a notice offering him a post in the

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[29]*Imvo Zabantsundu*, 3 November, 1884.

[30]"Diary," entries for 30 March, 1887 and others around that time, also 1 January, 1888. I have not been able to establish conclusively whether the Dhlozi whom Stuart refers to as living on his mother's farm is the same Dhlozi (kaLanga) who assisted Stuart at a large number of interviews. However, there are a number of indications which make this seem likely. See, for example, "Diary" entries for 23, 24 and 25 September, 1888, where Stuart noted that one "Dhlozi" arrived in Eshowe with Stuart's belongings. Stuart further noted that he had several long converstions with this Dhlozi.

[31]According to Stuart's Diary (see entry for 19 April, 1888) his relationship with Jantshi was sufficiently well established for Stuart to make cash loans to him. Also see the entries for 10 May, 1888, and 4 December, 1888.

[32]"Diary," 9 February, 1888.

fledgling Zululand native administration, and by the twenty-first of the same month, had packed and departed enthusiastically for the administrative capital, Eshowe.[33] Stuart owed his sudden employment to the deepening crisis over Eshowe's attempt to assert its control over Dinuzulu. The recently-annexed territory was in a chaotic state following the long civil war, and the new administration faced massive resistance and antagonism, notably from Dinuzulu, Ndabuko and their supporters. Zibhebhu had just been returned to his lands in the Ndwandwe area, and further tensions surrounded his reinstatement. These broke into open hostilities and rebellion within days of Stuart's arrival in Eshowe. The first armed clash between Ndabuko's forces and a combined force of British police, troops and "loyal natives" occurred on 2 June.

The crisis caused a number of other notable "Zulu experts" to congregate in Eshowe. Amongst those whom Stuart met at this time was the "white chief," John Dunn, who, with two thousand of his men, was assisting the British in the suppression of the rebellious chief Somkhele, who had joined with Dinuzulu.[34] Dunn regaled Stuart, with whom he spent a long winter's evening, with

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[33]See "Diary" entries for 13, 21 and 25 May, 1888.

[34]Ballard, *Dunn*, p.219.

anecdotes of life under Cetshwayo. Stuart had, in the meanwhile, taken up lodgings with yet another member of the coterie of "experts," Carl Faye.[35]

One of the first tasks assigned to Stuart was a hut tax collecting expedition with the Resident Magistrate at Eshowe, C.R. Saunders. Stuart's diary reveals that this period of his life was marked by a profound sense of disease, as the anxieties of the Eshowe administration began to affect him. He seems to have imbibed some of the attitudes of the seasoned administrators who surrounded him.[36] Finding the "Kafir[s] inclined to be cheeky,"[37] he was alarmed by the "rumours of disturbances about" and he became nervous when those "wretches set up the wretched war songs of theirs all day."[38] Stuart used freely in his diary the discourse of contemporary white colonial society, in which terms like "Kafir", "nigger" and "boy" (for adult African employees) and civilized/uncivilized (for whites and blacks respectively)--terms which are today understood to be racist and derogatory--were common.[39] But Stuart's use

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[36]"Diary," entries for July, especially 2 and 14 July.

[36]"Diary," entries for 10 and 11 June, 1888. Also see 22 June.

[37]"Diary," entry for 11 June, 1888.

[38]"Diary," entry for 22 June, 1888.

[39]"Diary," entries for 16 January, 4 June, 5 November, 1888.

of these terms are not grounds for his dismissal as a typical colonialist. Not only must these usages be understood and evaluated in their contemporary context, but they also have to be qualified by evaluation of Stuart's behavior. Stuart was, for the time, exceptional in subscribing to *Imvo*, having "long talks" with his African acquaintances, and in considering such discussions to be sufficiently significant to merit recording in his private diary.[40]

While profoundly influenced by the "old hands" under whose tutelage he commenced his career in native adminstration, Stuart's horizons rapidly expanded beyond the bounds of the magistry. The diary reveals that his linguistic skills and his facility for establishing easy relationships with Africans allowed him to make contacts among Eshowe's African population.

Another of the men whom Stuart met at this time, and with whom he was to have another lasting and influential relationship, was Socwatsha kaPhaphu of the Ngcobo.[41] Stuart interviewed Socwatsha repeatedly over the next twenty years or so. Socwatsha was an *imbongi* of considerable talent. At this time he assisted Stuart by

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[40]"Diary," entry for 1 January, 1888. Also see the entries for 7 November, 1887, 23-25 September, 1888.

[41]"Diary," entry for 7 July, 1888.

painstakingly dictating to him Osborn's *izibongo*.[42] The recording of *izibongo* was to be one of Stuart's greatest achievements and it seems likely that this passion was stimulated and nurtured by Socwatsha from whom, over the years, he recorded numerous *izibongo*. Socwatsha was later to provide Stuart with considerable information on Shaka.[43] He was also present at numerous interviews which Stuart conducted with other informants,[44] and actively assisted Stuart in locating "good men on Zulu tribal affairs" to interview.[45] Stuart tended to review the contents of other interviews with Socwatsha[46] (and indeed, other of his regular assistants) and it seems that Socwatsha must be regarded as a powerful influence on the Stuart collection as a whole.

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[42]"Diary," entry for 9 February, 1889.

[43]See SP, file 15, "Notes on Zululand, Zulu Rebellion," p.88, reference to an interview with Socwatsha, with Dhlozi present. Socwatsha provided Stuart with a very negative depiction of Shaka as not having married, as having forced abortions on, or killed, women who became pregnant by him, as having cut open a pregnant woman in order to see the position of a foetus, and as having killed his mother.

[44]Survey of the published archive alone shows that Socwatsha was present at interviews which Stuart conducted with at least nineteen other informants. These included, amongst others, interviews with key informants like Mkehlengana (vol.3, p.210), Mpatshana (vol.3, p.327), Mandhlakazi (vol.2, p.174), Maziyana (vol.2, pp.264, 266, 279, 292, 295, 299), Hayiyana (vol.1, p.161), Kwili (vol.1, p.275).

[45]*JSA*, vol. 2, p.299, Maziyana.

[46]see, for example, *JSA*, vol.3, p.211, Mkehlengana.

Jantshi entered Stuart's service at this time.[47] Jantshi kaNongila shared Stuart's passionate interest in Zulu history[48] and also provided Stuart with *izibongo*[49] as well as a great deal of information on the royal Zulu amongst who he was raised.[50] Stuart later came to regard Jantshi as an "authorit[y] on the reign of Tshaka," along with the early traders, Fynn and Isaacs, the missionary writers, Shooter and Holden, Theophilus Shepstone, and another African informant, Mkando.[51]

There are no interviews in the Stuart collection which date to the late 1880s. If Stuart was hearing accounts of African history from Jantshi and Socwatsha, he was not yet imbued with the sense of purpose that was to make the meticulous recording of their testimony his life's work. When he did begin to record systematically, he sent for Jantshi and, repeatedly, for Socwatsha.

In the meantime, on the 16 September, 1888, the Zulu regent, Ndabuko, surrendered himself, and at his preliminary hearing in November was committed for trial

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[47]"Diary," entry for 4 December, 1888.

[48]See above p.188.

[49]SP, file 70, 9 February, 1903.

[50]See his full testimony in *JSA*, vol.1.

[51]*JSA*, vol. 1, p.198, Jantshi.

on charges of high treason, rebellion and public violence. In the course of his trial, Stuart met Ndabuko's supporter, Harriette Colenso, as well as Harry Escombe, who acted as senior counsel for the Zulu chiefs, and who later became a Natal Prime Minister.[52] Through these contacts, which were to develop over the coming years into mature and sustained social relationships centered on a shared interest in the African politics of Zululand and Natal, Stuart was exposed to another perspective on the events at hand, a perspective that was opposed to that of his colleagues in the Eshowe administration.[53]

In September, Dinuzulu, having fled with his followers into the neighboring South African Republic, surrendered to the Boers, and, in November, made his way to the Colensos' residence, Bishopstowe, in Natal, and gave himself up. Dinuzulu was then moved to Eshowe for trial, and preliminary examinations began on 24 November.

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[52]"Diary," entries for 13, 14 November, 1988, 23 December, 1888, 4 May, 1889.

[53]Furthermore, the Stuart family had supported the Colenso faction in the great church dispute which had resulted in the charging of Bishop Colenso with heresy.(Stuart, *I Remember*, p.5)

The interpreter at the rebels' hearing was yet another figure with whom Stuart was to have ongoing association over many decades. "The swell interpreter,"[54] as he described him, was S.O Samuelson, who later became Natal's highly influential Under Secretary for Native Affairs. Stuart had by this time performed his own first official interpretation in open court in September, 1888, assisted and corrected by yet another well-known Zulu linguist, and son of Sir Theophilus, with whom Stuart was to pursue a life-long relationship, Resident Magistrate Arthur Shepstone.[55] By December, 1888, Stuart was himself interpreting at Dinuzulu's preliminary hearing.[56] Then, on 2 February, 1889, Osborn ppointed him Clerk and Interpreter to the Resident Commissioner. Stuart was elated, and his diary indicates he felt a special debt of gratitude to Osborn for the appointment.[57] Stuart was in Eshowe for the 13 February-27 April trial of Dinuzulu, Ndabuko and Ntshingwayo, although, surprizingly, he makes little mention of this in his diary. The three leaders were sentenced to ten, twelve and fifteen years imprisonment

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[54]"Diary", entries for 13, 14, 15 November, 1888. Also see 23 December, 1888, which suggests that Stuart had lunch with Harriette Colenso at the home of a mutual acquintance.

[55]"Diary", entries for 3,7, 18 September, and 8 October, 1888.

[56]"Diary," entries for 6-8 December, 1888.

[57]"Diary," entry for 2 February, 1889.

respectively. By December it was decided that they would serve their terms outside of Zululand, at St. Helena.

Unfortunately, Stuart's diaries end here. He never filled out the order form contained in his 1889 diary for an 1890 one, and we thus lose the uniquely internal view of his early development which the diaries for 1887-9 provided. Although Stuart continued to document his thoughts and conversations for much of the 1890s in letters to his mother, these were written for different purposes and must be subjected to different readings.

The precise course of Stuart's career and advancement over the next two years is difficult to trace. It was a period of heated debate over native policy in the run up to the achievement of Responsible Government for Natal in 1893. The issues of responsible government and native policy were inextricably tied up with each other, and native policy, in its turn, was closely linked to the issue of labor. Theophilus Shepstone and the Colonial Office in London initially resisted the push for responsible government because they feared that settler interests would dominate the local government and would direct native policy in a way that would serve narrow settler interests to the detriment of the Colony as a whole. In particular, they recognized

that the settlers' demand for labor would shape native policy.

Shepstone, who had withstood settler demands for the release of African labor from the homesteads for his entire career, fired his final salvos. In 1892, the *Natal Mercury* published his last treatises on "The Native Question," later reprinted in booklet form.[58] Arguing that "[s]hort cuts which ignore the great gulf that separates the social and political ideas of the two races must sooner or later bring disaster," Shepstone lobbied hard against new developments in Natal native policy, and what he saw as pressure from the Natal colonists for the dismantling of the "tribal system." Shepstone first reminded Natalians that the African inhabitants of the territory were aboriginal, and further argued that recent changes in native law were confusing, inconsistent and and inappropriate. The central thrust of his argument concerned the preservation of indigenous institutions. Stressing the importance of greater "knowledge of native manners, customs and laws," Shepstone ended with a strong warning,

> One thing is beyond doubt that to suppress native management by their own laws in Natl would be to release every native in it from all the special personal control that he fully

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[58]See *Natal Mercury*, 1 April, 1892. Also see *Natal Mercury*, 29 January, 1892.

> understands, that he so much needs, and that he has all his life looked up to.[59]

It was a warning which Stuart was to take to heart. Stuart had Shepstone sign his copy of the booklet, a symbolic statement of his respect for Shepstone, and, as we shall see later, of the continuity which Stuart perceived between his own understanding of native affairs and that of Shepstone.

In June, 1893, Stuart was back in Pietermaritzburg, taking his matriculation examination[60] when Shepstone died on the 23rd. The funeral was held on Sunday, 25 June, and Stuart joined the mourners, deeply moved by the large African attendance. In a poignant letter written to his mother describing the occasion, he observed that

> ...hundreds of natives from the surrounding country made a point of being present at their "Father's" funeral--it seemed almost as if they felt his death more than the Europeans did, and knowing their feelings I felt very sorry that no room was made for them in the procession--at any rate to the bigger men--and that no opportunity was given them for expressing the genuine sorrow they felt.[61]

Stuart later made a contribution to the Shepstone memorial which was erected in Pietermaritzburg, and

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[59]*Natal Mercury*, 1 April, 1892.

[60]SP. file 8, item KCM 1865c.

[61]SP, file 8, item KCM 1865c, James Stuart to his mother, 23 [sic] June, 1893.

mourned the death of "Natal's 'Grand Old Man'," [62] and the passing of an era.

A few weeks later, on 4 July 1893, Natal achieved Responsible Government. Frederick Robert Moor was appointed as the new Secretary for Native Affairs. The *Natal Witness* and the *Times of Natal*, reacting to Moor's appointment, pointed out that he was "not especially knowledgeable" about Africans.[63] S.O Samuelson, who was considered knowledgeable, was appointed Under Secretary. Before his appointment, Moor had been an outspoken opponent of the Shepstonian system.[64] Nevertheless, in the first ministry under Responsible Government, Moor, supported by Samuelson, continued to uphold the principle of African administration through "the tribal system."[65] The major issue which was to preoccupy Moor was the question of the exemption of educated Christian Africans from customary law. While few Africans had petitioned for exemption under the previous SNA, many did so during Moor's administration, encouraged by the American Board

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[62]As the *Natal Mercury* described him, 26 June, 1893. On the memorial see Sh.P, vol.88, "Memorial Subscription List."

[63]See *Natal Witness*, 11 October, 1893, editorial; *Times of Natal*, 12 October, 1893, editorial.

[64]My discussion of Moor draws heavily on Uma Shashikant Dhupelia's unpublished M.A. thesis, "Frederick Robert Moor and Native Affairs in the Colony of Natal 1893-1903," University of Durban-Westville, 1980.

[65]Dhupelia, "Moor", pp.39-40.

Zulu Mission which was actively opposed to the subjection of Christian Africans to customary law. Moor was uncertain how to treat the exempted natives: were they entitled to the same rights as the white colonists, or were there to be forms of discrimination, such as their being subjected to liquor and vagrancy laws? Exempted Africans were bitterly disillusioned by his hesitancy. Heated debates concerning the position of exempted Africans raged in the American Board Mission's publication, *Inkanyiso*.

In Zululand, Melmoth Osborn finally retired and was replaced as Resident Commissioner by Sir Marshall Clarke, who along with Osborn, Fynney, Haggard, and the real "Umslopogaas," Shepstone's head attendant, had been a member of Shepstone's annexation party. The change marked the beginning of what Shula Marks called "a brief spell of new thinking about Zulu problems."[66] Clarke did not pursue Osborn's policy of favoring Zibhebhu's anti-royalist Mandlakazi, and felt that the return of Dinuzulu was imperative if the problems of the Zululand administration were to be resolved and peace restored. Clarke, instead of trying to divide and rule and undermine the power of hereditary chiefs, wanted to grant considerable power to them, and to certain of the

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[66]Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, p.98.

loyalists. He set plans in motion for the return of Dinuzulu. Clarke's proposals, which were quite close to suggestions previously made by Harriette Colenso, rejected attempts to confine or curtail the Zulu leader, and sought to harness his authority to the administration.[67] They were a partial return to the original principles of the Shepstonian system.

When the Natal government got wind of the proposals to restore Dinuzulu, they presented the Governor with an ultimatum demanding that Zululand be incorporated into Natal before Dinuzulu was returned. Marks offers a number of reasons for this demand, which include the prospect of Natal's gaining access to a variety of Zululand resources from land to coal, labor, and the possibility of sending the surplus Natal African population north of the Thukela. To these motives she adds the question of prestige in a context where rival powers and centres were expanding. Natal's desire for territorial aggrandisement was complemented by claims that the potential for disturbances if Dinuzulu returned was so great that Natal would need to be in a position to control it. After many delays, the king's return to Zululand was made conditional on incorporation, and Dinuzulu was repatriated in 1898.

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[67]Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, p.101.

In summary, Stuart's early years in native administration provided an unusual and dramatic introduction to the politics of colonial rule at a critical and difficult moment of its inauguration in Zululand. In this period Stuart had contacts in three different worlds--that of the Zululand native administration, (inhabited by a coterie of "native experts" like Osborn, Fynney and Samuelson, into whose ranks Stuart was rapidly inducted); the enemies of the administration, (Harriette Colenso and Harry Escombe, with whom Stuart was later to have substantial dealings on a range of matters); and Stuart's African friends and acquaintances, (people like Dhlozi, Socwatsha and Jantshi). Stuart was thus uniquely placed to hear a range of opinion on the nature of imperial rule and the colonial experience from a spectrum of people whose knowledgeability he admired. In his diaries and letters at least, Stuart passed no opinions. He concentrated on the improvement of his linguistic skills, and on the further development, in different ways, of all of these relationships.

Magisterially Stuart: "storming a fort of vast magnitude"

In April 1894, Stuart's career began to take a new direction, when he was sent to Swaziland as a British Government interpreter. As a result of the First Swaziland Convention of 1890, a provisional government including the Transvaal, Britain and the Swazi nation represented by Sir Theophilus's son, "Offy" Shepstone, had effectively ruled Swaziland, itself at that time officially regarded as independent. Disputes between the South African Republic and the British High Commissioner led, in 1893, to a second Swaziland Convention in terms of which the South African Republic was given the right to attempt to obtain from the Swazi Queen Regent a proclamation which would give the Republic full rights over Swaziland without Swaziland being incorporated into the Transvaal. In terms of the convention, the Swazi authorities were to continue to look after internal Swazi affairs. The Queen Regent, not surprizingly, refused to sign. Then, in July of 1894, the post of resident adviser and agent, which Shepstone's son, Offy had held since 1887 (with a short gap) was abolished, and George H. Hulett, an advocate from Natal, was appointed as chief secretary to the Swazi nation.[68] That same year Mbandzeni's successor, the eighteen year old Ngwane V (or

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[68]Matsebula, *A History of Swaziland*, chapter ten.

Bhunu), was installed. Stuart's new appointment precipitated him into the middle of this complex and unsettled situation. In October of 1894, a Swazi delegation went first to Cape Town to see the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Loch, to ask for permission to go on to England for an audience with the Queen and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to appeal against these arrangements. Stuart, and George Hulett in the official capacity of legal adviser, accompanied the delegation. For Stuart, it was the first of what were to be a series of trips to London in charge of the representation of colonial subjects from south-east Africa.[69] Excellent service rendered on this occasion won Stuart the special thanks of the Imperial Government. The third and last Swaziland Convention had been signed on the 10 December, 1894, in terms of which Swaziland became a protectorate of the South African Republic and in 1895, at the age of twenty-seven, Stuart became the Acting British Consul in Swaziland.[70]

In 1895, in an attempt to prevent the South African Republic from gaining independent access to a port, Charles Saunders, who had been Resident Magistrate at

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[69]KCAL, SP, file 8, item KCM 1865d, Stuart to his mother, 17 November, 1894.

[70]KCAL, SP, file 8, item KCM 1865e, Stuart to his mother, 24 August, 1895.

Eshowe when Stuart first arrived there, undertook the annexation, for the British, of the Ingwavuma area east of Swaziland and north-east of Zululand, and, in September 1895, Stuart became the first Resident Magistrate of the new district.[71] It seems that it was at this time that Stuart made his first detailed notes of conversations on historical matters.[72]

In the meantime, tension between the young Swazi king, Bhunu, and the queen mother, Labotsibeni, was growing. Matters came to a head with the murder on 9 April, 1898, of Mbhabha Nsibandze, a Labotsibeni loyalist and the governor of the Zombodze royal residence. Bhunu was implicated and summoned to appear before the Landdrost's Court in Bremersdorp. Bhunu fled, with an escort, to the British Magistrate at Ingwavuma, James Stuart. From Ngwavuma, Stuart forwarded the refugees on to Eshowe.

The British intervened on the Swazi king's behalf. His safety guaranteed, Bhunu was sent back to Swaziland and a trial followed. The new British consul, none other

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[71]Brooks and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.188.

[72]Interview with Mahungane and Nkomuza, 8-11 November, 1897, on aspects of Tsonga history. (*JSA*, vol.2, pp.142-54.) I have located only one earlier instance of historical notes based on the information of an African informant, that of Mabela kaMagidi, giving the genealogy of the Biyela chiefly line. (9 January, 1894, JSA, vol.2, pp.1-3.)

than James Stuart, just appointed back to Swaziland, was allowed to attend the trial and advise the king both in and out of court. Ultimately Bhunu was found not guilty of murder, but was fined for permitting "public violence" in the royal homestead. Stuart agreed with the decision to fine Bhunu. Bhunu was ostensibly reinstated, but a Protocol, signed on 5 October 1898, in Pretoria, by the British Agent and the State Secretary of the Republic, removed all criminal jurisdiction from the Swazi authorities and, in effect, changed the status of the king to that of Paramount Chief, subject, like his people, to foreign courts of law.

During his 1898-9 stint in Swaziland as Acting British Consul, Stuart began collecting historical testimonies from informants identified as knowledgeable on African custom and Swazi history.[73] On 2 November, 1898, for example, Stuart had a lengthy discussion with Dywer D. Macebo of Groutville, at the British consulate in Swaziland. The two men discussed the nature of *lobola* transactions, and Stuart was left pondering the question as to whether *lobola* was a business transaction or an unwritten social law. In his notes of the conversation, Stuart commented that he was not in favor of viewing

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[73]SP, file 42, item xxvi, letter Dywer D. Macebo, in Swaziland to James Stuart, already back in Natal, promising to get information for Stuart.

By the time Britain officially declared war against the South African Republic, on 10 October, 1899, Stuart was back in Natal, working as a magistrate in the Lower Tugela district.[77] In his absence from Zululand a number of significant changes had taken place. As we have seen, in 1898 Dinuzulu had returned to Zululand, but as "government *induna*" rather than as king. This period also saw the transfer of Sir Marshall Clark to Southern Rhodesia and the appointment of C.R. Saunders in his place as Civil Commissioner and Chief Magistrate.[78] Saunders had worked under Osborn at Eshowe, yet was in some respects more influenced by the policies of Clarke and more sympathetic to African concerns than Osborn was. Despite this, Clarke's ideas were largely ignored as Saunders came under pressure from nervous settlers and officials, particularly in the period of the Anglo-Boer War, to try and minimize Dinuzulu's hold over the Zulu people.

This period also saw the growth of African protests against the policies of the Natal native administration, notably in the pages of *Inkanyiso*. The protests were led by the *amakholwa*--Christian, educated Africans who sought

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[77]Stuart seems to have left Swaziland in about March, 1900. (SP, file 8, item 1865, Stuart (Durban) to his mother, 24 March, 1900.)

[78]This title was later changed to Commissioner for Native Affairs.

exemption from "tribal authorities" and "tribal law." In 1901 Samuelson drew up a report on policy and matters relating to Africans, in which he deprecated the existence of a class of Africans who were free of "tribal control." A month later, Moor recommended the repeal of the exemption law of 1865.[79] The Hime ministry, then in power, decided against the repeal, but imposed new restrictions on exempted Africans. Massive dissatisfaction among the *amakholwa* resulted in increased political activity.

In June 1900, the Natal Native Congress (NNC) was formed with the aim of extending the activities of an earlier body, the Funamalungelo Society of exempted Africans, which had led the way in fighting for representation and rights for exempted Africans in the 1880s. The inaugural meeting of the NNC drew fifty-seven delegates and undertook to promote African rights and liberties. The members were largely *amakholwa*, although an attempt, initially unsuccessful, was made to include chiefs. The Congress was not campaigning for full political rights for Africans but merely for the right to be represented in Parliament by sympathetic whites. As Mark Radebe put it at the inaugural congress, "the natives must not rely too much on themselves, but where

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[78]Dhupelia, "Moor," pp.62-3.

possible, must endeavour to enlist the sympathy of English gentlemen."[80] One such English gentleman who was present at the June meeting was George Hulett, an old associate of Stuart's, who had accompanied the 1894 Swazi delegation to London.[81] Like Stuart, Hulett spoke good *isiZulu* and was well-acquainted with African affairs. Hulett was accused by the Natal Prime Minister, Hime, of being instrumental in initiating and organizing the Natal Native Congress, and in refusing to allow the Under Secretary for Native Affairs to attend. Hulett and the activities of the NNC were soon the object of a police investigation.[82]

I have not uncovered any evidence directly indicative of Stuart's attitude to the NNC. There are, however, several significant pieces of evidence which show that at this time he shared many of the concerns of the Congress. In about September, 1900, Stuart was posted to Ladysmith as Acting Magistrate.[83] Here, he was frustrated by the trivial nature of his daily tasks, but found opportunities to pursue his interest in African law

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[80]*Natal Mercury*, 6 June, 1900.

[81]Matsebula, *History of Swaziland*, p.157; Duphelia, "Moor," p.79.

[82]A. Odendaal, *Vukani Abantu! The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics in South Africa to 1912*, Cape Town, David Philip, 1984, p.310, note 143.

[83]SP, file 8, KCM 1865.

and the position of Natal Africans. One of the signs of concordance between Stuart and the NNC was that fairly soon after his arrival he was approached by local Africans who enquired whether he would be available for nomination to represent them in parliament, a request that obviously delighted Stuart.[84]

In a further indication of the nature of his concern with NNC matters, Stuart began to have lengthy discussions with local Africans regarding their grievances. In September, 1900, shortly after his arrival in Ladysmith, James Stuart and his assistant, Ndukwana,[85] had conversations at the Royal Hotel where Stuart was staying, with the leader of the *kholwa* community at Driefontein,[86] north-west of Ladysmith, elderly Johannes Kumalo, on the subject of Zulu

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[84]SP, file 8, item KCM 1865f, Stuart (Ladysmith) to his mother, November, 1900.

[85]I have not as yet been able to establish when and how Ndukwana kaMbengwana came into Stuart's service. Stuart's first interview with Ndukwana occurred in October 1897. The location of this interview is not given, but in 1897 Stuart was posted to Ingwavuma. (*JSA*, vol.4, p.263) Stuart's notes include another interview with Ndukwana in July, 1900 at Impendhle and in August at Howick.(*JSA*, vol.4, p.269, Ndukwana) Ndukwana gave Stuart substantial testimony of his own and was present at a large numbers of interviews with other informants recorded by Stuart. Stuart discussed the individual testimonies with him, and used him to to locate further informants. Like Dhlozi and Socwatsha, Ndukwana was, in a number of ways, clearly very influential in the development of Stuart's understanding of the region's history. It is possible that Ndukwana was Stuart's *induna*, but this requires further substantiation.

[86]*JSA*, vol. 1, p.223, John Khumalo commenting on Johannes Khumalo. Also see S.M. Meintjes, "Edendale 1850-1906: A Case Study of Rural Transformation and Class Formation in an African Mission in Natal," unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of London, 1988, p.354.

regiments.[87] Then, on the 12th of October, Stuart, on his own this time, had a discussion that lasted over an hour, again in his room, no. 12 at the Royal Hotel, with John Khumalo, a headman in the Roosboom area, another *kholwa* community.[88] This conversation concerned native grievances against the government, notably the rent charged by Europeans of squatters, and the loss of control of fathers over their daughters. The discussion went on to a consideration of Shepstone's rule.[89] A little over two weeks later, in the morning of the 28th of October, Stuart, this time with Ndukwana present, had yet another conversation with Khumalo.[90] The discussion covered amongst other things, the Langalibalele affair, land grievances, and African objections to their administration system. When the conversation resumed that evening, Stuart noted that Khumalo was averse to the abolition of the "tribal system" and was disaffected with the administration, charging that most officials did not know what they were doing. "John does not place great reliance in the young Englishmen of today;" noted Stuart, "they do not go as thoroughly into matters as Somsewu,

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[87]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.213-4, Johannes Khumalo.

[88]For a detailed discussion of the position of the Natal *amakholwa* see Meintjes, "Edendale," chapters 10, 11 and 12.

[89]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.215-6.

[90]*JSA*, vol.1, p.222. Stuart had asked Khumalo to come up from his home at Roosboom for a few days.

Mr. J. Bird, etc., and yet they fancy they know more than their elders."[91] Stuart's conversations with John Khumalo, however, reveal Stuart to be made in the mould of Shepstone and Bird: his notes of the conversation are testimony to careful, sustained discussion over a number of days--matters gone into most thoroughly--as well as to a genuine concern to elicit African opinion. The picture which they paint of Stuart in nightly consultation in his hotel room with well-informed Africans suggests a scenario heretofore little seen in Ladysmith. John Khumalo himself commented on the unusualness of the arrangements, laughingly calling Stuart's room "*KwaSogekle, kwa Tulwana*, for it is there that elderly men meet."[92] *KwaSogekle* literally means "the place of the maze," i.e. the maze of spittle drawn on a hut floor by men engaged in communally smoking hemp. The Thulwana was one of Mpande's *ibutho*, made up of men born c.1834.[93]

On the morning of the 29 October, 1900, the conversation was resumed, involving discussion of issues of exemption and the native question, as well as *kholwa* practices. The interview ended with Khumalo identifying the chief representatives of the amakholwa in Natal, and

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[91] *JSA*, vol. 1. p.221.

[92] *JSA*, vol.1, p.247, John Khumalo.

[93] *JSA*, vol.1, eds. note 67, p.270.

noting that the next NNC meeting was scheduled for January. Stuart described Khumalo as his "interlocuter"[94] and the context of this remark suggests that Stuart viewed him as a mediator between himself and the *amakholwa*. Stuart and Khumalo met again on 22 and 24 November, in the presence of Ndukwana, and on 8, and 9 of December, with John Africa and Ndukwana, again in Stuart's hotel room at the Royal. Their conversation covered topics such as the looseness of African women, especially those exempted--a comment on the breakdown of authority of homestead heads and chiefs--as well as complaints about the Under-Secretary for Native Affairs, S.O. Samuelson, who "was practically nominated by natives, but natives now find he is simply an officer under responsible government."[95]

In response to these complaints, Stuart suggested that what was needed was a man responsible for native affairs who must be "a good and reliable Zulu scholar, be entirely independent of the Natal Government, hold office for five years at a time and be allowed to be re-elected, or let him go on indefinitely during pleasure [sic], and be in direct touch with natives in every part of Zululand and Natal. Let all native cases," he continued, "civil

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[94]*JSA*, vol. 1, p.223, Khumalo.

[95]*JSA*, vol. 1, p.230, Khumalo.

and criminal, all executive work, be dealt with by the present Secretary for Native Affairs etc., and let the officer's duties be purely diplomatic." Khumalo and Ndukwana, Stuart noted, "thought such proposal would give great satisfaction." "I think," Stuart continued, "that such an appointment, of a man who has native interests at heart, would safeguard and promote native interests better than having representatives in the House."[96] In effect, Stuart was restating Shepstone's long-held position. Where Shepstone had, in his own way, been both "a good and reliable Zulu scholar," and independent of the Natal Government," in 1900 the Native Affairs Department could claim neither qualification.

Like Stuart, the *amakholwa* were also protesting the lack of knowledge of African matters and the silencing of themselves.

> We Natives are not admitted to the franchise, consequently we are unrepresented in any political matters, thus we are forced into the state of dumb beasts, which can never express the pains of their bodies, nor advise as to the best way of managing them in order to get good service from them...I am afraid the Government's knowledge of us is entirely derived from Magistrates, Administrators of Native Law, the Secretary for Native Affairs, and farmers.[97]

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[96]*JSA*, vol.1, p.230, Khumalo.

[97]*Inkanyiso*, 5 May 1892, letter from "Philanthropist."

Thus, if Stuart was not directly behind the NNC, he was certainly preoccupied with the same concerns. Andre Odendaal has described the Natal Native Congress as aiming "to cultivate political awareness," and as a "forum for ventilating grievances."[98] It is difficult to view Room 12 at the Royal Hotel in this period in different terms. It was these shared concerns which led Stuart to the vision of native administration and of his own future that underpinned his truly monumental research efforts.

When Stuart and Khumalo next met, on 15 and 16 December, 1900, with Ndukwana and Mabaso present, they discussed the notion of Christianity as *ukukhanya* (literally, to light up). The thrust of the conversation was critical. Ndukwana "strenuously maintained that the *Zulu life and civilization* was *ukukhanya*,"[99] a point that Stuart and the others present seemed to concede. Stuart sketched the scenario of a girl who is adopted by a European family, who is treated as one of the family until a certain age when the parents send her to eat her meals apart in the kitchen "thereby letting it be understand [sic] that there is an impassable barrier between the two." "What kind of enlightenment is that,"

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[98]Odendaal, *Vukani Abantu*, p.59.

[99]My emphases, *JSA*, vol. 1, p.232, Khumalo.

railed Stuart, "which allows its clergy to shake hands with their native parishioners at the mission station, and when they meet them in the street in towns will pass them by practically as strangers?"[100] Civilization was depicted as bringing its own evils. Some days earlier Ndukwana had retailed with horror how he had been accosted by European soldiers offering him money for sex.[101]

Stuart's comments as recorded in this conversation were, for the time, extraordinarily radical, significantly in excess of the remarks made by the identified "agitator," George Hulett. Whereas Hulett at the inaugural congress of the NNC, comfortably asserted the superiority of whites over blacks, Stuart comments reveal him to be markedly less confident of white advantage, and significantly less arrogant.[102]

The possibility that Stuart's interest in the NNC and the conversations were forms of intelligence gathering needs to be considered. Stuart's evident sympathy for the situation of his informants, as well as his active engagement in the suggesting of solutions

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[100]*JSA*, vol.1, p.233, Khumalo.

[101]*JSA*, vol.4, p.341, Ndukwana.

[102]Odendaal, *Vukani Abantu*, p.60.

together with the absence, as far as I have been able to ascertain, of any official reports of the conversations, argue against this. Furthermore, there are indications that at about this time he received a severe reprimand from his superiors. I have been unable to establish the exact reason for it, but one possibility is that his concern with African grievances was not looked on favorably.[103] This suggestion is supported by the fact that Stuart was subsequently reprimanded for allowing Africans to discuss new taxes and to voice their opposition.[104]

Stuart addressed an extraordinary letter to his mother just a few months after his posting to Ladysmith, in which he revealed himself to be possessed of a powerful life motivation. The letter is so strangely and strongly worded that it is worth quoting at length.

> It will interest you to know that I am making slow sure progress finding nothing to retract but everything to confirm and establish. My ideas of things broaden day by day thanks to my perpetual heavy reading and systematic inquiry. I am in reality directing the whole of my intelligence to storming a fort of vast magnitude. The chances to every ordinary mortal are of course dead against my ever succeeding but I don't care a rap what anyone

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[103]SP, file 8, item 1865h, Stuart (Durban) to his mother, 5 April, 1901.

[104]SNA 1/4/14 C43/05, 8 November, 1905 and SNA 1/4/14 C43/05, Minute, MNA c.8 November, 1905, both cited in Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, pp.173-4.

thinks. I just go plodding along in my own way. Nearly four years of this perpetual haggling and nagging at generalities and universals in numberless aspects has opened my eyes more and more to the meaning of what I am at...I am moving along slowly and I think, surely, and the day will come, I can't say when, when my work, carefully and methodically prepared, will be able to bear the public gaze and stand criticism. The more I think of it the more I feel that this great subject depends for its exposition not so much on talent as on intention. A great object had to be attained, to show that this Idea is true, well, it doesn't really matter how this is done so long as it is done. A woman cares not how a man proposes so long as he does propose. So long then as I reach the end, do not be surprized or greatly concerned about the capers and antics I go through. What I have to do is to get there and though I shall endeavour to do all well and decently I hope you will keep in mind that not the manner but the substance is the important point. I am still, as I have always been, master of my Idea. The whole thing takes its orders from me. Is it no triumph to be master of such Idea so vast if not vaster than that of Christianity? And so, day by day, I will proceed, tramping this way and that way through this vast jungle and forest trying to find the day. I am humble and, I hope, cautious and perservering. And so another year is coming to a close leaving me I think the richer in light than I was at its beginning.[105]

Nowhere in this letter does Stuart explicate directly what his "Idea" is, but, as I hope to show in the coming pages, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that Stuart was talking here about his work in collecting African testimony and information, and his conception of himself as the ideal interlocuter between African and

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[105]SP, file 8, item KCM 1865, Stuart to his mother, December, 1900.

white colonial society.[106] Precisely how he understood his task, and what constituted his "Idea" is one of the questions which the next chapter seeks to elucidate.

Stuart was at this time also taking down detailed notes of conversation with Ndukwana on topics such as the *sisa*-ing of cattle, "Zulu festivals," controls over women's marriages, symbols of office, diviners, marriage, burials, circumcision, *amaLala*, clan names, land and land tenure as well as historical matters such as details of Shaka's life and death, origins of the Zulu, and many other subjects besides. Between September and December, 1900, Stuart recorded conversations held with Ndukwana on fifty days, in some cases having more than one conversation on a single day.[107]

The intense and frank discussions which Stuart held in this period with Khumalo and Ndukwana were key in shaping his conceptions of native policy. Khumalo was an educated Christian who perceived the value of conserving old forms and whose ideas on the role of traditions in securing social stability accorded well with Stuart's. As we shall see in the next chapter, Stuart strongly

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[106]At the time of writing this letter, it was four years since Stuart first began to record African oral histories.

[107]*JSA*, vol.4, pp.269-345, Ndukwana.

advocated the preservation of "traditional tribal institutions." He was to insist on "going into matters in a thorough fashion," and believed that Africans needed a good (white) man on whom they could rely to mediate between them and the government. The interviews with Ndukwana imbued Stuart with an abiding sense of the depth of knowledge about African "customs" that it was necessary to gain before the real nature of key institutions could be properly understood. The Ladysmith conversations thus exposed Stuart, on the one hand, to the extent and nature of African grievances and the richness and meaning of African cultural practices, and, on the other hand, led him to make a vital connection between the two. From henceforward, Stuart was to argue that the key to native policy lay in greater knowledge and understanding of indigenous institutions and practices. Stuart's early years in native administration laid in place his "Idea" for the collection of materials on African history and "custom," and forged his understanding of the position of Africans in Natal and Zululand.

Chapter Eight

James Stuart and "the establishment of a living Source of Tradition," 1901-1942

In April, 1901, Stuart took up the position of Assistant Magistrate in Durban.[1] The move inaugurated a new period in his life, as he now entered directly the world of white colonial politics, coming closer to the seat of native policy-making, and under the spotlight of the Durban press. While in Durban, he continued to advocate the importance of the appointment of a knowledgeable expert in African customs to high office in the native administration, but his writings and public pronouncements were freer of the overt political concerns which dominated his stay in Ladysmith and governed his communication with men like John Kumalo.

The dominant issue in native policy in Natal at the time of Stuart's Durban appointment, was the failure of the Native Affairs Department (NAD) to ensure a constant and adequate labor supply for the colony. With the completion, in 1895, of the Durban-Rand railway line, the

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[1]SP, file 8, item KCM 1865h, Stuart (Durban) to his mother, 5 April, 1901.

Rand was increasingly able to attract Natal laborers to the Highveld on contracts. Natal settlers held strong notions of the inbred idleness and irresponsibility of Africans, and the necessity of teaching them the habits of industry and the value of labor. Labor was viewed as the first step towards civilization. The position of African women was the object of special settler attention, for women's labor was seen as the means that enabled African men to be idle, and to avoid the colonial labor market.

The NAD refused the colonists' demands to prevent the migration of Natal labor to the Rand, as well as to increase the hut tax. While the colonists required the government in power to do everything it could to ensure a constant labor supply in the colony, the SNA, Moor, also considered it his duty to see to the welfare of the African worker.[2] Moor was, nonetheless, under pressure from his white constituents and, as a member of the farming community himself, was not unsympathetic to their needs. He responded that Africans were active on the colonial labor market, but that demand exceeded supply. He had a number of plans to increase the supply. One plan that was not successful was to import labor from Portuguese East Africa. Another was to provide adequate

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[2]Duphelia, "Moor," p.138.

accommodation for migrants from outlying areas in the towns Moor wanted more than mere barracks, but the Durban Town Council, reluctant to spend the money, resisted his plans. It was in this period, on 1 June, 1902, that the first passes were issued in Durban. Essentially, Moor, whom Marks has argued was unlike his successors in that he was not an extremist, was trying to maintain a delicate balance between white employers and African workers.

When Moor left office in August 1903, Natal had had ten years of responsible government, for eight years of which he had controlled the Native Affairs Department. Moor had run the department in what was essentially the mould of Shepstone but with the added complication of his being an elected official and thus more susceptible to settler pressures than Shepstone. Like Shepstone, Moor believed that the "tribal system" was the only effective means for governing Africans. In his view, the authority of the Supreme Chief, the Secretary for Native Affairs and the African Chiefs had to be maintained. Following in the Shepstone tradition, he discouraged the system of exemption from customary law which had been provided so as to make it possible for Africans to turn their backs on traditionalism and "tribal" life. Likewise, Moor was opposed to granting the franchise to the Africans. He

also resisted the idea of land being held in freehold and this became a major issue on the mission reserves.[3] However, where Shepstone was highly critical of the existing *Code of Native Law,* Moor saw it as an effective instrument through which absolute control over the Africans could be achieved.

Stuart shared a number of his superior's views, notably his belief in the importance of the maintenance of the "tribal system." He was thus able to flourish--at least, to a degree--under the Moor administration. In some respects, however, he was critical of Natal native policy. In Stuart's view, one of the problems with Moor's approach was that he was following Shepstone's system, without the necessary qualifications.

Shepstone's system depended on an intimate knowledge of African society and on Shepstone's ability to play the role of chief.[4] As an editorial in the *Natal Witness* of 19 January, 1901, pointed out, Moor did not have that knowledge, nor was he able to build the kinds of relationships with African chiefs that Shepstone did. Stuart's reservations about the existing native administration as a whole, were focused on precisely this problem.

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[3]Duphelia, "Moor," pp.205-6.

[4]Duphelia, "Moor," p.209.

With his move to Durban in 1901, Stuart, as magistrate, had to deal on a daily basis with issues and problems raised by these defects in the administrative system. He protested against the implementation of the poll tax because it was, in his view, oppressive and a danger to the maintenance of the indigenous social system, and because it was widely regarded as oppressive. The labor problem also impinged on him directly. One of Stuart's greatest concerns at this time was the problem of *togt* labor. Since 1870 *togt* daily laborers were required to obtain licenses to work. This enabled the authorities to control the influx of Africans into the towns. In 1902 the Togt Labor Amendment Act tightened still further the regulations controlling *togt* laborers, requiring them to live in designated premises.

In April 1902, Stuart, in his role as Acting Assistant Magistrate in Durban, pondered the problem of the "precariousness of domicile of the Native."[5] Prefacing his discussion with a description of "the bloodsucking greed of invisible speculators" which resulted in widespread rent squatting, and references to "our somewhat unsympathetic form of Government and civilization," Stuart argued that "altruistic measures"

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[5]SP, file 40, item xx KCM 23774, handwritten script by Stuart entitled "Observations by the Acting Assistant Magistrate, Durban on the *Labour Question* as existing in Durban," dated 13 April, 1902.

were necessary "to combat baneful selfish grasping." The solution which he proposed was the establishment of a "native township" in Durban, that was not a "location...the slovenly huddling together of 'blind mouths,'" but,

> the institution, on a large scale, of a school of practical training in the ways of civilisation in a way which does not interfere with their own modes of life, whilst steadily inculcating our own and which actively assists them in combating blazing economic influences on their homes, wives and children--tending to very destruction--which irresposible speculating Companies and individuals in all parts of the Colony bring to bear on them.[6]

In advocating education as a source of security, Stuart was going further than Moor, who was strongly criticized by some administrators and liberal colonists for a failure to provide for African education in his period of office in the Native Affairs Department.[7] Despite the fact that Stuart's document was radical for its time, it was filled with stereotypes such as the notion of African precariousness of life being due as much to "the perpetual motion of Africa" as to the indicted land companies. Stuart echoed the settlers in talking about "the indolence natural to the native" and the need to inculcate a love of labor.

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[6]*Ibid.*

[7]Duphelia, "Moor," p.209.

While prisoner of certain stereotypes, Stuart broke free of their bondage in other areas. This escape was a consequence of his close contacts with Africans in Natal. Over the next few months, Stuart had a series of discussions about native policy with Dhlozi, Ndukwana, Jantshi, and a new acquaintance, Mbovu kaMtshumayeli, of the Qwabe.[8] On one occasion, he discussed the dubious benefits of European civilization, and suggested to Dhlozi and Ndukwana

> a vigorous attack on European civilization. I called up Rousseau's *Contract Social* and his doctrine of 'back to nature,' and said those who could read between the lines would see in my published views something very akin to Rousseau, although in penning them I had not got Rousseau in mind.

Stuart continued,

> Europeans must somehow be universally educated in regard to Zulu affairs, for only in that way can they arrive at a firm, right, universal policy. The sufferings of the Zulu people lie too deep for words; they feel, but cannot tell what they feel.[9]

Stuart felt that the *Code of Native Law* misunderstood funadmentally a number of the basic institutions and practices of African society. These ideas underlay his researches into "customs." The need for Europeans to learn more about African society, especially in order to

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[8]See *JSA*, vol. 3, pp.23-4, Mbovu, 9 February, 1903 discussion with Mbovu, Jantshi and Ndukwana on the land question, and discussion with Ndukwana about African resistance.

[9]*JSA*, vol.1, p.93, Dhlozi.

make policy, was to be a constant refrain in Stuart's writing, and was a motivating force behind his collection of material on African history and society.

At the same time as Stuart was discussing the land question and other matters of political significance with his African friends and acquaintances, he was also beginning systematically to research the early history of the inhabitants of the Zululand-Natal area. One of the chief objects of his attention was the reign of Shaka. Like Shepstone, he saw in Shaka a model of African government. Stuart pursued this subject diligently and enthusiastically in a score of interviews with African informants between 1903-5, accumulating hundreds of pages of closely written notes on the topic. While he interviewed informants over a much longer period, an in-depth focus on this period conveys a picture of the intensity and the scope of his activity.

In the period July 1902-October 1903, he resumed with vigor the recording of Ndukwana which had begun in Ladysmith, on custom and historical matters.[10] In early 1903 Stuart sent Ndukwana to fetch Jantshi kaNongila from Stanger.[11] In numerous conversations at which Ndukwana

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[10]*JSA*, vol.4, pp.354-383, Ndukwana.

[11]*JSA*, vol.1, pp.174-202, Jantshi.

was present, Jantshi provided Stuart with an account of the life of Shaka as well as other matters.[12] Jantshi's testimony is particularly revealing of Stuart's interviewing techniques. Jantshi gave Stuart an account--his "evidence" (a word which Stuart uses throughout to describe the content of these conversations)--of the history of Shaka's times, and then Stuart, in his own words, "cross-examined him."[13] When the interview resumed the next day, Stuart headed the page, "Jantshi still under cross-examination."[14] In this way, Stuart brought to his interviewing the legal language and approach which he used in his official capacity.[15]

Another informant who provided Stuart with a rich account of the life of Shaka was Ndhlovu kaTimuni, chief in the Maphumulo district, whom Stuart interviewed in 1902 and 1903.[16] In January 1903, Stuart interviewed Mruyi kaTimuni on the topic of Shaka's early years and recorded both the *izibongo* of Shaka from Jantshi, who was

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[12]Jantshi's account of the life of Shaka is discussed in detail in chapter four.

[13]*JSA*, vol.1, p.188, Jantshi.

[14]*JSA*, vol. 1, p.189, Jantshi.

[15]This impression is borne out by a comparison of the testimony of Jantshi with a statement on togt labor which Stuart in his capacity as magistrate took down in April 1902. (SP, file 40, item 19.)

[16]*JSA*, vol. 4, Ndhlovu. Ndhlovu's testimony on Shaka is discussed more fully in chapter four.

present at the interview, as well as those of Shaka's uncle, Mudli, from Mruyi.[17] In May, he met with Tununu who gave him an account of Shaka's birth, as well as material on the reign of Dingane.[18] He also interviewed Magidi kaNgomane of the Mthethwa who maintained that Shaka had fathered a child.[19] In July he heard from Madikane kaMlomowetole, the Qadi chief, a rich account of Shaka's birth, early years and accession to the chiefship of the Zulu.[20] In August, the discussion with Madikane was resumed over a number of days.[21] In February of the following year, in conversations over three days, Stuart obtained yet another version of the story of Shaka's life, from Mbovu.[22] On two occasions in August, in October, and in November of 1904, Stuart resumed conversation with Mbovu on the topic of Shaka.[23] Also in August 1904, Stuart discussed the reign of Shaka with

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[17]7 and 8 January, 1903, (SP, file 14); 1 January, 1903 (*izibongo*), 8 January, 1903. Ndukwana was present when both Mruyi and Jantshi spoke. Both interviews were recorded in the first person. (*JSA*, vol. 4, Mruyi, pp.36-9.)

[18]28 May 1903. (Typescript in SP, file 14, Ndukwana present.)

[19]*JSA*, vol. 2, p.80, Magidi.

[20]8 July, 1903. (*JSA*, vol. 2, pp. 47-8, Madikane.)

[21]15, 16, 17 and 30 August, 1903.(*JSA*, vol. 2, pp. 49-52, Madikane.)

[22]7, 8, 9 February, 1904.(*JSA*, vol.3, pp.23-31, Mbovu.)

[23]7 and 29 August, 16 and 25 October, 10 and 13 November, 1904. (*JSA*, vol.4, pp.31 34-8, 41-5, Mbovu.)

Meseni kaMini,[24] and in September and October dealt with Shaka's relations with the Qwabe with Mmemi kaNguluzane.[25] In February 1905, Shaka's dealings with the Cele were covered in an interview with Maquza kaGawushane.[26] In April of 1905, Stuart met Mkehlengana and Mkotane, sons of Shaka's famous officer, Zulu kaNogandaya, and recorded from them a host of stories about their father and about Shaka, as well the *izibongo* of Zulu.[27] In April Stuart also interviewed Maziyana kaMahlabeni of the Ndelu,[28] Mcotoyi kaMnini,[29] and Melapi kaMagaye,[30] all of whom added material to his data on Shaka. In May, Magidigidi kaNobebe provided information on Chunu relations with Shaka as well as material on Shaka's military system.[31] In May, June and July, Stuart reinterviewed Madikane repeatedly, checking his story against the information he had since received

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[24]*JSA*, vol.3, p.100, Meseni.

[25]*JSA*, vol.3, pp.238-72, Mmemi.

[26]*JSA*, vol. 2, pp.232-7, Maquza.

[27]18, 19 and 21 April, 1905. Also present Socwatsha, Mkotana, Mgqibelo kaSokwebula and Nduna. (*JSA*, vol. 3, pp. 210-8, Mkehlengana, and pp. 222-7, Mkotana.)

[28]*JSA*, vol.2, pp.264-301, Maziyana.

[29]*JSA*, vol.3, pp.53-67, Mcotoyi.

[30]*JSA*, vol.3, pp.72-94, Melapi.

[31]*JSA*, vol.2, pp.83-97, Magidigidi.

from his other sources.[32] Stuart also interviewed Mayinga kaMbekuzana for information on Shaka in July 1905.[33] Shaka was not Stuart's sole interest and in this period he also interviewed informants on a range of other topics.

At this time, Stuart noted the existence of sharply conflicting versions of the life of Shaka. The account given by Ndhlovu, he commented, was at variance with those of Ndukwana and Mkando. "Some of the men I have spoken to stoutly deny Tshaka was ever illegitimate," he noted, "whilst others with equally cogent reason, maintain, if not the exact opposite, then something near to it."[34] He compared the oral testimonies which he collected with the written accounts by Fynn, Isaacs and Shepstone, and noted further discrepancies. He seems to have given considerable credit to Ndhlovu's version. "It has to be remembered," he noted, "that Ndhlovu takes a deep interest in these matters, and that he heard them from his father," who was, as Stuart observed, present at many of the events concerned.[35]

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[32]26, 27, 28, 29 May, 27 and 28 June, 11 and 12 July 1905. (*JSA*, vol.2, pp.52-62, Madikane.)

[33]*JSA*, vol. 2, pp.246-59, Mayinga.

[34]SP, file 52, p.7, 21 June, 1903.

[35]*JSA*, vol. 4, p.206, Ndhlovu.

In the course of his emergence as an expert on Zulu affairs, Stuart's "Idea" began to gain clearer shape, as evidenced by this long stream-of-consciousness sentence in his private notes:

> Begun without any definite aim, the work has at length, by its scope and fullness so impressed its character on me, as to give rise to an intention to convert the whole...into an instrument for bettering the future of the people, and this in two principal ways (a) by placing so much of their folklore, language, history, habits and customs, praises, proverbs etc. on record as to form perhaps the nucleus of a far more extensive and thoroughgoing undertaking, having for its object the establishment of a living Source of Tradition upon which subsequent generations must more and more depend, not from idle curiosity, but vital national necessity; for, to keep fresh and alive the traditions of a people otherwise losing them through the peculiar circumstances they are placed [in] as regards the white races, is to provide them with a fountain at which all must at all times drink in order that, mindful of a strenuous past, they may be men of character and backbone, not a mongrel set of waifs and strays, blind as to the past and, therefore blinder still as to their future, for tis ever the past that lights up the future.
>
> Now as to the second way in which the future of the Zulus can be bettered.
> Not only would a systematic record of Zulu life, character, and achievement serve to inspire others to improve it, it would help materially to enlighten the white people among whom the Natives live as to what the latter really are. Europeans are eager to have this information, but it is not properly forthcoming. The gulf between the two races continues to yawn, with nothing to bridge it. And yet it is on this and this alone that mutual trust and sympathy are built up and depend.[36]

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[36]SP, file 42, item ii. (emphasis in the original). Also see item

For Stuart, answers to "the native question" lay in historical knowledge of African society. Not only did that research have to be done, and a thorough enquiry made, but it also had to be written down and preserved for the Africans concerned as much as for the administrators.

The research was not limited to the views of Africans. To his oral archive Stuart added the fruits of his researches amongst written sources. He began combing the writings of early travellers for information which he cross-checked against his oral sources.[37] In September, 1903, for example, Stuart acquired a copy of Nathanial Isaacs' two volume account of his sojourn in Natal, *Travels and Adventures in South-East Africa*.[38] Stuart's markings in the margins of his copy of Isaacs' *Travels* show that he cross-referenced details in the text with the African oral testimony which he had recorded,[39] as

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xliii for further insights into Stuart's campaign for the preservation of knowledge of native custom.

[37]See SP, file 52, item 1, KCM 24148, "Tshaka: a short account of his life, character and reign, preceded as introduction thereto, by remarks on the early history of the Zulu and Mtetwa tribes" (22 February, 1903) in which Stuart discusses his research methods, including his comparative examination of the "recognised authorities," as well as the importance of "independently enquiring of the natives themselves for such facts as tend to bring about more exact knowledge." (p.1)

[38]See the date in the copies of Stuart's copy of Isaacs text, held at Killie Campbell Africana Library.

[39]Stuart's copy of Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, vol.1, pp.66, 324.

well as with a host of other written accounts, both published and unpublished.[40] Where Isaacs described Shaka as a "savage," Stuart pencilled in the margin, "A mistake. He was a barbarian."[41] The distinction for Stuart was clear: the lifestyle of a savage was unpalatable, that of a barbarian different from his own, rougher perhaps, but fully comprehensible. Stuart likewise annotated his notes of oral interviews with references to published sources, highlighting discrepancies between the sources. The way to proceed with the research, he thought, was "to collect all books bearing on the Zulus--throw their facts into chronological order and as it were put all that is valuable in them under proper heads. Each head and subhead must be completed off, the whole work being then composed of organic bodies and therefore itself becomes an organism."[42]

One of the written sources which Stuart had access to was the papers of the late Henry Francis Fynn. He had been consulting Fynn in Bird's *Annals of Natal*, but, around this time, Fynn's son gave Stuart his father's

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[40]See *JSA*, vol.1, pp.39, 57, 62, 63, 75, 103, 164, 167, 194, 220, 226, 237, 326, 330, 337; vol.2, pp.408, 413.

[41]Stuart's copy of Isaacs, *Travels and Adeventures*, vol.1, p.350.

[42]SP, file 49, item 13, KCM 24069, p.8 (emphasis in the original).

papers to prepare for publication.[43] In a letter to a London publisher regarding the editing, Stuart spelt out his method of dealing with the Fynn papers and specified the kinds of editorial interventions he was making.[44] The letter is significant, for Fynn's *Diary* has been subject to considerable criticism--even labelled a forgery--because of the difficulties of distinguishing the hand of Stuart from that of Fynn. The letter, taken together with an understanding of Stuart's working methods more generally, provides a starting point for the close textual analysis of the *Diary*. Having the Fynn papers in hand, was a great advantage for Stuart, and they probably influenced his syntheses of Zulu history in no small measure.

Many years later, after he settled in England in 1922, Stuart augmented his oral and published sources with archival material. He systematically combed newspaper sources such as the *South African Commercial Advertiser, The Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser* and the *Grahamstown Journal*, as well as the missionary publications at the British Museum for items pertinent to the early history of Natal and Zululand.[45] He used these

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[43]SP, file 49, item 14.

[44]SP, file 49, item 14.

[45]SP, uncatalogued manuscripts, "Extracts 1-7."

data both to flesh out Fynn's *Diary*, as well as to augment his own writings. Throughout his researches, however, Stuart carefully provenanced every new detail of information, and rigorously distinguished between evidence from different sources.

By January 1904, Stuart, having perceived the magnitude of the task involved in the implementation of his "Idea," was advocating the establishment of "a Department for studying natives, for listening to their grievances and suggestions as to their own government as well as guiding and advising them on the one hand, and the Natal Government on the other."[46] Stuart envisaged that one of the department's first tasks would be the production of a monograph on the state of native affairs. "The whole should be presented from the Native point of view, indeed, the work's chief value would be the fact that it represented the problem from the Native standpoint."[47] Stuart's desire to see his Idea translated into a formal project was not motivated by practical concerns alone. Linked to his developing perception of the importance of greater knowledge of indigenous institutions, was a desire to invest his

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[46]SP, file 49, item 13, KCM 24069.

[47]Emphasis in the original.

researches with a coherent methodology, and to win the support of the scientific community.

In December, 1905, Stuart prepared a memorandum for the British Association of Science, a delegation from which visited South Africa that year. In the memorandum[48] Stuart advocated the establishment of a department of anthropological science in each colony, with a carefully selected individual heading each division. Describing anthropology as "the Queen of the Sciences," Stuart argued that it had hitherto been despised because it failed "to combine interest in human nature of the past with that of the present" and was not yet "a guide and adviser in the world's affairs."[49] Stuart observed that anthropology had the potential to study fruitfully the process of contact between Africans and Europeans.[50] Noting that, due to "deeply rooted prejudices," European colonists, evidencing "repulsion in every feature of social and industrial life," deny Africans an equal share in their "advantages,"[51] Stuart argued that their prejudices and the concommitant

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[48]SP, file 31, item xvi, KCM 23543. This document is a rough draft. I have not as yet been able to establish whether Stuart did indeed submit a memorandum, and, if he did, to what extent it differed from this draft.

[49]SP, file 31, item 16, pp.1-2.

[50]SP, file 31, item 16, p.24.

[51]SP, file 31, item 16, p.3.

injustices which resulted, were the result of "ignorance." The appeal to the scientific community was an attempt to gain support for his view of native affairs in the face of settler ignorance. Indeed, Stuart suggested that anthropology offered the means for overcoming these prejudices. He also argued that while the move towards the rapid Christianization and civilization of Africans looked, on the face of things, progressive, it was a notion based on an ethnocentric judgment informed by an inadequate understanding of African society. "What South Africa needs, as far as the Natives are concerned, is something which is radical and immediately radical and it is absurd to suppose that that can be obtained otherwise than under the agis [sic] of Science and by men competent to deal with and interpret facts brought before them."[52]

Stuart's vision accorded perfectly with the aims of the Association. The president, anthropologist A.C. Haddon, was, at this time, a persistent advocate of the establishment of an imperial bureau of ethnology. Haddon urged colonial officials to attend to the practices of subject peoples. If "officials unwittingly violated traditional customs their subjects would revolt; and officials seeking to improve the lives of colonized

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[52]SP, file 31, item 16, p.15.

peoples required their subject's cooperation--which could be secured only if officials' proposals appealed to local values."[53] In his presidential address to the anthropology section of the British Association meeting in South Africa, A.C. Haddon spoke of Bantu social organization as lending itself to discipline and giving African people the capacity for great achievments when they were led by those of their own who possessed great executive ability--men like Shaka.[54] Haddon and Stuart's positions were almost identical.

In February 1906, Stuart prepared a draft for an essay competition held by the South African Association for the Advancement of Science on the topic "The Best Means of Preserving the Traditions and Customs of the Various South African Native Races in a Form Available for future Scientific Research."[55] In his essay, he again lobbied for the appointment of a professional collector. Above all, Stuart wished for an official post to carry out his erstwhile avocation.

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[53]Kucklick, *The Savage Within*, p.46.

[54]H. Kucklick, "Contested Monuments: The Politics of Archaeology in Southern Africa," in G. Stocking, *Colonial Situations*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1991, pp.145-6.

[55]SP, file 49, item 15.

Stuart, who had met Haddon in the course of the British Association's South Africa visit,[56] was eager to establish and define the social value of his knowledge. He sought for his endeavors a form of professionalism, a scientific basis and a claim to impartiality. He also wished to establish the subject of African oral tradition as a scholarly enterprize. To this end Stuart made sure that he reached beyond his fellow colonists to bring his work to the attention of professional scholars.[57] In this respect, Stuart's campaign for extending knowledge of the African inhabitants of Natal and Zululand differed from that of Shepstone, for whom the command of such knowledge was established through the ability to operate successfully in an African context.

Stuart's general cry for knowledge was echoed by Maurice Evans in his book, *The Native Problem in Natal*,[58] when he concluded that what was most lacking was "accurate knowledge," notably about African grievances. Evans was, at this time, emerging as an early theorist of

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[56]SP, file 49, item 14.

[57]To this end in 1907, for example, he gave a lecture before the South African Association for the Advancement of Science in Durban on the subject ever dear to him "The Zulu Tribal System". In this instance, his particular concern was "How New Clans Came to be Formed."(SP, file 2, item 21.)

[58]M. Evans, *The Native Problem in Natal*, Durban, P. Davis and Sons, 1906, pp.7, 15, 18.

segregation, and an authority on the native "problem."[59] For Stuart, the problem was more than a difficulty in Africans communicating their grievances; nor was the solution demanded just the learning of how to manipulate the axioms and aesthetics of indigenous societies--as had been Shepstone's strategy. It entailed coming to understand their systemic nature in an intimate, and analytical fashion.

In about 1903, Stuart began a series of public lectures on "Zulu law and customs" which continued for at least the next three years, and included topics such as "Zulu Tales and Traditions, with a Note on Proverbs,"[60] and "The Place and Function of Cattle in Zulu Life."[61] In these lectures he drew on his growing knowledge of African customs and history to provide background material for analyses of matters of current concern in the colony. Some five years after beginning systematically to collect historical materials, Stuart was offering detailed accounts of the precolonial history of the region. While he was interested in a range of other topics on the early history of the Natal-Zululand region, the reign of Shaka and the various institutions

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[59]Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.294.

[60]*Natal Mercury*, 19 June, 1905.

[61]SP, file 2, item 22.

on which the Shakan system was based, were his chief interest. In 1903, he turned his attention to the reconstruction of the history of the reign of Shaka,[62] a task that he was to return to again and again over the next three decades.

By February Stuart produced his first draft of the life of Shaka.[63] In June, he had a revised version in hand, entitled "Early History of the Tribes of Zululand."[64] Another draft followed in June 1904, and a further revised version entitled "Tshaka: his Life and Reign," was delivered in a lecture in Pietermaritzburg in August 1905.[65] The lectures include a vast amount of information never before recorded in writing. Stuart was one of the first commentators systematically to distinguish amongst Zulu-speakers the existence of different dialects as well as ethnic affiliations. He wrote extensively about the division of the inhabitants of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region into *amaLala*, *amaNtungwa* and so on. Stuart brought into his lectures and draft

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[62]See SP, file 52, item 1, KCM 24148, "Tshaka: A Short Account of his Life, Character and Reign, Preceeded as Introduction thereto, By Remarks on the Early History of the Zulu and Mtetwa Tribes." Dated 22 February, 1903.

[63]SP, file 52, item i, KCM 24148.

[64]SP, file 52, item 1, KCM 24148 (21 June, 1903).

[65]SP, file 52, items 3 and 4.

essays material which came directly from his interviews, sometimes conducted just a few days earlier. He felt that the raw data from his informants would be difficult for his audiences to digest, and he sought to make them as accessible as possible.[66] In the lectures (and in the drafts), Stuart tended to go beyond a focus on the Zulu king to look at society more generally, and to reveal the workings of the system on which Zulu power was based. Commenting on Shaka, Stuart remarked, "We see him as through a veil, the dark veil of savage and terrific majesty."[67] Stuart's project was to lift away that veil.

Stuart's various texts lend themselves to a detailed analysis of their differences and the registering of those differences against the accumulation of interviews on Shaka in order to establish how Stuart's own understanding changed as he accumulated new information. Likewise, a close analysis of differences in texts produced for different audiences would be useful in adding to our understanding of Stuart's authorial activities. Such a task is a project in its own right, and will not be attempted in this study. The major point to be made here is, rather, that there is a very clear distinction between Stuart's synthesized accounts of the

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[66]SP, file 52, item 10.

[67]SP, file 52, item 7.

reign of Shaka--even where they draw heavily on information from African oral sources--and his notes of conversations with informants on the same topics.

The synthesized versions are marked by Stuart's methodological sophistication in using the oral sources. He was alert to the fact that "Much that belongs to anterior days is often attributed to a later Sovereign, especially if remarkable and successful."[68] Stuart was also keenly aware of the problem of information passing out of oral accounts where there was not a clear cut memory "hook" for it. For oral data to survive historically, he noted, "they must possess qualities likely to endure and to pass into succeeding generations whilst their activity or genius should be such as to leave a mark in regions in which they dealt."[69]

Stuart's synthesized accounts were organized chronologically, in sharp contrast to the notes of interviews. Moreover, they were based on a comparative examination of the "recognized [written] authorities" as well an "independently enquiring of the natives themselves for such facts as tend to bring about more exact knowledge." While in his notes he was rigorous in

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[68]SP, file 53, item 2, p.5.

[69]SP, file 53, item 2, p.4.

keeping information from different sources precisely provenanced, he explicitly billed his lectures as syntheses. His own synthetic Shaka, not unexpectedly, was very different from that of Ndhlovu, or Jantshi, or Ndukwana, and for that matter, from that of Isaacs and Fynn. He was a powerfully constructive figure:

> Almost synchronizing with that of Napoleon, in Europe, the career of Tshaka in South Africa, instead of being fraught with failure, met with success and that in a truly remarkable manner. Beginning with a small and little known tribe he by degrees lifted it together with many surrounding tribes with a five hundred mile radius into becoming a great nation.[70]

Stuart's Shaka did "not destroy merely for destruction's sake. He destroyed in order to construct, and herein lies the supreme merit and genius of his truly terrible reign."[71] Thus Stuart's representation of Shaka echoed Shepstone's. His researches, however, went much deeper.

Stuart's text rehearsed some details which would have been familiar to his Durban audience but also, as we have noted, introduced them to materials that came straight out of the mouths of his informants.[72] In drafts which date to 1903, Stuart tried to move his

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[70]SP, file 52, item 1, p.1.

[71]SP, file 52, item 2, KCM 24149, p.26.

[72]For example, the doggerel "You are looking at the earwax of a dog; Pierced by an Ntungwa stick," which Stuart included in the draft came from his interviews with Ndhlovu the previous year.(JSA, vol.4, pp.199, 200)

audience beyond the question of Shaka's goodness or badness:

> The exploits of one whose match you may in vain turn over the pages of world history to find, may for a moment amuse you; the revolting cruelty of a man whose deeds outdid Nero himself may, for a moment appall you; the achievements of a general whose numerous rough and ready campaigns surpassed even those of Napoleon in dash and daring, of Genghis Kahn in energy and irresistability and Marlborough in completeness and inevitability of success may, for a moment, astonish, but these things, surprizing though they be will cause you to take a deep and lasting interest in the people themselves, I am afraid I must take leave to deny.

He insisted on a deeper, more probing knowledge of Zulu affairs. He continued,

> What is the good of knowing anything about a Kaffir? Vote something for education, give missionaries facilities for Christianizing and teaching, stop polygamy, breakdown chieftainship, pulverize the tribe, taboo ancient customs and habits, compel labour et cetera and we have done all that can in reason be expected of us to do. How we, who know so little, can be ready to do so much, so much that is amazingly drastic, is to me a profound mystery.[73]

Decrying the lack of knowledge was a passionate refrain of Stuart's in this period. He returned again and again to the point that an in-depth understanding of African affairs was an essential prerequisite for the making of "native policy." That understanding was to be gained only through systematic inquiry. It was precisely such an inquiry that Stuart perceived to be his life's work.

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[73]SP, file 52, item 1, p.3.

In May 1903, he delivered a lecture at the Durban Presbyterian Guild Schoolroom. entitled "The Licensing of Marriage (*uku Jutshwa kwe'zintombi*). With a Note on the *isi-Godlo*." The talk was widely reported in the press, with the full text of the lecture published in the *Natal Mercury*, and later reprinted in booklet form.[74] Stuart prefaced the lecture with a description of the early history of the Zulu kingdom under Shaka, and then introduced the subject of his talk, "the licensing of marriage" as "one of the most striking features of this man's autocratic government."[75]

Noting that the material which he was about to present was nowhere else recorded, Stuart stressed his role in its collection.

> Most of what I am going to tell has been obtained from elderly native men, and, as no written account that I know of exists, I have had to construct the lecture out of much chaotic and disjointed material, slowly gathered during leisure hours.[76]

Stuart went on to discuss the various institutions which Shaka introduced, or made use of, "to govern his country by means of an army, and to make that army as perfect as

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[74]See J. Stuart, *Studies in Zulu Law and Custom*, Durban, printed by Robinson and Co., (probably 1903). Hereafter cited as "Marriage." Also see *Natal Advertiser*, 20 May, 1903.

[75]Stuart, "Marriage," p.3.

[76]Stuart, "Marriage," p.3.

possible."[77] Chief amongst these was the prohibition on all marriages "without the king's express approval."[78] Marriage regulations, and the associated practice of organizing all men and women into age-grades, Stuart viewed as fundamental to the Zulu system of government. So great were their effects, Stuart noted, "that anyone who desires really to know the Zulu people cannot do otherwise than give the matter his careful attention."[79] Stuart's account is filled with a wealth of historical detail that is testimony to "the careful attention" which he gave to the topic. In his analysis of marriage restrictions, Stuart was expanding on a familiar theme of Shepstone's researches into the social institutions on which despotic power was based.

For Stuart, the collapse of the Shakan system had terrible effects on the social fabric of Zululand.

> What goes on now-a-days, both in Natal and Zululand, is not in any way a picture of what used formerly to take place The necessary royal sanctions having been removed, the moral standards having been undermined by foreign ideas, the people now, one and all, pursue their own inclinations, not unlike the savage waters of a sea which has overthrown the dyke that formerly held it back. The removal of that great restraint, which the awe-inspiring name of a despotic monarch imposed on a whole

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[77]Stuart, "Marriage," p.5.

[78]Staurt, "Marriage," p.7.

[79]Stuart, "Marriage," p.8.

> people, has resulted, under British rule, in a widespread dissolution; and it is already, not without difficulty, that we can collect together the several parts of a political system rapidly becoming effete.[80]

This then, was Stuart's response to the political anxieties of the disaffected Africans with whom he had been consulting intensely over the previous four years, and the anxious and fearful white settlers in his Durban magisterial district. Where the Natal Native Congress was advocating the opening up of access to colonial society as a means to redress the problems experienced by educated and Christianized Africans, Stuart, developing an analysis out of his historical researches, and influenced by his contacts with anthropologists like Haddon, advocated what was, in a sense, the opposite solution, the recognition of the strength of indigenous institutions.

At the same time, Stuart was careful to acknowledge that, in the case of marriage regulations, young girls were sometimes forced to marry men they did not want. Stuart advanced his argument for the preservation of indigenous institutions cautiously, indeed, implicitly, in the lecture. It was, after all, a presentation given to representatives of precisely those settler interests which had used the position of women in the Zulu kingdom

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[80]Stuart, "Marriage," p.14.

as an argument to justify intervention in affairs north of the Thukela. "If, as has been pointed out," commented Stuart, "the individual sometimes suffered, the community at large derived very great advantages from such strict and universal discipline, although the custom itself was not altogether a popular one."[81] For Stuart, the system protected the people from prostitution and ensured that every woman "got a husband and protector."[82] The scarceness of women under the system "caused [men] to redouble their energies"[83] in earning the right to marry. In Shaka's day this occurred on the battlefield. In twentieth-century Natal, Stuart argued, this would occur through labor.

> And yet, if Tshaka succeeded in building up the strongest native army in modern times, why may not we, accepting our responsibilities to the full, with a becoming patience, and guided by a similar, though not so cruel or barbarous, policy, direct steadily the energies of this fine people into other channels, and teach them not how to fight, but how to work.[84]

Thus, for Stuart, the answer to the problems of native policy were to be found in the exertion of greater controls, and the most satisfactory means of doing this,

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[81]Stuart, "Marriage," p.20.

[82]Stuart, "Marriage," pp.20-21.

[83]Stuart, "Marriage," p.21.

[84]Stuart, "Marriage," p.20.

in his view, was through the system which was most familiar to the African population, the Shakan system of government. To use that valuable resource, however, required that it be properly understood. That is what underlay the choice of topic for the Durban lecture. As Stuart put it,

> This custom of uku-jutshwa kwe'zintombi, as it was called, i.e. licensing of marriage, is of the first importance in enabling us to grasp the meaning of the Zulu system of government--the strongest native government of that day in all that part of South Africa, at least, south of the Equator.[85]

Stuart also lectured on other institutions and traditions, such as his lecture on "Zulu Boyhood"[86] which looked at the basis for the courage and "martial spirit" of the Zulu in their boyhood training, and his two-part lecture given in Durban in May 1904 on "The Place and Function of Cattle in Zulu Life."[87] As usual, the press reported on the talks.[88] Indeed, Stuart's lectures clearly had a wide impact, evoked responses in the

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[86]Stuart, "Marriage," pp.14-15.

[86]*Natal Mercury*, 20 May, 1903, and reprinted as a pamphlet.

[87]First part delivered at the Wesley Hall, West St., Durban (SP. file 31, item i, KCM 23528; lecture in file 2, item 22, ms.1046); the second part was given at the Presbyterian Guild, Berea, Durban (SP, file 31, item 1, KCM 23528). See also his lecture of 19 May, 1905, on "Zulu Tales and Traditions, with a Note on Proverbs," delivered in the Manning Road Hall.(SP, file 48, item 2)

[88]*Natal Mercury*, 12, May, 1904. (Clipping in SP, file 16, KCM 23464.)

letters pages of the press, and were met with calls for further contributions.[89]

The language of Stuart's lectures, publications and official communications was carefully moderated to meet the expectations of his various audiences. As we have seen, in his private notes--and occasionally in public--he railed fiercely against the injustices experienced by Africans under colonial rule. In public he tended to be more moderate and diplomatic. He chose particular aspects of the Zulu system for elucidation to different audiences. The lecture on "Zulu boyhood" was delivered at the Durban High School. The object of the lecture was threefold: to offer, as we have noted, an explanation of the deep roots of the "martial spirit" of the Zulu; to provide more knowledge generally about the Zulu, knowledge that Stuart felt was sorely absent amongst the colonists; and, finally, to alert the white youngsters to their common humanity with Zulu boys, to show that the Zulu, as Stuart put it, "was not a mere animal, but a moralist, not a mere mongrel, but a man of repute; not a debased savage, but an intelligent being...He is, in

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[89]See, for example, letter Major C.W. Lewis to Stuart, 24. May, 1903, asking Stuart to publish his lectures in book form (SP, file 48, item 2); and letter by "Pro-Zulu", *Natal Mercury*, 20 November, 1903, asking Stuart for further lectures, especially on the topic of chiefly authority; letter Capt. Montgomery to Stuart, 6 August, 1906 praising Stuart's lecture (SP, file 44, KCM 238b.)

short, a man, of right, a member of the genus homo, with a claim to be dealt with as such, undeniably just and overwhelmingly strong."[90]

If Stuart felt he could be frank with the young scholars, he was more guarded with their parents, and the white establishment of Durban, and careful to take account of their prejudices. The strong imagery and harsh tone of his remarks, nonetheless, suggest an angry young man.

> If we are to know the Zulu or any other people on this earth, we must first want to know them. There must be the preliminary wish, the desire, the enthusiasm to know. That is the spark which in some way or another must be kindled in our bosoms. Until that real desire for truth arise, the Native Question and all that belongs to it will be not a 'living' but a 'dead' question. Native Question. Who asks the question? Can we take no more interest in the Natives than in our cats and dogs? A question is an inquiry made by one who wants to know, really wants to know and asked of those believed to be able to answer it. True answers are vital to our present and future welfare. Cannot the Zulus tell you something about the Native Question? Why then, I pray, don't you ask them? Why do you invite me to lecture on subjects I know nothing about, except what I myself have picked up by asking?[91]

This statement, marked "omit" in the margin and perhaps never actually delivered in the lecture, summed up the fundamentals of Stuart's approach, and his awareness of

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[90]SP, file 16, p.99.

[91]SP, file 52, item i, pp.2-3, "Early History of the Tribes of Zululand."

what he could say in public and what he needed to suppress.

Sometime in 1903 Stuart began to plan a book--possibly stimulated by the suggestion made by a correspondent, Major Lewis, that the lectures should be published in book form.[92] Stuart was, however, wary of the finality of publication. His notes show that he understood research of the kind which he was undertaking, by definition, to be constantly changing and far from a final truth.

> For this purpose some method must be established which is always continuous and accumulative. I write today what I know, tomorrow I or 1000 others may add to it. And so it is an open book I desire to start which shall become the central authority.[93]

Stuart worried specifically about authors having "a way of rounding off what they are not competent to complete and what ought never to be closed down until it is complete."[94] The open-endedness of method conveyed in this expression of anxiety is the hallmark of Stuart's work. Effectively the *Archive* is such an "open book," to which Stuart constantly added new material, meticulously provenancing each addition, cross-referencing but never

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[92]SP, file 48, item 2.

[93]SP, file 49 item 13, p.8.

[94]SP, file 49, item 13, p.8.

merging, never synthesizing or ironing out contradictions, and never rounding off what ought not be completed. It is precisely this open-endedness which makes the *Archive* a "central authority" rather than a "tainted well."

Stuart's commitment to a continuous and accumulative method was one of the reasons why he never published a synthesized reconstruction of his own of Shakan times. In 1904 he noted that he envisioned the quarterly production of "accessions" to the body of knowledge, to be published at a low cost. These did come out, in the form of the published lectures and reports.

It is likely that the Rev. A.T. Bryant, whose published account of Zulu history, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, more than any other single account, influenced historians writing about Shakan times, was in the audience for some of these lectures, or at least that he read the published lectures and reports. In 1904 Stuart and Bryant were in active correspondence with one another, exchanging historical as well as lexical and orthographic information.[95] At this time Stuart was also corresponding with Harriette Colenso on similar

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[95]SP, file 40, items 2 and 13.

matters,[96] as well as with John Shepstone.[97] S.O. Samuelson was another contemporary who enjoyed a lecture by Stuart on Shaka and was left pondering the future of "our natives."[98] In sum, while Stuart published relatively little, his views were communicated to his contemporaries and were likely to have influenced their thinking and their publications in no small measure.

The work of research and preservation which Stuart deemed imperative demanded fluency in *isiZulu*. But his language concerns went deeper. Stuart, Bryant and Colenso also exchanged wordlists. In search of translations they enquired deeply into the nature of indigenous institutions and concepts. Orthography was, of course, an important issue at the base of these lexical endeavors. Mutual concern for the correct orthography to be employed, led to the establishment of a Committee on Zulu Orthography, and, on 6-9 September, 1905, to a General Orthography Conference, held in Durban and chaired by Stuart.[99] The conference was attended by delegates from a number of local missionary societies, Chief Dinuzulu, at least three Zulu-speakers who were

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[96]SP, file 10.

[97]SP, file 49, item 35.

[98]SP, file 40, item 4.

[99]SP, file 44, KCM 23879.

especially interested in the topic--people like John Dube, the editor of the *isiZulu* publication, *Ilanga lase Natal*--and a number of "experts" like Harriette Colenso and Bryant.

Orthography proper was not the only concern of the conference. The attention of the conference was drawn to the need for a formal translation from English into *isiZulu* of a vocabulary of power, authority and sovereignty. The conference tussled with the distinction between "The Governor" (for which one delegate proposed "*umbusi*") and "Government" (for which he suggested "*urulumeni*"). "Parliament," it was agreed, would be translated as "*umpakati*".[100] In formalizing these translations, the committee was giving specific meaning and content to the concepts concerned

The codification of language and its regimentation in terms of a standardized orthography usually spells the end of regional variation, and is generally seen as a key element in the development of national consciousness. At this conference, however, Stuart expressed concern for the preservation of regional variations, notably between the Zulu and Lala dialects. He speculated on the origins

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[100]J. Stuart, *The Conjunctive and Subjunctive Methods of Writing Zulu*, Durban, n.p., 1906, p.11.

of *isiLala* as "in all probability older than Zulu" and noted that it "preserves some of the oldest words in their simplest forms."[101] For Stuart, the words of the Lala dialect merited collection for their historical content. The conventional explanation of official concern with orthography as a way to standardize and regiment language is not an appropriate way of understanding Stuart's concerns and we need to probe further to understand his concern with orthography.

Stuart suggested that the conference take on the task of preparing collectively an "authoritative Dictionary of the Zulu language"[102] based on the decisions of the conference. "[A]nimated by a desire to set the Zulu tongue in its best and most scientific forms," the conference, led by Stuart, nominated an interim working committee to proceed with this task to be followed by a further conference to ratify its progress. The language of science which Stuart brought into his lexical and orthographic inquiries echoed his approach to the British Association and his desire to put the study of African history and "custom" on a more professional, objective footing.

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[101]Stuart, *Conjuctive and Disjunctive Methods*, p.12.

[102]Stuart, *Conjuctive and Disjunctive Methods*, p.13.

A second orthography conference was held in March, 1906, in Durban, which focused squarely on the debate over the respective merits of the conjunctive and disjunctive ways of writing *isiZulu*. The former approach was the method favored by Bishop Colenso, and was still advocated by his daughter Harriette, as well as by Bryant. Stuart supported the disjunctive method. Harriette Colenso, irritated by Stuart's claim that the Colenso system made it "impossible for books printed in that style to be read with facility,"[103] was also annoyed that, despite Stuart's acknowledgement that orthographic matters should be decided by the speakers of the language, in reality the Committee would make the decisions. Two distinct positions emerged: Bryant, supported by Harriette Colenso, proposed a motion for the conjunctive method, arguing that "pronunciation is the chief and final guide as to what the Zulu mind regards as a word; and that whatever in the Zulu language is united in one vocal effort under one penultimate accent is that which in the Zulu mind forms one word or complete independent division of speech, and should, therefore, be written together as one united whole--thus: "*ngiyatanda*," "*bengiyakumtanda*." [104]

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[103]See Harriette Colenso's copy, in Natal Archives, Colenso papers, p.5, for her irritable scribbles in the margins.

[104]Stuart, Conjunctive and Disjunctive Methods, p.5.

Although Stuart had learnt his *isiZulu* "partly with the aid of Colenso's [conjunctive] *Dictionary*,"[105] he proposed the counter motion, for the disjuctive method.

> In an attempt to establish a method of writing Zulu, the ideal should be one of practical utility rather than of abstract perfection. The end of the orthographer is to provide the most efficient instrument for the communication of thought...Hence every system must, in its essence, be utilitarian, and not simply perfect, for perfection's sake, like a work of art. Rules, of course, are necessary, but, where they come into conflict with the efficiency of the instrument, they should make way for others more in accordance with the object referred to. Man is the master, not the slave, of his speech."[106]

The disjunctive method was seconded by other participants as "practical."

When Stuart described one of Colenso's conjunctions, "*ninjengabangahlakanipile*" as "a grotesque product of the Colenso system,"[107] the tone of the conference became heated. Harriette Colenso responded arguing that

> the difficulties noticed at the Conference were difficulties of the foreigner--the European. It was the difficulty of getting into the Zulu's mind, and into his language which expressed that mind. It was extremely difficult for Europeans coming full-grown to the matter, with all their prejudices in favour of their own methods, to get themselves into the Zulu's way of approaching and expressing thoughts; and the difficulty was at least as

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[105]SP, "Diary," entry for 7 September, 1888.

[106]Stuart, *Conjunctive and Disjunctive Methods*, p.5.

[107]Stuart, *Conjunctive and Disjunctive Methods*, p.30.

> great on his side. It was at the root of many woeful misunderstandings, and she was truly thankful for any sign that this was beginning to be recognised.[108]

Dube observed that he often failed to understand writings in *isiZulu*, even those in his own paper, unless, that is, it was his own article. Noting that he "wrote the language simply from instinct, and not according to authority," Dube favored a compromise between the two systems.[109] Although there were ten Zulu-speaking delegates to the 1906 conference, with five making contributions, only two of them asserted that Africans should decide such matters and that decision should be made in relation to *isiZulu* and not other languages. Most deferred to European expertise. Colenso's words revealed starkly one of the matters at issue in the debate, a quarrel over which of the "experts" it was who knew best the Zulu mind.

The lack of agreement was such that the conference was unable to make any decisions on a set of rules for Zulu orthography. In consequence, "another and stronger Committee"[110] was set up, the Zulu Orthography Committee, consisting of twelve members, to carry on the

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[108]Stuart, *Conjunctive and Disjunctive Methods*, p.32.

[109]Stuart, *Conjunctive and Disjunctive Methods*, pp.9-10.

[110]Stuart, *Conjunctive and Disjunctive Methods*, p.4.

work of the conference in drafting a set of rules, and to submit them for ratification at a further meeting of delegates in 1907.

An account of the proceedings of the 1906 conference was subsequently edited by Stuart in his capacity as the conference chairman, and published, together with a set of rules passed in March 1907 by the Zulu Orthography Committee, as a booklet entitled *Zulu Orthography*,[111] and distributed to delegates preparing for a third conference in 1907.

To accept at face value Harriette Colenso's claim that, at root, the debate was over "getting into the Zulu mind," is to assume that Stuart was not prepared to make the necessary effort to attain something akin to "a Zulu point of view." Everything in Stuart's historical researches, and indeed, his own education in the Zulu language at the hands of native speakers makes that reading seem unlikely. While the disjunctive method was closer to English in form, there was nothing to support the argument that the conjunctive method was closer to spoken *isiZulu*.

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[111]J. Stuart (ed.), *Zulu Orthography*, Durban, printed by Robinson and Co., 1907.

More credible is the idea that Stuart favored the disjunctive system because it would encourage use of the language by non-Zulu speakers. This accorded fully with his demand of the colonists that they learn more about the African people amongst whom they lived. To speak to them, as Stuart insisted they must, language access was an essential prerequisite. The disjunctive method also suited Stuart's own notation style. When Stuart took notes, he did so in a mixture of English and *isiZulu* to which the disjuctive method lent itself better. From a translator's point of view, the disjunctive method itself brought written *isiZulu* a step closer to English. And Stuart was, in every sense, a translater, or interpreter, of the African world to the European one, and vice-versa. Thus while Stuart was committed to the fullest understanding and precise documentation of African ideas, and was uncompromising in the need for their recording with the fullest integrity, in their translation and in making them generally known--as in his synthesized lectures--he also took on the role of making them accessible. So, too, in orthographic matters, Stuart sought the exact meaning of words, but preferred the most accessible format. In the movement from the aural to the graphic that is entailed in the writing down of the spoken word, Stuart insisted on fidelity of content, and

forwent what was already lost, an attempt to maintain consistency of form across media.

This raises a crucial issue in relation to the use of the Stuart collection as a historical source. As we have seen, Stuart was motivated by a complex and powerful drive to accumulate as much knowledge as possible about African society and history. He took down accounts of indigenous history in a particularly meticulous fashion. He sought, as faithfully as possible, to record the original content of the testimonies he was given. Of course, within such constraints, Stuart himself affected what was recorded in all sorts of ways. He did not reproduce that content exactly. Indeed, he could not have done so, no matter what techniques he employed. (Even a video recording cannot reproduce the original with absolute fidelity.) The full content of an oral text is always, inevitably, lost in recording. Much has been written, in other contexts, about the loss of the voice expression, the performance component, and their meanings, in the move from a spoken text to a written one. That literature brings useful perspectives to bear in the assessment of the traditions recorded by Stuart. Stuart, himself a performer in his role as a practising *imbongi*, is likely to have been, to a degree, alert to such points, and indeed, this is borne out by his

decision to record orally his praising. However sensitive to such issues he might have been, these performative aspects and the oral character of the accounts are lost in his records, leaving little trace. The absence must be noted.[112] While all recording techniques are, inevitably, unable to be faithful to the original, Stuart's specific recording techniques remain highly relevant. His meticulous documentation of dates and background information of other kinds, for example, can be seen as adding valuable content to the interviews. In sum, James Stuart made an enormous effort to preserve the content of the historical accounts which he heard.

If, for a moment we pause to distinguish between content and form, the question is raised of Stuart's impact on the form of the traditions which he recorded. While Stuart, as we have seen, has a great deal to say about his attempts to record content, he does not speak about form. The evidence of the orthography conference offers us some insight into his attitudes towards form. In particular, it draws our attention to the point that one of biggest interventions that Stuart made in recording a mass of oral material was to bring about a

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[112]On the shift from orality to literacy see J. Goody, *Interface between the Written and the Oral*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987.

massive change in form, transforming spoken text into writing, turning the aural to graphics.

Where sound is fugitive, writing can be described as permanent. Composition for the two different forms is likely to alter given their different degrees of permanence. A spoken narrative cannot be returned to and poured over, whereas a written text can. On the other hand, as happened when Stuart collected materials, an oral informant can be "cross-examined" offering, under questioning, elaborations and explanations, augmentations that a written text cannot provide.

With the recording of the oral testimonies of large numbers of informants and their transformation into written words, Stuart established a corpus of material that was less changeable than its oral precursors. At the same time as it gained permanence, and became visible as words, it also acquired new authority. The written word claims the right of being a reliable record of what a person said. As Walter Ong has argued, this marks a transition moving from a situation where knowledge is equated with hearing (in *isiZulu* for example, the verb to know, *ukuzwa*, is also the verb "to hear") to a situation where seeing is equated with truth ("I see what you say" meaning I know or understand what you say"--*ukubona*, "i

see/acknowledge").[113] For Stuart, knowledge of African society demanded research that involved asking and listening, but it also entailed writing down, preserving, and fixing, and, in so doing, conferring authority on the written word. The public impact of this was, at the time, limited because Stuart published little, but it is of increasing importance with the publication since 1976 of his notes.

Written accounts, merely by virtue of being written, are more uniform and more sequential (or linear), than oral accounts. Written words are things in space. In other words, they have a spatializing bias, as well as a specific linear temporality. These features affect the logic of the arguments of oral and written texts. Thus the understanding of both time and logic are likely to be different in written and oral forms, even when the words are identical. In oral narratives, time is typically mixed up and not linear. The temporal pattern between the beginning and the end of the story is often anarchic, dependant on the psychodynamics of the incident described and the narrative occasion. Prophecy is a feature well-

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[113]Walter Ong, "I see what you say," *Interfaces of the Word*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1977; Ong, *Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1958; Ong, *The Presence of the Word*, New York, Simon and Schuster, Clarion Book, 1970. First published 1967. See also Gerhard Fritschi, *Africa and Gutenberg: Exploring Oral Structures in the Modern African Novel*, European University Studies, Number 9, Peter Lang, Bern, 1983, pp.18-23.

explanation over elucidation. Where the notes manifest a preference for structuring historical knowledge in terms of stories and personification, Stuart's syntheses approach historical knowledge in terms of systems and concepts. Thus where Stuart's informants focus on episodes in the life of Shaka, and on his personality, in his syntheses, Stuart examined institutions such as the licensing of marriages and their effects.

Furthermore, in situations where language is spoken not written, there is no fixed linguistic standard comparable to the codification in a literate society with its dictionaries, grammars and orthography committees. In other words, there are no permanent authorities. This is not to say that a spoken language is without internal laws, but rather to say that the drive for uniformity and regimentation inherent in print is absent. Thus the tendency of spoken languages to evolve new spoken forms, constantly to modify modes of expression in close response to the changing world in which they operate, is lost in transcription, as is the investment of meaning in onomatopoeis, sound word plays or puns, and sound exclamations. Fritschi, considering the question of what happens when an oral tradition is put in literate form comments:

> ...putting oral expression into literate form means taking a cultural object that is living

and hence meaningful under definite, specific conditions, and putting it into an environment governed by different forces and expectations. Formerly in a concrete situation, presupposing exchange, knowledge, and an awareness of connections, oral discourse is cut off from its probably vital surrounding organism. In a written form it can somehow be likened to a piece in a museum, which, though getting a lot of attention, has lost a lot of its meaning because it is separated from its genuine environment.[115]

To make these points is not to support the whole idea of scientific history and abstract reasoning as depending on the invention of writing.[116] Rather, it is simply to point up some changes in form between the original spoken narratives and Stuart's written notes, and vastly greater differences between Stuart's written notes of oral texts and his own synthesized texts.

However, it does seem that Stuart believed that the transcription of African oral texts into written form--making them, thereby, into permanent, unchanging texts--was to open them up to scientific enquiry--in other words to open African history up to objective and critical investigation; to render it truly analysable, and ultimately, to make it authoritative. Writing, in his view, allowed for the accumulation of knowledge, and this

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[115]Fritschi, *Africa and Gutenberg*, p.118.

[116]For a critique of that position see R. Finnigan, *Literacy and Orality: Studies in the Technology of Communication*, Oxford and New York, Basil Blackwell, 1988.

had, of course, implications for the corollary of increasing information, control. Indeed, Stuart linked overtly his recording activities to the building of a more effective bureaucracy. A standardized orthography was essential for that bureaucracy and for systematic research.

At the same time as Stuart was interviewing well-informed Africans, lecturing to his fellow-colonists and establishing a standardized orthography, he was also lobbying hard for a particular conceptualization of native policy. Stuart pursued his crusade for increased knowledge of the African inhabitants of southern Africa in his evidence to the *South African Native Affairs Commission of 1903-5*. The Commission was established with the aim of gathering "accurate information on affairs relating to the Natives and Native administration"[117] for the purposes of common understanding on native policy.

The thrust of Stuart's evidence was that Africans should be consulted about their future government and the form it would take. To this end, Stuart proposed the establishment of a Native Council (or, Councils, if country-wide). He went on,

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[117]Quoted in Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.213.

> As this Council is for the purpose of dealing with purely native matters and would concern itself entirely with native welfare, so it must necessarily consist of natives or those enjoying the very fullest knowledge of native affairs and at the same time sympathizing with the people and possessing their confidence.[118]

Membership of the Council was to be permanent, thus avoiding the problem faced by elected officials like Moor who were responsible to a white electorate whose interests often clashed with those of the African population.[119] Stuart envisaged that the Council would be set up by the Governor of the Colony in his capacity as Supreme Chief (with the advice, Stuart added, of "a man like Mr. John Shepstone"[120]), and be under the presidency of "an European officer who may be known as the Secretary to the Supreme Chief."[121] The Council would meet twice a year and, in between times, the Secretary with a small staff would be responsible for the conduct of its business. Stuart did not confine his conceptualization of its work to comment on native policy. Rather, he envisaged a dramatically proactive role for the Secretary. "The work refered to will be to

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[118]SP, file 2, KCM 1046, 29 February, 1904. Typescript of Stuart's submission to the Commisssion, entitled "What then is to be done?" p.4.

[119]SP, file 2, KCM 1046, 29 February, 1904. Typescript of Stuart's submission to the Commisssion, entitled "What then is to be done?" p.5

[120]SP, file 2, KCM 1046, 29 February, 1904. Typescript of Stuart's submission to the Commisssion, entitled "What then is to be done?" p.4.

[121]SP, file 2, KCM 1046, 29 February, 1904. Typescript of Stuart's submission to the Commisssion, entitled "What then is to be done?" p.5.

collect all information he can regarding native habits and customs; he will prepare a history of native policy in Natal as well as in South Africa; he will acquire from all available sources the history of the various tribes; and he will make a systematic study of all such grievances of natives, especially those of major importance..."[122]

Stuart declined on principle to offer comments on the questions posed by the Commission, arguing that these were matters for African comment and, where discussed by Europeans, demanded access to African views and vastly extended research. "I am of the opinion," he commented, "that no man has any right to lay down the law on matters he knows next to nothing about. The European has no actual experience of communal land tenure, of living under a tribal system, of being polygamist, consequently his impresssions are slight and faulty and his deductions therefore must necessarily be narrow because not giving sufficient weight to all the factors as, for instance, they would come before the mind of an intelligent native living under such a system, if only he could sufficiently express himself."[123] In his submission, and in his

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[122]SP, file 2, KCM 1046, 29 February, 1904. Typescript of Stuart's submission to the Commisssion, entitled "What then is to be done?" p.6.

[123]SP, file 2, KCM 1046, 29 February, 1904. Typescript of Stuart's submission to the Commisssion, entitled "What then is to be done?"

subsequent cross-examination by the Commission, Stuart warned of the consequences of failure to hear and understand African grievances, and to act on them.[124]

When examined by the Commission, the heart of Stuart's argument was starkly revealed. The Commission cross-questioned him closely on the subject of Shakan rule:

"Was that not practically a despotism?"

"Yes, it was." admitted Stuart.

"A despotism of martial law which proved a success?"

"Yes" responded Stuart.

"Directly that was withdrawn?" enquired the Commisssion.

"The controlling influence being withdrawn, the people tended to disintegrate."

"Therefore" the Commission enquired, clearly puzzled, "you believe in despotism?"

"I do," responded Stuart, "that is despotism for this race of people we are dealing with in South Africa."[125]

The Commission went on to explore the question of "repugnant" practices associated with the despotic government of Shaka. To this Stuart responded, "I think

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p.11.

[124]SP, file 2, KCM 1046, pp.3,7, 9-10; file 6, KCM 23464, pp.7--9.

[126]SP, file 6, KCM 23464, typescript of Stuart's examination, pp.4-5

the European people are apt to misconstrue the way in which these people governed their own people. Things that they did which appear to us arbitrary and cruel, were not necessarily so. It was a system which they fully understood and many of these practices which we mark down as being contrary to civlised usages, were just in themselves; it was justice."[126]

For Stuart--like Shepstone--the key was the viewing of the whole as a system. What was indefensible under a Christian government, was, in his view defensible "under a native system."[127] While he admitted, when pressed by the Commissioners, that the Shakan system in its entirety could not be re-established in modern times, he considered a modified form a feasible goal. "The whole genius of native life is to live under a patriarchal system,"[128] Stuart submitted, of which, for Stuart, the Shakan system was but the most developed form. He argued further that under this system, hereditary chiefs had obligations towards their followers which ensured that they represented more than their own narrow sectoral interests.[129] In particular, he considered that,

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[126]SP, file 6, KCM 23464, typescript of Stuart's examination, p.5.

[127]SP, file 6, KCM 23464, typescript of Stuart's examination, p.5.

[128]KCAL, SP, file 2, KCM 1046, p.2.

[129]SP, KCM 23464, p.12.

contrary to current practices in Natal native administration, "tribes" should be kept intact, and not broken up, that hereditary, rather than appointed, chiefs were desirable. Finally, Stuart argued that the native system of rule contained within it a concept of guardianship that was vested in the King. "Owing to our having conquered the country, it is now vested in ourselves, and it confers on us very extensive rights.."[130]

Shepstone's legacy is obvious. The Shakan system was the ideal solution to the problems of native administration in Natal. It was closely tied to imperial domination, but, and this was Stuart's central thesis, neither opportunistically, nor superficially so. Where Shepstone was anxious to know the native so as better to rule him/her, Stuart was further concerned with the importance of knowledge of the past for Africans. He recognized that history and "custom" were crucial components of the identities of Natal's colonial African subjects.[131]

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[130]KCAL, SP, file 6, KCM 23464, pp.18-19.

[131]See SP, file 6, KCM 23464, typescript of Stuart's examination, p.6.

At the end of 1905 the authorities introduced a new £1 poll tax on top of an already onerous tax burden. The new tax was aimed at the African peasantry to oblige young men to enter wage labor so as to satisfy European labor needs. The poll tax caused widespread dissatisfaction in Natal. Rumours of a general uprising abounded, small incidents of recalcitrancy sparked off a panic, and martial law was declared. In April, the Zondi chief, Bambatha, who had been summarily deposed by the Natal authorities, went into open rebellion, soon to be joined by a number of other prominent chiefs. The rebels were rapidly defeated by the colonial forces, but a host of small incidents continued throughout 1907, until the Zulu king, Dinuzulu, who was thought to be behind the continuing ferment, was arrested, and charged with high treason.[131] Stuart, holding the rank of captain in the Natal Field Artillery, was an intelligence officer with the colonial forces, and was credited with bringing in Dinuzulu.

Stuart's involvement in quelling the uprising and his motives in subsequently publishing a comprehensive

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[131]The most comprehensive account of this uprising is Shula Marks' study, *Reluctant Rebellion: the 1906-8 Disturbances in Natal*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1970.

account of the disturbances[133] merit a study of their own. For the purposes of this study it is sufficient to note that Stuart was opposed to actions which dislodged the African peasantry from the land, and had long expressed opposition to a poll tax. He was, moreover, personally acquainted with some of the rebels, men like Ndhlovu kaTimuni whom we have already had occasion to mention, and was sympathetic to, and understanding of, their grievances. On the other hand, he was also a member of the colonial service, and he believed that native administration depended on strong governance in the Shakan mould. Thus, when Bambatha challenged the government, Stuart, while opposed to the poll tax, found himself in agreement with the authorities that firm action had to be taken. To compound further the ambiguities of his position, it was precisely his status as a "native expert" that earned him the post of intelligence officer, and obliged him to use that knowledge in the suppression of the community from whence it emanated.

After the disturbances were over, the Government of Natal invited Stuart to compile a history of the rebellion. By the time the manuscript was completed,

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[133]J. Stuart, *A History of the Zulu Rebellion, 1906, and of Dinuzulu's Arrest, Trial and Expatriation*, London, Macmillan and Co., 1913.

about five years later--Stuart being a slow and meticulous accumulator of materials--the new Union Government declined to meet the expenses. It is not surprizing for the criticisms levelled in the book at the Natal Native Administration in 1906 applied equally to Native Affairs in 1912 under the new Union Government in which Stuart held the post of Assistant Secretary for Native Affairs.

The book, which Stuart eventually published privately in 1913, was a powerful critique of the errors in native administration which led to the disturbance.

> But although government of the Natives mainly in accordance with their own laws and customs has been the oustanding feature of Natal's policy, changes being introduced with care and deliberation as they appeared to be necessary, there have not been wanting occasions on which instead of being sympathetic, Her administration has been cold and artificial; instead of being content with advance in harmony with nature's slow processes she has imposed laws involving sudden and widespread change; instead of being occasional and simple to understand, the laws have been frequent and to some extent unintelligible, having in view rather the benefit of the higher than of the lower race. Instances of such inconsistency will be given later; for these indeed, are the stuff out of which the bonfire of the Rebellion was built up. Had Natal been true to herself, had she but steadily adhered to the general principles above outlined, it is not too much to say, there would have been no Rebellion.[134]

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[134]Stuart, *Zulu Rebellion*, p.22.

It was also a statement of the need under all circumstances for firm responses and strong governance.[135]

The details of the struggles in the Native Affairs Department in the run up to and first years of Union await detailed investigation. Suffice to say that Stuart found himself in opposition to the policies of the Union NAD on three counts. Firstly, he felt that entrenched separate development was central to the maintenence of the fabric of African society.

> Natives must be granted special areas within which they can live unaffected or rather affected as little as possible by European ideas and manner of living--this may be described as a policy of segregation, but is really a policy of recognition of rights and privileges to which natives are due, not merely as individuals but as communities.[136]

Secondly, he argued that it was imperative that Africans had a say in, and control over, their own affairs, and finally, he regarded as imperative the appointment of an interlocuter between the African communities and the government, in effect, a Shepstone figure.

> Within these areas should be appointed Europeans who are sympathetic towards native life and character. These may be Commission[ers]--who, in their turn must all be subject entirely to the Native Affairs

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[135]Stuart, *Zulu Rebellion*, p.136, and "Replies to Criticisms," pp.522-7.

[136]KCAL, SP, file 2, KCM 1046, typescript dated 6 September, 1911.

> Department. This complete subjection to the N.A. Dept, will cause them to take special interest and pride in their work, there will be esprit de corps among them. The scheme will resemble the giving of a charter to the N.A. Dept. as suggested by the Natal N.A. Commission.[137]

The ideal man to head up this corps was, of course, none other than Stuart himself. In the last section of his book, on "Native policy," Stuart argued that the core of the problem was "the inadequacy of the organic connection between Europeans and Natives." As he put it,

> ...the want of an organic connection between their race and that of the white man takes the form of a request for the appointment of a person to act as intermediary, one to whom they can go with their troubles, and one who would lay these before the Government for favourable consideration.[138]

Stuart criticized Union policy as an attempt to impose "Western Civilization" on Africans, and he depicted the Bambatha affair as standing for a deep-seated rejection of precisely that:

> Bambata, as many natives believe, in spite of every proof to the contrary, is still living. For them his spirit, i.e. dissatisfaction with European rule, or, to put the same thing positively, a desire to control their own affairs, not on European lines, but on those sanctioned by the collective wisdom of their own race, is certainly alive, though he may be dead.[139]

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[137]KCAL, SP, file 2, KCM 1046, typescript dated 6 September, 1911.

[138]Stuart, *Zulu Rebellion*, p.531, emphasis in the original.

[138]Stuart, *Zulu Rebellion*, p.536.

One of the major effects of his proposals that Stuart foresaw, was that it would remove "the existing conditions under which a continuous impulse is given to living in accordance with European ideas and customs" and "the spirit of native custom and creed will prevail."[140] In 1911, Stuart was advocating a form of native policy that was very much a successor to Shepstone's ideas.

While the thrust of the argument in this chapter, and the one preceding, is that Stuart regarded his views as being in the best interest of Africans and had devoted considerable energy and time to ascertaining African opinion on the question, it is also an argument of the two chapters that effective colonial governance was a further concern of Stuart's.

> Thus, in a certain sense, there would be a restriction of liberty as well as of individualism. People by self choice, would tend more and more to submit themselves to a form of social and political life to which they are accustomed and which, so to speak, runs in their veins. They would therefore, elect to be under a form of control, provided this were exercised by themselves, in the same way that we find Ethiopians desirous of controlling themselves apart from all European interference.[141]

In terms of the new Union constitution, the head of the government was also the Supreme Chief of all the African

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[140]Stuart, *Zulu Rebellion*, p.536.

[141]Stuart, *Zulu Rebellion*, p.536.

inhabitants of South Africa. In Stuart's eyes this was a perversion of the Shepstone system and destined to fail. This Supreme Chief was distant, unknown and inacessible, and, in turn, did not have the necessary knowledge of the African communities under him to rule in the Shepstone--or Shakan--manner.

In order to draw attention to the differences between this distorted version of the Shepstone system and "Somsewu's" original conceptualization, Arthur Shepstone in consultation with Stuart, in 1911, wrote to Rider Haggard, requesting him to undertake the task of writing a biography of Sir Theophilus.[142] Haggard, who had accompanied Shepstone on his trip to annex the Transvaal in 1877, and who had been charged with the resposibility of running up the Union Jack over Pretoria, had been a personal favorite of Sir Theophilus.[143] He had championed Shepstone and his system of native administration in *Cetywayo and His White Neighbours*,[144] and considered him always "my beloved chief and friend".[145] The motivation for the biography, Arthur

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[142]SP, file 19, p.172, copy of letter A.J. Shepstone to Rider Haggard, 30 December, 1911. (Original letter in NAD, PMB)

[143]Gordon, *Shepstone*, p.256.

[144]Haggard, *Cetywayo*.

[145]Haggard, *Days of My Life*, pp.62 and 68.

Shepstone stressed, would be its capacity to speak to "the native question...an evergreen and vital matter out here."[146] Indeed, it seems that Arthur Shepstone and James Stuart were keen to have Rider Haggard deploy his popular writing style to lobby public opinion, for it was their plan that Stuart would do all the research, and that Rider Haggard would not even have to come out to South Africa.[147]

As we have seen, following the publication of *Cetywayo*, Haggard began to be considered something of an expert on South Africa, a reputation that was only enhanced by his enormous popularity as the writer of fiction set in Africa.[148] As Arthur Shepstone put it "...I know of no-one else in whose Judgement, savoir-faire and literary ability such entire confidence could be reposed as in yourself."[149] But Haggard was unable to oblige. In his reply to Arthur Shepstone, he pleaded overwork, but offered to help Stuart in any other way. His recommendation to the author to fill up the biography

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[146]SP, file 19, pp.173-4, copy of letter A.J. Shepstone to Rider Haggard, 30 December, 1911. (Original letter in NAD, PMB)

[147]SP, file 19, pp.176-7, copy of letter A.J. Shepstone to Rider Haggard, 30 December, 1911. (Original letter in NAD, PMB)

[148]Ellis, *A Voice from the Infinite*, p.92.

[149]SP, file 19, copy of a letter A.J. Shepstone to H. Rider Haggard, 30 December, 1911, p.175.

with Zulu accounts, "taken down in their own manner of speaking--not in the white manner and rendered into the appropriate English idiom"[150] struck an immediate cord with Stuart, ensuring that the two would continue to correspond. Indeed, in his notes made in preparation for the biography, Stuart did precisely as Haggard suggested, notably with regard to his treatment of the matter of "Sir Theophilus Shepstone having been regarded by the Zulu nation as representing Shaka."[151] Stuart made a start on the biography, drawing up a chronology of Theophilus' life, asking John Shepstone questions, as well as interviewing Africans, as suggested by Haggard.[152] The research into Shepstone's life and practice surely touched cords for Stuart, their life works being in many respects akin, and their differences from the broader settler populations being so similar. Like so many of Stuart's projects however, it was hampered by Stuart's commitment never to round off what ought not be completed, and was never finished.

In 1912, Rider Haggard sent the proofs for the second book of what was to become a trilogy on Zulu

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[150]SP, file 19, copy of a letter H. Rider Haggard to Arthur Shepstone, 23 Jan, 1912.

[151]SP, file 19, KCM 23467, pp.183-5.

[152]SP, file 19, James Stuart's notes on Sir Theophilus Shepstone.

history, to his new acquaintance, Stuart, to correct.[153] Stuart seems to have lost little of his youthful ardour for Rider Haggard's racy narratives, approving his labors and proclaiming it to be animated "by the true Zulu spirit".[154] Coming from Stuart, the acknowledged Zulu expert of the time, this was high praise indeed, and Haggard went on to dedicate the book, *Child of Storm*--in which Rudyard Kipling had a hand[155]--to Stuart, noting the endorsement in the dedication.

In 1914, Rider Haggard came out to South Africa and arranged to go on a trip with Stuart to Zululand. When the two men met in Durban, Haggard presented Stuart with an autographed copy of the first book of the new trilogy, *Marie*.[156] Accompanied by the knowledgeable Socwatsha whom Stuart had invited along specially, and an old retainer of Haggard's from his previous trip, Masuku, Stuart and Haggard then toured Zululand together with J.

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[153]Lilias Rider Haggard, *The Cloak that I Left: a Biography of the Author Henry Rider Haggard KBE by his daughter Lilias Rider Haggard*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1951, p.210.

[154]See dedication in the front of H.Rider Haggard's, *Child of Storm*, Longmans, London, 1913, in which the author refers to Stuart's comments.

[155]Cohen, *Life and Works*, p..204.

[156]Stuart's own copy of *Marie*, with Haggard's inscription to him is to be found in the Gubbins Library, University of the Witwatersrand. It is likely that Haggard also presented Stuart with a copy of *Child of Storm* (possibly also signed for Stuart, but I have not as yet managed to locate an inscribed copy).

Gibson.[157] Socwatsha provided Haggard with a great deal of material which subsequently used in Haggard's next book, *Finished*, the last of the trilogy on Zulu history."[158] The morning after their arrival at the Residency at Eshowe, Haggard's daughter records, the party "walked over to the site of a kraal called Jazi, meaning Finished, or Finished with Joy. An old native led him [Haggard] to a place in the middle of a patch of mealies that growth was weak and thin, for there stood the large hut where died the last of the Zulu kings--Cetywayo."[159] Haggard had declined to write a biography of Shepstone, but Shepstone figures as a character in *Finished*, in which Haggard describes him as the "African Talleyrand."[160]

In 1914, Stuart, in his turn, went to England as an adviser on Zulu habits and customs for a stage version of *Child of Storm*, produced by Oscar Ashe. Stuart purchased the costumes, supervised the Zulu dances and otherwise attended to details of authenticity.[161] Stuart and

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[157]Lilias Rider Haggard, *The Cloak that I Left*, pp.51, 64, 85, 110-111,223. My account of Haggard's Natal and Zululand visit in 1914 and his interaction with Stuart and Socwatsha is largely drawn from this source.

[158]Haggard, *The Cloak that I Left*, p.224.

[159]Haggard, *The Cloak that I Left*, p.233.

[160]Haggard, *Finished*, p.23.

[161]D.S. Higgins (ed.) *The Private Diaries of Sir Rider Haggard*,

Haggard entered thus into each other's worlds: Haggard interviewed Stuart's informant Socwatsha while Stuart helped craft fiction. The relationship was mutually influential.

Throughout the 1910s Stuart continued to interview knowledgeable Africans on topics of historical interest. Then, in 1916, he finally married and shortly thereafter, on the request of the Government, accompanied the Native Labour Corps to France. He returned to South Africa in December 1917. In the period 1918-1922 Stuart resumed interviewing, as well as work on the Fynn papers. He lectured on Zulu history and ethnography. Arguing that the Zulu does not want "the sublime and airy types of liberty civilisation has to offer,"[162] Stuart criticized the British government for failing to fufill its responsibilities in ruling Zululand, for taxing their subjects mercilessly, and otherwise being "neglectful of the welfare of the black people. Bad government," he continued, "signifies to them that European civilisation itself is to that extent bad or defective."

1914-1925, London, Cassell, 1980, p.7.

[162]"European Civilization from the Uncivlized Native's point of View," SP, file 2, KCM 1046.

Stuart continued working on drafts of his history of the reign of Shaka, and persistently lobbied for the appointment of a Special Native Commissioner, as well as advocating the establishment of University Chairs in subjects like Anthropology and Colonial History.[163] Finally, in 1922, he and his family set sail for England.

Stuart, very much "the Zulu expert" in London, made contact with the African language specialist at the School of Oriental Studies at the University of London, Alice Werner. Stuart and Werner exchanged books such as Fuze's *Abantu Abamnyama* and Maine's *Ancient Law*, and Werner invited Stuart to lecture in London.[164] As had been the case in Natal, in London, Stuart's expertise was communicated in spoken presentation far more than in written form. He lectured very widely on a range of subjects--with the reign of Shaka ever a favorite topic--representing "the Zulu" in the metropole. Stuart took charge of the Zulu section of the Aldershott pageant and the 1924 Wembley Exhibition, and when the praise poet who was part of the pageant was stricken with stage fright, Stuart, with arms, face and legs blackened, played the

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[163]SP, file 2, KCM 1046; file 31, item 7.

[164]SP, file 40, item 7.

Each of the four Readers contains a mixture of historical narratives, discussions of what might be termed "customs"--topics such as the forging of metal in early times, cattle, the manufacture of knobkerries and knobsticks, the carving of headrests and spoons, and so on--and praise poems. Of the historical accounts, about one sixth are concerned with the reign of Shaka, while the *izibongo* of Shaka are given in installments in four of the Readers.

Remarkably, Stuart's Zulu Readers have been ignored in most reviews of Zulu historiography, with the exception of the work of Rycroft and Ngcobo,[170] Malaba,[171] and Gunner.[172] These studies deal with the *izibongo* published in the Readers. Rycroft and Ngcobo argue that the Readers were "very influential in presenting a wide range of Zulu cultural and historical material which made its mark on future Zulu writers."[173] They note that the Readers were withdrawn from school use in the mid-1930s when changes in the official orthography made earlier (disjunct) publications unacceptable.

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[170]Rycroft and Ngcobo, *Praises of Dingana*, pp.xii, 44.

[171]Malaba, "Shaka as Literary Theme," pp.228-41.

[172]E. Gunner, *Ukubonga nezibongo*: Zulu praising and praises," unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of London, 1984.

[173]Rycroft and Ngcobo, *The Praises of Dingana*, p.45.

However, it should be noted that they were reissued in the new conjunctive orthography and probably continued to be influential for an even longer period.[174] In comments that pertain largely to the praise poems, Rycroft and Ngcobo point out that Stuart's Readers were the bases for the novels of R.R.R. Dhlomo and C.L.S. Nyembezi's publications.[175]

Rycroft and Ngcobo show in relation to the praises of Dingane that the Stuart Readers presented a version of the Zulu king's praises that was cobbled together, by Stuart, from a range of sources, and that Stuart's intervention in the creation of these texts was quite substantial. This is not surprizing: many *izimbongi* patched together lines in a similar fashion, and Stuart was himself, after all, an *imbongi* of some note. Rycroft and Ngcobo's findings concerning Stuart's methods in putting together the published version of Dingane's praises are broadly born out by Malaba's analysis of the praises of Shaka, also published serially in the Readers.[176]

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[174]SP, unaccessioned manuscript, proof copies of *Tulasizwe* (1936) and *Vusezakithi* (1938).

[175]Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," p.59.

[176]See especially Malaba, "Shaka as Literary Theme," chapter three, especially pp. 238-40.

Gunner argues that Stuart was responsible for fixing praise poems in a particular form and for losing sight of the creative work of individual *izimbongi*, while Golan builds on this criticism to argue that Stuart "created the impression that *izibongo* were fixed texts of which he had obtained the real or official versions."[177] This reading of Stuart is, in my view, misplaced. While the effective consequence of the writing down of *izibongo* was, inevitably, their fixing in written form, Stuart cannot be blamed for this. Their further freezing in a particular version was also an effective consequence of their publication. At the same time, it must be recognized that Stuart was enormously sensitive to the existence of many versions of the praises of Shaka, and the impact of the circumstances of delivery and composition on those versions. Moreover, in an essay on praising in one of the Readers, Stuart expressly asserted that praises were "unfixed" texts. In sharp contrast to Golan's claims that Stuart claimed to have recorded the true or official versions of the *izibongo*, and that he was "responsible for the common belief that the time and place in which the praise poems were sung, and the ability of the bard were of no importance," Stuart actually detailed in his essay a variety of circumstances of praising. He noted that *izibongo* incited people to

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[177]Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," p.59.

bravery, that praises were always being composed and that anyone could praise--"*Izibongo azi kete muntu munye, ukuti nang' o qam' izibongo*."[178] He was, moreover alert to the different abilities of different bards.[179]

There is a tendency in the literature to view Stuart's Readers as sites for the promotion of his versions of Zulu history. This is implicit in Golan's evaluation of Stuart.[180] In contrast to the praises, which were Stuart's syntheses, the historical narratives in the Readers were not. In the historical sections of the Readers, Stuart expressly eschewed the idea of collating material from a number of sources. Instead, he preserved the integrity of the stories as recorded in his original notes. Introducing the first book, Stuart noted that the contents of Reader "are original, having in every instance been collected by me." Review of the stories about the reign of Shaka bear out the validity of this claim. The stories about Shaka can be provenanced to one or another of Stuart's informants. Stuart used versions from a range of informants of very different political persuasions whose accounts were both for and

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[178]Stuart, *uKulumetule*, p.94. Also see his comments SP, file 60, item 4.

[178]Stuart, *uKulumetule*,, discussion of Magolwane, chapter 17.

[180]Golan, "Construction and Reconstruction of Zulu History," pp.58-9.

against Shaka. The individual narrative styles of the original testimonies is preserved in the Readers. The structure of the original narratives is likewise largely retained.

Moreover, the contents of the Readers reflect Stuart's collection process. The author has resisted imposing a chronological order in the arrangement of the stories, or the systematic pursuit of themes, while the eclectic mixture of historical material, information on "customs" and praises, reflects the contents typical of any one of Stuart's interviews. The stories appear to have been selected for inclusion because of their interesting content, dramatic narration and richness of detail. This writer struggled to discern an ideological orientation in Stuart's selection.

In summary, brief survey of Stuart's only substantial publications reveals that they reflected closely his notes of interviews. Minor differences between the two forms do exist which will merit closer study as textual sensitivity in relation to Stuart advances. This chapter heralds what is likely to be a new interest in close analysis of Stuart's many texts, published and archived. These include the Fynn *Diary*. Stuart died 8 April, 1942, with the task of editing the

Fynn papers as yet another uncompleted work. The papers were brought back to South Africa and passed onto Mck. Malcolm, and ultimately published in 1950.[181]

Conclusion

The two chapters on Stuart have argued that the private, unpublished Stuart stands in marked contrast to the public figure. Stuart employed a different language in his private papers and correspondence to that of his public pronouncements. In the former, Stuart was more tentative and more exploratory, frequently revealing himself to be morally outraged by the effects of colonialism of the African communities of Zululand and Natal. In the latter, Stuart spoke as an authority on Zulu customs and history, at the same time as he stressed the importance of still further researches. The public Stuart was a dynamic policy-maker imbued with a powerfully paternalist vision regarding British rule over its colonial subjects. I do not mean to suggest that there were two distinct faces to Stuart, one private, the other public. There were many features common to both

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[181]*The Times*, 17 May, 1944.

visages. The first was never wholly free of imperial ideology and racial prejudice common at the time, nor was Stuart's sense of moral outrage ever wholly absent from the second. In both miens, Stuart was concerned with the fundamental issue of the nature of African and European integration, and the problem of the differences between the "lower" and "higher" races. In both Stuart was also concerned with "bettering the future of the [Zulu] people."[182] In a single document Stuart could assert the superiority of the European and called for equality of opportunity for Africans.[183]

Stuart, partly as a result of his immersion in Zulu affairs and his noted linguistic skill, was no mere perpetuator of imperial hegemony, or representative of his "unpleasant generation". Rather, he was a highly self-conscious cross-cultural broker, mediating between the African and European colonial worlds in which he moved.[184] He sought not simply to implement imperial policies, but to reform and reshape them. He was highly critical of Natal native policy and very receptive to the articulation of African grievances. His approach was

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[182]SP, file 42, item ii.

[183]SP, file 40, item xi; also see file 42, item vi, for Stuart on the subject of rights for Africans.

[184]See his comments, SP, file 42, item vi.

essentially tactical, and he was adept at choosing the right languages for all the many audiences, African and European, that he had occasion to address, and whom he sought to sway. The great ambiguities of his position are perhaps best captured by the countless lists of proposed, but always ultimately rejected, book titles which survive in his papers. "The White Man's Tyranny in Africa" was one cry straight from Stuart's heart; "Civilisation of lower races: a tyranny" was another mediated through the discourse of his time.[185]

Crude caricatures of Stuart as the exploiter of African oral tradition for resources to facilitate and legitimate white access to land, and the labor of Africans, are contradicted by the mass of evidence pointing to his grand Idea, and his complex understanding of the task which he set himself. Stuart, like Shepstone before him, sought to protect Britain's colonial subjects from the land and labor demands of the settlers. Again like Shepstone, Stuart sought in African tradition a vision of sovereignty on which to base native policy. The image on which he drew, like Shepstone, was that of Shaka.

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[186]SP, file 42, item xxi.

Shula Marks is quite correct to see in Stuart's recording efforts and his publication of the Readers an effort to shore up what he saw as Zulu tradition.[186] But, we also need to understand how Stuart viewed the relationship between knowledge of African tradition and native policy, and, secondly, the extent of his particular interventions in the material he collected and published. Stuart had an extremely serious commitment to getting to know a vast deal about the native inhabitants of Natal. He was irritated by more facile approaches, and he employed a methodology that kept synthesizing activities out of his notes, and ultimately, also out of the Zulu Readers.

Stuart remarked that he often felt that the Zulus "deserve a Thomas Hardy of their own, some-one able on a large canvas to portray their various manners and character, and set down their merits and achievements..."[187] Stuart fancied himself to be precisely such an interlocuter, able to see, portray and interpret the humanity and culture of "the native"; able, like Hardy, to appreciate the hero in the rustic yokel that his contemporaries denigrated.

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[186]S. Marks, "Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness," in L.Vail, (ed.) *The Creation of Tribalism*, p.220.

[187]KCAL, SP, file 42, item xxiv.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, a sharp distinction must be drawn by scholars using Stuart's materials between his notes and his own compositions. There are strong motivations for regarding his notes as being remarkably faithful to the spoken orginals. The chief changes, I have suggested, were a product of a change of form from oral to written form.

The rational for the focus on Shaka, first by Shepstone, and later in a more developed, professionalized, and "scientific" form by Stuart, was a prudent regard for indigenous sentiments, and the need for a legitimation for colonialism. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Kucklik has shown, it was assumed that a king could not govern without the support of his people.[188] In other words, large states headed by kings were viewed as archetypal constitutional monarchies. The compulsion inherent in such a systems was understood to be necessary so that when confronted with an enemy, disciplined collective action was possible. This kind of thinking allowed administrators like Shepstone and Stuart to reach out and appropriate to the colonial project the reign of Shaka, and thereby to legitimate that project, doing so in a way that took full cognizance of indigenous sentiments.

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[188]Kucklik, *The Savage Within*, p.253.

PART FOUR

CONCLUSION: SHAKA AS METAPHOR, MEMORY AND HISTORY IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICA

> "But nobody has to worry about Gatsha Buthelezi, he will never rule South Africa, his struggle is in vain. Even Shaka Zulu said so before he died. All the Zulus are under a curse."[1]

Section Four, the concluding section of this study, is concerned with the use of Shaka and Shakan times as metaphors for contemporary relations between black and white South Africans. Chapters nine and ten look at two influential instances of the representation of Shaka in South Africa today, the television series, **Shaka Zulu**, and the Natal holiday resort, **Shakaland**. An important conclusion of the study is that contemporary political discourse draws on the symbol of Shaka in a manner that is given shape, or put another way, constrained, by the history of the image as traced through parts two and three of the study.

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[1]Letter to the editor from Dr. Alfred Ntlotleng, *The Star*, 22 January, 1993. I am grateful to Graeme Rodgers and Marcus Darwell for drawing my attention to this letter.

Chapter Nine

A positional gambit: *Shaka Zulu* and the conflict in South Africa

Shaka Zulu, the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC) television miniseries, premiered in South Africa in late 1986. Within a year it had been seen by a remarkable 100 million viewers in South Africa and abroad. Equally astonishing was the series' cost, a staggering $24 million. Hailed by some critics as a rare instance of African history from an African perspective, and slated by others as racist propaganda, the series remained in the public eye well beyond its screening times. In this chapter I examine the significance of *Shaka Zulu* through reference to the series' production history and to its political setting. I situate the miniseries within the context of the contests over the production of the history in South Africa in the 1980s.[1] I analyze *Shaka Zulu*'s script, explore the series' "rich and awkward commotion of production," and assess the multiple intentions of the producers and the possible

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[1]The concept of "the production of history" used here is drawn from the enormously suggestive work of Cohen, *The Combing of History*.

ways of its reception, both in South Africa and abroad.[2] This provides a lens through which to scrutinize the nature of hegemony and power in South Africa, and "contests which produce, reproduce and change historical knowledge."[3] It allows us to see the way in which images of Shaka which originated in African oral tradition, which were shaped and reshaped over the next century or so, have been drawn on in the making of Shaka into a metaphor for South African politics.

"The Thick Forest of Propaganda and Misrepresentation"[4]

The intimate connection between politics and the production of history needs no introduction in a deeply divided society like that of South Africa, where history has been and continues to be raided to provide justification for successive versions of apartheid. Racism in South Africa is underpinned by a range of ideas about what Africa was like before the arrival of the first whites and the ideas have been reflected in the

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[2]D.W. Cohen, "The Production of History," paper prepared for the Fifth International Roundtable in Anthropology and History, Paris, 1986, p.64.

[3]*Ibid*, p.25.

[4]The phrase is drawn from Mazizi Kunene's comments on writings about Shaka, in Kunene, *Emperor Shaka*, p. xiii.

filmic representation of "tribal" Africa. A range of films on "the Zulu," "the Venda," "the Sotho," and so on, were made from about 1960 onwards.[5]

The interpretation of the South African past in film mirrors some of the broad historiographical developments outlined in chapter one. In a 1968 episode of *Cesar's World* on "the Zulu," identical tracking shots follow both game and Zulu people moving through the bush. The scene shifts to the urban setting of Durban. "Nowadays," remarks host Cesar Romero, "the Zulus have been tamed." In films like *Zulu Dawn* (1979), about the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, Africans are portrayed only as naked warriors, brave and noble in the first film, and fortunate victors in the second. In *AmaZulu, People of the Sky* (1979), a film by independent director Steven Coan, flashbacks to the time of Shaka, "the Black Napolean of Africa," consist of warriors, battles and flames. Little of the recent historiography which has moved away from a focus

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[5]Of all the South African "ethnic groups," the Zulu are the most popular subject on film. The ethnographic films include at least ten short Encyclopaedia Cinematographica films on various aspects of Zulu culture and way of life (songs, ritual, medical treatments, hairdressing practices) made between 1968 and 1971; and two films by Hugh Tracey in 1968-9 on Zulu dances. *Bantu Tribes of South Africa* (1972), looks at the differences between the various "ethnic groups." A number of propaganda films focusing on the "ethnic" complexity of South Africa were made by the government's Department of Information to promote the policy of Separate Development. See K. Tomaselli et al, *Myth, Race and Power: South Africans Imaged on Film and TV*, Cape Town, Anthropos, 1986, p.2.

on Shaka to look at social and economic forces of the time has been represented filmicly.

"The Appropriating Appetite of History"

In the mid-1980s, the challenge to the dominant version of the past accelerated sharply. Between 1985 and 1986 student protests involved over 900 schools and nearly 40 percent of black school students in classroom stayaways.[6] With the establishment of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) in early 1986, the students' boycott strategy was superseded by a movement for the creation of "People's Education" to replace Bantu Education. "People's History" was given priority. On the far right, the Conservative Party launched a new monthly cultural publication in 1984, *Die Afrikaner Volkswag*, which sought to refocus attention on the Great Trek and the Afrikaners' historic struggle for survival. In 1986, *Volkswag* began a three-year commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Great Trek in an attempt to wrest *volkskultuur* from the ruling Nationalist party.

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[6]S. Davis, *Apartheid's Rebels*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1987, p.92.

The declaration of two successive states of emergency in 1985 and 1986 inhibited active resistance to apartheid, but the struggle for control over the past persisted. Concerned about history's growing primacy in the crisis situation--what he described as "the appropriating appetite of the discourse of history"--the South African novelist J.M. Coetzee remarked that, at this time, so ascendant was history that even the novel in South Africa was "being colonized--at an alarming pace--by the discourse of history."[7] In a similar vein, a heated meeting in early 1987, attended by proponents of "People's History"--history teachers, trade-union educationalists and progressive academics--and hosted by the History Workshop, a social and labor history forum, gave rise to a perceptive press report noting that moments of the production of history were becoming major events in history itself. "What is at stake, " said the *Weekly Mail*, "is not brute fact but which version of this country's past establishes itself within the national consciousness, that of the traditional rulers or that of the people... The rewriting of the past becomes an underwriting of the politics of the present."[8] The production of history had moved centerstage in the contest for power in South Africa. It was into this

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[7]*Weekly Mail*, 13-19 November, 1987.

[8]*Weekly Mail*, 20-26 February, 1987.

arena that *Shaka Zulu* plunged headlong when it was first screened in South Africa at the end of 1986.

The Plot

Shaka Zulu is a historical drama centered on the earliest encounter between blacks and whites in southeast Africa. Lieutenant Francis Farewell (Edward Fox) is commissioned by His Majesty's Government in London to journey to southeast Africa, and there to make contact with Shaka Zulu (played by soccer player Henry Cele), the head of a powerful and warlike kingdom. In the series, Shaka is presented as poised for an attack on the British Cape Colony some 300 miles to the south of his domain. The British Government is unable to provide the forces necessary to defend the Cape. The alternative plan is to send out "A solitary Caucasian" (Farewell), armed with little more than "civilization, years of tried and tested double-talk" to overawe and divert the Zulu monarch from an attack on the Colony.

At the Cape, Farewell recruits a band of men, adventurous and true, to accompany him to Shaka's kingdom. Their numbers include a compassionate Irish doctor, Henry Francis Fynn. The party sets sail, and is

wrecked off the shore of Natal, on the southern periphery of the Zulu kingdom. Shaka, a shrewd tactician, realizes the possible advantages and strengths of the new arrivals in his kingdom, and orders the party up to his capital, Bulawayo (literally, "the place of killing").

Once at Bulawayo, Farewell finds that his task is not as simple as it seemed in London. Shaka is an intelligent man, ruling a highly organized kingdom, a diplomat well-versed in debate and easily Farewell's equal in double-talk. Both Farewell and Fynn are drawn to Shaka, and are fascinated by the society in which they find themselves. During their stay at the Zulu court, they learn the story of Shaka's rise to power and how the mighty Zulu kingdom was built.

Fynn records all that he hears in his diary. The diary, its contents narrated by Fynn, is the vehicle for a series of flashbacks which tell the story of Shaka's conception and birth, his stormy adolescence as an outcast son of the Zulu chief, and his accession to power. Shaka's lifecourse is believed to be controlled by a prophecy, and he is shown to be destined from birth to rule. The achievement of the prophecy is assisted by the timely interventions of the ancient "witchdoctor," Sitayi. By the time the Swallows, as the Europeans come

to be called by the Zulus, arrive in Shaka's kingdom, it has expanded under his leadership from a small, insignificant chiefdom to the most powerful state in southern Africa.

Farewell and company win Shaka's trust by healing him after an attempted assassination at Bulawayo, and by assisting him in a campaign against his most powerful enemies, the Ndwandwe, under Zwide. Farewell is then required to escort a Zulu deputation to conclude a treaty with the British on Shaka's behalf. Farewell and a number of Shaka's most trusted advisors set sail for the Cape in a homemade bark. During their absence, Shaka's mother, to whom he is obsessively devoted, dies, and the Zulu kingdom is plunged by the grief-crazed monarch into an orgy of mourning. One feature of this mourning is a destructive campaign in the direction of the colony. Reports of ravaging Zulu hordes pressing on the borders of the Cape sabotage Shaka's diplomatic mission, already under strain as a result of the derisive and shoddy treatment of the party by the Governor of the Cape and his aides. Farewell and the Zulu chiefs return to Shaka's court to find the kingdom in turmoil, suffering under the harsh mourning prohibitions. Farewell confronts Shaka, who realizes that his power is crumbling, but he rejects Farewell's overtures. To the

end a servant of his destiny, Shaka then walks alone to meet his killers, his brother Dingane and others from his inner circle. The series ends with the Zulu kingdom in flames. Chaos prevails.

Historical Accuracy, Dramatic License and Propaganda

Bill Faure, the director of the series, defined its position within southern African historiography:

> Shaka's life was originally recorded by white historians who imposed upon their accounts bigoted and sensationalist values--often labeling the Zulus as savage and barbaric. It is our intention with this series to change that view.[9]

Faure's statement of intention featured prominently in the official *Shaka Zulu Souvenir Brochure* provided at the series' press launch and was widely quoted in a host of comments and articles at the time of its screening.[10] *Shaka Zulu* was billed as "one of the most important and dramatic stories in the history of Africa, a story which

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[9]*Shaka Zulu Souvenir Brochure*, Johannesburg, 1986, p.3.

[10]See for example, *Weekly Mail*, 31 October-6 November, 1986; *The Sunday Star*, 12 October 1986; *Style*, February, 1987; *The Star*, 4 October, 1986.

will soon take its place in world history,"[11] and was widely acclaimed as a revisionist production.[12]

In a number of U.S. cities, however, protests were organized and the series was condemned as "fascist," "violent," "historically inaccurate," and "racist propaganda."[13] More pointed criticisms came from a few isolated sources in South Africa: the mainly black readership *Drum* magazine and the *Weekly Mail*, a publication which describes itself as "the paper for a changing South Africa." "Who's [sic] Shaka is this?" asked *Drum*'s Kaiser Ngwenya. "Why is it written through the eyes of Henry Fynn, the white doctor? Why couldn't one of our most famous stories be told simply as a black story?"[14] Under the heading "Shaka Through White Victorian Eyes," the *Weekly Mail* reviewer noted, "Apart from Cetshwayo's brief words to Queen Victoria, blacks hardly speak in the first episode.... This is not a

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[11]*Souvenir Brochure*, p.3.

[12]*New York Times*, 2 November, 1987; *Cape Times*, 16 July, 1986; *The Star*, 4 October, 1986; *The Sunday Star*, 12 October, 1986; *The Star*, 10 October, 1986.

[13]*The Hartford Courant*, 28 February 1987; *Star-Telegram*, 22 February, 1987; *The Houston Chronicle*, 8-14 March, 1987; *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Datebook Television*, undated clipping, Harmony Gold publicity package; *New York City Tribune*, 2 March, 1987.

[14]*Drum*, January, 1987.

series made or told by Africans. Control is still in the hands of whites."[15]

The producers responded to these criticisms by claiming that the series was originally filmed and edited in chronological order beginning with the birth of Shaka, and tracing his rise to power. Only then were viewers to see the entry of the whites. They claim that the script was restructured and the flashback device introduced only when "American movie moguls" demurred that unknown black faces and black history would not capture international audiences.[16] If this claim is correct, it is worthwhile to note that international market constraints enjoyed priority over Faure's much vaunted aim of moving away from the original records of "bigoted" white historians.

Fynn's narration in the series is no mere sop to the international market or simply a convenient dramatic device. The series actively positions the audience to identify with his character. Fynn is presented as the figure with the most integrity. He is invited to accompany Farewell because of his concern for the black population of South Africa; he is critical of Farewell, and even more so of the British authorities; and he is

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[15]*Weekly Mail*, 9-16 October, 1986.

[16]*The Star*, 9 October, 1986.

enormously sensitive in his dealings with Shaka. Separate from but privy to the thoughts of both protagonists, his is advanced as an objective account of events. The audience is also positioned to be sympathetic to the other main European character, the able but wily Farewell. Developed as a likable and humane character, Farewell cares for the men under his command and establishes an affectionate relationship with Fynn. He is a loving, if absent, husband to his beautiful wife. Fynn and Farewell stand in sharp contrast to Shaka, who is portrayed as a man without warmth. "Love, love?" Shaka rails against his mother. "We are incapable of that emotion, Mother. All we ever felt is vengeance and hate."

Faure's aim of producing a film that does justice to the African past is further undermined by the emphasis given to the white adventurers far beyond their actual historical roles. Indeed, the Swallows are depicted as playing a decisive part in Zulu history. After the assassination attempt, Shaka is badly wounded. The Swallows heal him and then literally get him on his feet and back on his throne in time to foil a *coup d'etat*. The Swallows' finishing touch to the king's healthy appearance is the application of macassar oil to his head. The oil hides Shaka's grey hair and, he believes,

has rejuvenated him. He orders its application to the head of his aging mother. In this way, the Swallows are shown to have gained control over Shaka's body and to have saved his throne for him.

They are also depicted as becoming the key force in the military power of the kingdom. Shaka demands that they participate in the battle against his strongest and most persistent foe, Zwide of the Ndwandwe. During the battle, the Swallows, using a single cannon and a few muskets, put the Ndwandwe to flight. They succeed in breaking Zwide's power where previously the full weight of the Zulu army had failed. This incident indicates the extent to which real power, from then onward, is not Shaka's alone. It also serves as a reminder that the numerically inferior party of whites controls the means to wipe out entire African armies if they so wish. "Amazing, isn't it sir," remarks one of Farewell's men, "What a little gun powder does to 'em." In fact, neither of the above incidents are mentioned in the historical record. Fynn did tend Shaka, but he was not instrumental in saving his life or his throne. The visitors did participate in a Zulu campaign, against a small and recalcitrant Khumalo chief, but not against the Ndwandwe whom the Zulu routed unassisted.

Key episodes in Shaka's reign in which the white visitors played no role are omitted from the series. The decampment of one of Shaka's top generals, resistance to Shakan rule in the Qwabe country, the visits to the royal establishments of traders from Delagoa Bay and of the Swazi monarch, Sobhuza, are all events which are represented in the corpus of Zulu oral tradition yet extant, are powerfully and richly narrated, and lend themselves to dramatization. The reason that these events did not occur on screen, while others are manifestly inaccurate, is that, despite protestations to the contrary by its makers, *Shaka Zulu* was not about Zulu history, but about black-white interaction.

Not only is the Swallows' role built up far beyond their actual historical significance, but they themselves are ennobled and their quest romanticized. In real life Fynn was not a doctor of medicine, but a callow youth of twenty when he arrived in Shaka's country. He and Farewell fell out soon after their arrival and Shaka was able adroitly to play off the factions among the whites against each other. Farewell had been in the British army during the Napoleonic wars, but had since resigned his commission and become involved in shady dealing in India. He was an unlikely character for a delicate diplomatic mission. He misrepresented himself to Shaka

as an envoy of King George and used his assumed status as the basis for securing a grant of land from the Zulu king, and as an incentive to persuade Shaka to help him to collect ivory. In fact, the Europeans were given a specific instruction from the Cape Governor not to make any deals with the Zulu king. They were to restrict themselves to what was their only true motive for journeying into the Zulu kingdom--the less noble pursuit of profit through commerce.

To a man, the European visitors were a rough band of fortune seekers and adventurers. Two of the most colorful members of the original party were left out of the series entirely: the seventeen-year-old Jewish orphan, Nathanial Isaacs, who jumped ship at St. Helena, made his way to Natal, had numerous exciting adventures in pursuit of ivory, and who later became a slave trader; and "Hlambamanzi," the Xhosa interpreter of the party. The historical records suggest that "Hlambamanzi" warned Shaka about some of the whites' less reputable intentions and behavior, finally becoming such a problem to the visitors that they killed him. The inclusion of either of these figures in the series would clearly have posed

problems for writers seeking to present the white pioneers as romantic figures.[17]

Historical accuracy was not, in fact, high on Faure's list of priorities. Instead, he allowed the series to establish its authority as a legitimate interpretation of the past through close attention to authenticity. Tons of genuine animal skins, feathers, horns and oxtails were used to make the costumes. Real skulls were favored over paper-maché replicas; grass huts constructed by "time-honoured means" were built by skilled "Zulu tribesmen"; iron spears and hide shields were manufactured for the thousands of "real Zulus" who swarmed across locations in Zululand, playing the role of "their ancestors."[18]

The search for authenticity enmeshed *Shaka Zulu* in a series of contradictions at the level of production. The construction of sets on actual historical sites, raised serious questions about the filmmakers' respect for the history they were recreating; production of any sort in a

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[17]Fynn, *Diary*; Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, pp. vi-xvii; Bird, *Annals*, vol. 1; Roberts, *The Zulu Kings*; Du Buisson, *The White Man Cometh*, pp.3-5, 35, 36-39.

[18]*The Star*, 4 October, 1986; *Style*, November, 1986; *Houston Chronicle*, 8-14 March, 1987; Harmony Gold publicity flyer, n.d.; *Souvenir Brochure*, pp.4, 6-7, 12, 14, 22, 25; C. Burgess, "Shaka Zulu: The Aftermath," *South Africa Today*, 3, 2, 1987; for a discussion of the authenticity of the weaponry used, see *The Historical Firearms Society of South Africa Newsletter*, 34, 1985.

South African homeland is connected to the issue of the exploitation of an overabundant supply of labor at excessively low wages; equally questionable was the necessary reliance on the co-operation of compliant homeland leaders, desperate for outside sources of income and reluctant to impose operating constraints on crews. Indeed, it was precisely this set of conditions that made South Africa an alluring location for foreign movie makers in the 1980's.[19]

"The Rich and Awkward Commotion of Production"

Faure's intentions were doomed from the moment he and his white co-authors began work on the script. "Black history suffers because it is mainly written by whites.... I am a South African, and I felt it was time to rewrite the black history books," Faure stated, apparently oblivious of the antinomy in his claims.[20] In the very act of producing the script, Faure repeated Fynn's act of constructing Shaka. For a moment, early in the history of the script's production, there existed the

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[19]*Houston Chronicle*, 8-14 March, 1987; *United States Anti-Apartheid Newsletter*, 3, 1, 1988. On the making of local films and attempts to hide their origins, see the article by John Hookham in *Weekly Mail*, 13-19 May, 1988, and the reply by filmaker Chris Davies in *Weekly Mail*, 27 May-2 June, 1988.

[20]*The Beacon Journal*, 8 October, 1987.

possibility that Faure might have broken free of Fynn, and the "bigoted" constructions of Shaka by "generations of white historians," to offer, if not a Zulu version of the past, a script largely based on one. In 1979 Faure had in hand Mazizi Kunene's just published epic poem, *Emperor Shaka the Great*.[21] Kunene's text constitutes a powerful reappropriation of Shaka by a Zulu-speaking writer. Based on oral tradition, it offers a compelling evocation of Shaka as seen through African eyes. Kunene's text is, however, characterized by a cursory and harsh depiction of the white visitors to Shaka's court.

Faure initially toyed with the idea of basing the script on Kunene's text, but the involvement of the state-controlled SABC in his project in 1981 put paid to the idea. In the eyes of the SABC, no matter how magnificent Kunene's poetry, it could not outweigh the fact that he was previously an official ANC representative and an outspoken critic of the government. The SABC was likely to have eschewed a script based on Kunene's text for financial as much as political reasons. The need to appeal to the American market through the use of white interlocutors ruled out the use of an Africanist

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[21]See note 4 above.

text like Kunene's.[22] In 1982 an American, Joshua Sinclair, was brought in to rewrite Faure's original script. The script underwent yet another change of writers before it was completed. At least two significant changes in the script, which seem to have occurred after Sinclair was fired, were designed to present the Swallows in a better light and to eliminate ambiguities in the series' vision of potential interracial cooperation.[23]

These late changes to the script are useful indicators of some of the forces operating on Faure in the course of making *Shaka Zulu*, and which modified his original artistic and imaginative objectives. Faure began his career at the London Film School where, in 1974, he presented a dissertation entitled "Images of Violence." Faure's study addresses the problem of the ubiquity of violence on screen. The solution posited in the dissertation is not the elimination of violence, but the provision of tools for viewers to deal with it.

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[22]My discussion with Faure at his home in Florida, South Africa, 1990; telephone interview with Faure, 2 April, 1988.

[23]Sinclair was fired when he refused to follow editing instructions from the American distributors, Harmony Gold. (*Style*, November, 1986.) These conclusions are based on an article in the *Cape Times*, 16 July, 1986; a telephone interview with Faure, 2 April, 1988; and a reading of Sinclair's publication in German of *Shaka Zulu* (Munich, 1986) based on his script. I am grateful to Anja Baumhof for assistance with the translation of key passages from Sinclair's German text into English.

Faure returned to South Africa and began to work for the newly established television service of the SABC. According to Faure, he conceived of the idea of *Shaka Zulu* in the immediate aftermath of the 1976 Soweto Uprising. "It was time we rectified the misconceptions of history," he said, "and we needed to give black history a greater status."[24] *Shaka Zulu* was to be Faure's artistic and emotional response to political turbulence. The series developed his thesis on violence, by graphically portraying violence and then showing it to be misplaced. With *Shaka Zulu* Faure hoped to extend and liberalize the boundaries of consensual discourse in South Africa. In 1977, working with these ideas as an SABC film director, Faure was significantly ahead of his time.

However, as Tomaselli has shown with regard to other historical productions made for the SABC, the director's "selection of content and sources were governed by a sophisticated understanding (or gut reaction) of what would have been acceptable to the SABC and/or its target audience."[25] Indeed, during the period in which *Shaka Zulu* was made, the SABC was moving in a more "reformist" direction; Faure, in turn, was succumbing to the

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[24]Telephone interview with Faure, 2 April, 1988.

[25]Tomaselli, et al, *Myth, Race and Power*, p.43.

pressures exerted by his backers--restructuring his script and switching from a Zulu to an English text--and becoming increasingly involved in the production of other forms of state propaganda.[26]

In its final form, the script was ultimately faithful to the diary of the "bigoted white historian," Fynn, who originally recorded Shaka's life, and whose view of Shaka Faure was so eager to contest. To flesh out the areas in which Fynn's text is thin, the script primarily makes use of two other sources: the diary of another of the Europeans present at Bulawayo, Nathanial Isaacs; and E.A. Ritter's popular account of the life of Shaka, published in 1955.[27]

Fynn's "diary" was reconstructed from memory after Shaka's death, leading one historian to describe him as a "fiction writer" and the diary as a "forgery".[28] Fynn did indeed keep a journal of sorts, the original manuscript of which was reputedly buried by accident and never recovered. He subsequently wrote up sections from memory. Finally, as we have seen, James Stuart and later

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[26]Telephone interview with Faure, 2 April, 1988.

[27]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*; also see the discussion of Isaacs above. Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*.

[28]*Drum*, January, 1987; *Weekly Mail*, 21-27 November, 1986.

D. Mck. Malcolm edited the final version which appears as the *Diary of Henry Francis Fynn*. The preface to the *Diary* describes its genesis and makes it clear that the text is not an original journal reflecting daily events. In many respects, however, the *Diary* offers a detailed picture of life and events in Shakan times that is remarkable and invaluable to modern historians, and certainly a rich resource for a scriptwriter. Isaacs' text is based on the writer's memories and the journal of one of his deceased companions in Natal, James Saunders King. Isaacs' objective in publishing was to encourage investment in Natal. Like Fynn, Isaacs learned to speak *isiZulu* and his account also offers valuable historical data, for he was an intelligent and curious observer and was present at a number of the major events during Shaka's reign. His dramatization of events and his romantic streak are easily discernable to the careful reader.

Nevertheless, both Fynn's and Isaacs' texts reflect their authors' biases as lower-middle-class Englishmen of the early nineteenth century seeking adventure and fortune in Africa. In the 1830's, both sought actively to draw Britain into establishing a colony in Natal, and to that end they stressed social disorder and upheaval in

the Zulu country.[29] It was certainly in the subsequent interests of these authors to emphasize the "savagery" of Shaka. While the texts remain two of the most valuable sources for historians of the period, they require a careful disentanglement of their facts from their fictions, as well as close attention to their specific biases and their silences. Perhaps the most significant of these is the way in which they position both researchers and casual readers to look at the Zulu kingdom through white eyes.

Ritter's text is rather different. It purports to be an account of Shaka "as the Zulus saw him." Ritter attributes his knowledge of Zulu history to his boyhood attentiveness to the tales of knowledgeable old Zulu informants, and he demonstrates an obvious respect for Zulu oral tradition. Nonetheless, his book, like those of Fynn and Isaacs, reflects his own particular biases. The book is glaringly inaccurate in places, and characteristically romantic. For Ritter, Shaka was a "despot" and the reasons for his "excesses" were to be found in his disturbed childhood:

> Modern psychology has enabled us to understand the importance in after life, of a child's unhappiness. Perhaps we may trace Shaka's subsequent lust for power to the fact that his

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[29]Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, xi-xii; for background on Fynn and Isaacs see Roberts, *The Zulu Kings*.

> little crinkled ears and the marked stumpinesss of his genital organ were ever the source of persistent ridicule among Shaka's companions, and their usual taunts in this regard so rankled that he grew up harbouring a deadly hatred against all and everything E-Langeni. [the clan name of his tormentors][30]

Sexual insults are as common in Zulu society as they are in many others, but this explanation for Shaka's rise to power, which was echoed in the television series, has no resonance in any other source, and occurs in none of the many oral testimonies recorded by James Stuart at much the same time, and from at least one of the same informants used by Ritter. The ending of the television series with the murder of Shaka, the suicide of his paramour, and the flames and chaos was drawn straight from the final sections of Ritter's text.

Faure claimed that the script also drew on Zulu oral history, but there is little evidence of this, except insofar as the accounts of Fynn and Isaacs were themselves based on oral accounts. Where it seemed that the script writers may have had recourse to Zulu "tradition" is in the rendition of Zulu ceremonies and ritual. Authentic funeral and wedding scenes were a point of pride for the filmmakers.[31] Great attention was

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[30]Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*, pp.3-14.

[31]*Souvenir Brochure*, pp.2-14.

paid to the peculiarities of Zulu corpse preparation, the binding of the body in seated position wrapped in a skin hide, and the practice of burying alive the attendants of a dead king or queen.

Scenes involving the so-called "witchdoctors" of the time were handled in a similarly sensationalist manner. Sitayi, the ancient *isangoma* who controls Shaka's destiny, was depicted as a grotesque creature, hundreds of years old. Zulu oral tradition holds that, in fact, Shaka was less influenced by his *izangoma* than his predecessors, and through a skillful trick, robbed them of influence at his court. Zulu *izangoma* were ordinary people who lived and died under ordinary circumstances, although it was believed that they possessed rare and valued abilities. In contrast to the other-worldly Sitayi, they were an integral part of the community, unlikely to command packs of hyenas and maintain dens of dwarfs. In the representation of the *izangoma*, and in a host of other ways, the series presents Zulu ritual as disgusting and frightening. It is difficult to credit Faure's contention that

> Irrespective of the impressions and license taken in the execution of this project, always paramount was our intention to place in historic perspective seventeenth-century [sic] Africa with its witchcraft and superstition, and to correct the misconceptions of those who judged the beliefs and traditions of Africa--

> not in the context of Africa--but rather through their narrow Christian perspectives.[32]

The depiction of Zulu society was another area of significant misrepresentation of the past in the series. Granted, some of the series' greatest appeal lay in its representation of a world and a culture that is strange and "other" to modern viewers, both black and white, inside and out of South Africa. Instead of exploring and revealing a historic culture to the viewer, murky filters and molten colors were used together with clouds of smoke from fog machines to smudge the picture of the Zulu society, to make its inner workings dark, barbarous and finally incomprehensible. Whether in dance or at war, all movement in the Zulu kingdom is always within a cloud of dust, stirred by thundering barefooted warriors and maidens. These scenes, mostly of the Zulu court, are complemented by black nighttime scenes, shattered periodically by thunder, rain and lightning in steely shades of blue and white, which occur with the representations of the "witchdoctors"--scary, monstrous and even more incomprehensible.[33] In the Cape Colony, by way of contrast, the air is always crisp and clear; images are sharply defined against blue skies and white

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[32] *Ibid*, p.15.

[33] K. Tomaselli, "Camera, Colour and Racism in Shaka Zulu," *History News*, 30, November, 1987, pp.9-11.

buildings. Horseback regiments on parade and the carriages in the main streets raise no dust.

The series' focus on the whites' actions, the use of Fynn as narrator, the uncritical reliance on Fynn's diary and other texts by "bigoted" white historians, and the sensationalistic treatment of Zulu life point to a sharp contradiction between the series' actual content and the director's stated aims. In order to explore the significance of this contradiction, it is useful to look more closely at the financing of the series.

> *Shaka Zulu* took longer to shoot, cost more money and employed more people than any other production yet made in this country. It was also surrounded by rumour, gossip and tales of sensationalism. Even now, the facts are hard to find.[34]

The biggest scandal was centered on the production's cost. It seems that Faure initially planned to make the series independently, but as work on the script and the pre-production planning proceeded, it became clear that it would be one of the largest, most costly series ever produced in South Africa. By 1981 the SABC had taken over production and financing. *Shaka Zulu* would take two years of pre-production planning and research, two years on location, and one year of post-production work before

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[34]*Style*, November, 1986.

it was shown on South African television at the end of 1986.[35]

In late 1983, or early 1984, the production scale expanded still further. It was at this time that American distributors were drawn in. Throughout 1984 and 1985, the original budget of about $1.75 million was rumoured to be escalating monthly, and the SABC continually refused to publicize any budget figures. The final figure admitted to by the SABC was $24 million.[36] The sudden pouring of masses of money into the production--"as if into a bottomless pit," as one cynic commented--came at a time when the recession in South Africa was biting, the film industry in South Africa was depressed and the SABC was cutting expenditure on other productions and placing a freeze on new productions.[37] The SABC justified the outlay through reference to the anticipated return to be earned on the international market. The US-based associate producer of the series, Frank Agrama, however, noted that the production was a "calculated gamble." *Shaka Zulu* was, in fact, the most expensive miniseries ever produced for television syndication in the United States without a precommitment

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[35]*Ibid.*

[36]*The Star*, 29 September, 1986; *Souvenir Brochure*, p.6.

[37]*Style*, November, 1986; *The Star*, 29 September, 1986.

to network or operation time.[38] At this point, the vastly extended scale of the series and changed circumstances of production began to have an impact on the series' form and content. Tensions between Faure and his backers were running high, until finally the Americans suggested that he be replaced by an American director. This was firmly rejected by the SABC.[39] When *Shaka Zulu* finally went into production, the key technical expertise was provided by overseas specialists. To explain the appropriation of the series in this way, and why the SABC took the enormous risk and embarked on such an expensive project when it did, it is necessary to look at the wider political context which prevailed when the series was being made.

1984 was a traumatic year for South Africa. The United Democratic Front (UDF), formed in 1983, called for a boycott of the tricameral parliamentary elections (the first step in the Government's so-called "reform" strategy), and an explosive backlash against "reform" swept the country. In 1985 "necklace" killings were reported around the country, government buildings were burned, and hundreds of schools were closed down.

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[38]Harmony Gold publicity flyer, n.d.; *ibid*. On the riskiness of the venture also see *Electronic Media*, 22 September, 1986.

[39]*Style*, November, 1986.

Between September 1984 and December 1985 nearly 1000 people died as a result of township unrest. Strike action reached an all-time high, and a super trade-union federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), was formed.[40] One of the ways the state responded to this moment of crisis was with the increased use of its coercive powers. Troops poured into the townships and thousands of people were detained.

It was widely recognized that the image of civil war which South Africa was projecting, with nightly scenes of violence entering living rooms of viewers all over the world, was disastrous for South Africa's image abroad.[41] "The cameras have a way of only finding the violence and not the positive side," noted Faure.[42] Indeed, within months of the uprising, foreign banks refused to roll over South African loans, and both foreign and domestic capital began to withdraw from South Africa.

One step which the South African government took to change its image was to impose restrictions on the

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[40]J. Saul and S. Gelb, *The Crisis in South Africa*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1986, p.214; *The Star*, 23 December, 1985.

[41]Saul and Gelb, *The Crisis in South Africa*, p.222.

[42]*The Beacon Journal*, 8 October, 1987.

press.[43] The SABC, always the government's hand-maiden, at first reported events with biased glosses, but increasingly it limited visual coverage, and restricted itself to relaying official "unrest" figures for each day.[44] In one striking reversal of this policy, used to justify the increased use of troops in the townships, the torching of an informer was screened in gruesome detail.

Television drama was one way in which the SABC could project another view of South Africa. John Cundill, writer of a historical drama on the 1922 mineworkers' strike screened just before *Shaka Zulu*, gave an indication of the kind of thinking in influential quarters within the SABC at this time. "[T]elevision is a powerful medium of communication, and the idea of using TV dramas as reform tools has strong relevance...," Cundill said. "The projection of blacks and whites interacting in situations portraying reality and

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[43] *Race Relations Survey*, 1985, Johannesburg, 1985, p.460.

[44] See I. Wilkins and J. Strydom, *The Super-Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond*, Johannesburg, Jonathon Ball, 1978; P. Crankshaw, A. Williams, and G. Hayman, "To Educate, Entertain and Inform: The Meyer Commission Into TV," *The SAFTTA Journal*, 3, 1983, pp.20-27; G. Hayman and R. Tomaselli, "Technology in the Service of Ideology: The First 50 Years of Broadcasting in South Africa," in K. Tomaselli et al, eds., *Addressing the Nation: Studies in South African Media*, vol. 1, Johannesburg, R. Lyon, 1986.

highlighting their common humanity would go far to ease the tensions of mounting racial strife."[45]

Shaka Zulu offered the SABC an opportunity for presenting black and white viewers in South Africa with a drama advocating interracial collaboration and portraying the dangers of its failure. The Shaka theme as developed across the nineteenth century by people like Ndhlovu kaTimuni, Shepstone and Stuart was redolent with meaning about the nature of black-white interaction. The series also presented an opportunity to give another view of South Africa to overseas audiences, one which could be seen to advocate peaceful co-existence and respect for the African heritage, and which provided, by way of analogy, a comment on the government's "reform" plans. *Shaka Zulu* was thus extensively promoted outside of South Africa. In the United States, in a piece of sophisticated marketing, the series was shown on a network of independent television stations across the country, aimed at between 70 and 90 million viewers.[46]

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[45]*Weekly Mail*, 21-27 November, 1986; *The Star*, 1 October, 1986. For Faure on the role of television in influencing racial attitudes see the interview with Faure, *New York Daily News*, 6 October, 1987; and the interview with Faure and actor Henry Cele, *Houston Chronicle*, 8-14 March, 1987.

[46]*The Star*, 29 September, 1986. In eighteen US cities *Shaka Zulu* delivered higher ratings than the local stations' 8 pm. films. In Baltimore, *Shaka Zulu* gave WBFF-TV the highest rating and share in the M-F 8 pm. movies, with an average increase of over 300%. Harmony Gold publication "*Shaka Zulu* vs. M-F O'clock Movies," n.d. These figures are based on Nielsen and Arbitron ratings.

Faure and the show's two leading Zulu stars did a promotional tour of the United States that was timed to coincide with the screenings--and with Black History Month. On tour, Faure and actor Cele made the series' propaganda purposes explicit. "We believe that it is time to shed light on South Africa, correct misconceptions and change the system," they claimed.[47] They made it clear that they saw the series as an analogy with the present. Echoing the words of Farewell and Shaka in the series ("Nothing is impossible if two kingdoms truly want to live in harmony"), Faure remarked, "there is a large core of white and black people who want to come together in harmony. People are using our situation to further their own ends [presumably a reference to the work of agitators--a common refrain in the parlance of South Africa's frustrated reformers]. They don't give a damn if our children are killed. But Henry [Cele] and I care," Faure continued, enacting yet again a moment of white interlocution, "and so do a lot of other South Africans."[48] Faure and Cele also used the opportunity provided by the interest in *Shaka Zulu* to

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[47]Interview with Faure and Cele, *Daily News*, 6 October, 1987.

[48]*Ibid.*

speak out against the imposition of sanctions against South Africa.[49]

"The Politics of the Tightrope"[50]

In the turbulent political climate which prevailed when the series was screened, *Shaka Zulu* offered an easily recognizable analogy for modern South Africa. The series vividly conjured up the numbers ratio obsessively debated by white South Africans. Farewell's party consists of only eight men. The crowd scenes at Bulawayo show masses of thronging black humanity. "There's an awful lot of them, isn't there?" comments one of Farewell's men on their first sight of the capital. Indeed, at times the series' dialogue made the analogy less than subtle.

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[49]*Washington Post TV Week*, 1-7 November, 1987; *The Beacon Journal*, 8 October, 1987; *Daily News*, 6 October, 1987. The series has also been promoted as educational material in the United States. *Harmony Gold News*, n.d.; *New York City Tribune*, 2 March, 1987; *The Sunday Republican*, 1 March, 1987.

[50]The phrase is Shula Marks', coined to express the tensions at the heart of politics in South Africa, and to describe the political activity of leadership figures in South Africa who negotiate a precarious course between traditionalism and modernism, action and restraint, the imperatives of the South African state and the expectations of black South Africans. S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa*, Johannesburg, Ravan, 1986, p.6.

The violence of African society is explored at length. It is **the** problem to which a solution must be found. White society at the Cape is represented as being under threat of attack by Shaka. Farewell's mission is to deflect that onslaught. (In fact, this is a scriptwriter's embellishment, for, as we have seen, the Cape was not threatened at this time.) Farewell and his party are also presented as being in danger at Shaka's court. Death is always a possibility. Shaka is shown to be a ruthless leader, dominated by the imperatives of power and revenge. The Zulu are constructed as a highly militarized nation, an irresistible warrior tide. In the series, this militancy is not censured. Rather, the Swallows, like Shepstone, seek to control it and divert it from attack on white society.

The representatives of British imperialism in London serve as symbols for the far right wing, and a clear distinction is drawn between them and the whites on the spot in southeast Africa. King George IV, who considers the Zulus to be nothing more than "a tribe of savages running around in their birthday suits," is an object of ridicule. The Colonial Office's understanding of how to deal with the Zulus is shown to be way off the mark, as are their ready assumptions of the superiority of "civilization" and the potential efficacy of a "solitary

Caucasian" in dealing with Shaka. "If we cannot soothe the savage beast," they say, "we can at least confuse him whilst we mount an effective military defensive." The series makes it clear that Shaka confuses as much as he is confused. "Your Colonial Office has no idea of what it is up against," remarks Fynn to Farewell on their first introduction to the full panoply of the Shakan state. Fynn sees the Swallow's relationship with Shaka as a game of chess between two skilled players. The Swallows realize that their position in southeast Africa is most precarious, and that only the most careful strategy will see them through.

The strong rejection of the Colonial Office's racist attitudes struck a recognizably reformist note. Farewell's plea to Shaka to refrain from attacking the Cape was perhaps the most direct call of the series. "That yearning which has brought about everything that has happened was as much your fault as it is mine, but hating my people is not the solution. We must search for another, together."

Part of the solution is seen to lie in greater mutual understanding and respect. Farewell, in shades of Stuart, makes this point explicit to the governor of the

Cape Colony when he escorts Shaka's diplomatic mission to the Cape.

> In the course of the three years that we have been amongst the Zulu people, I have endeavoured to reconcile Zulu interests with those of the British government. Now there have been many difficulties, of course, most of them related to questions of custom, such as you have just witnessed with regard to the seating arrangements [the deputation had just elected to seat themselves on the floor of the governor's office] and basic misunderstandings which affect communication. But more recently I have had the good fortune to win the confidence and the trust of the Zulu king. The result of which is the king's strong desire to show his goodwill by proposing an alliance with Britain.

At this stage of the drama Farewell had discarded parts of his European garb, donning instead elements of the costume of a Zulu chief. Thus he no longer looks like an Imperial officer. Nor is he acting only in the interests of the British king. He has become (like Shepstone) a product of Africa itself, ambiguously placed midway between the Colonial Office and Bulawayo. This was the terrain on which the advocates of "reform" in South Africa situated themselves, somewhere between the conservative forces and "the place of killing."

Shaka is constructed as the one Zulu with vision who can see the importance of the whites and their "magic" for the Zulu people. Despite the warnings of his advisors and his *izangoma*, Shaka is determined to

appropriate the power of western knowledge. His complete control over his people means that he can enforce a vision of interaction if he so chooses. Shaka's commanders are depicted as being utterly subject to his authority. "We share a common life, " remarks Ngomane, the Zulu "prime minister," to Shaka. "My own!"

In much the same way that Shaka was chosen by Shepstone as the model for colonial despotism, so to is Shaka the type of black leader with whom the proponents of reform in South Africa in the 1980s would ideally have liked to negotiate. Enlightened and authoritarian, his closest contemporary parallel was the leader of the kwaZulu homeland and Inkatha boss, Gatsha Buthelezi. Like the Shaka in the series, Buthelezi personified Zulu politics. During the 1980s, moreover, Buthelezi enjoyed a media prominence that exceeded that of any other active black leader in southern Africa. The analogy between Shaka and Buthelezi is a common one in South African discourse. It is a comparison often drawn by Buthelezi himself, by journalists, and by ordinary South Africans.[51]

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[51]Maré and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, pp.1, 173; see also *The Guardian*, 6 July, 1987; *The Star*, 30 September, 1986; *The Star*, 4 October, 1987.

The South African Government's reform strategy was centered around the idea of political confederation. Buthelezi's mobilization of Zulu ethnic nationalism was highly compatible with the reformist vision. In the face of widespread opposition to the government's new constitutional proposals, the cooperation of Buthelezi in "reform" became essential. Echoing Fynn's metaphor of a chess game, Faure remarked, "When the game is set and all the parties come together, it's going to be parties like the Zulus calling the shots."[52] For both Inkatha and the South African state, the 1980s saw the increasing inevitability of their mutual alliance against mounting radical opposition. "For some," explain Mare and Hamilton, "Inkatha offers the last hope of a peaceful negotiated settlement. For the state it may be the most hopeful partner in the first tentative steps beyond or away from the bantustan policy based on 'power-sharing' between 'groups'--a plurality of minorities."[53] Inkatha, under threat from the growing UDF presence in Natal, in its turn, began moving closer to the South African state.

It is not sufficient, however, to see, as have Wright and Mare, Buthelezi and the SABC simply as acting in concert in *Shaka Zulu* to further the aim of presenting

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[52]Interview with Faure, *The Hartford Courant*, 28 February, 1987.

[53]Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, p.6.

the leaders of kwaZulu as the authentic representatives of African people in Natal/kwaZulu.[54] By the time the series was first screened, the South African state was certainly more squarely behind Buthelezi than ever before. But the series was characterized by far greater ambiguities than this simple interpretation allows, ambiguities which developed as the script itself evolved from 1979 to 1986.

The series ends in chaos when interaction with the whites is rejected by Shaka. It offered a strong warning to independent black politicians like Buthelezi not to try and go it alone. This was not surprizing, since Buthelezi had seized the constitutional initiative from the government through the establishment of the Buthelezi Commission in 1980. The Commission rejected as a "sop" the state's attempt to cater to black political aspirations through the establishment of a Black Advisory Council to the President's Council, and set out to explore constitutional alternatives. In 1986, Buthelezi's most ambitious venture, the kwaZulu/Natal Indaba, began to prepare the way for a multi-racial, multi-cultural legislature for the Natal region.[55] The

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[54]J. Wright and G. Maré, "The Splice of Coincidence," *The Sunday Tribune*, 7 December, 1986.

[55]Maré and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, pp.3, 164.

state, which rejected all of these initiatives, was alarmed at the support which Buthelezi was garnering at the expense of the state's own more fraught "reform" plans. A warning note is sounded in the very first scene of the series. Queen Victoria listens closely to Cetshwayo's account of the life of his ancestor, Shaka, and then remarks, "We are a practical woman, your Highness. We will not make an alliance with a legend."

Shaka Zulu offered more than just a caution to Buthelezi and others of his ilk. It neatly twisted the veiled threats that Buthelezi directed at the South African state when it seems intransigent. It suggested by way of analogy that the modern mfecane, which Buthelezi threatened may erupt if whites continue to ignore him, would be as threatening to the Zulu leadership as to the whites. In the series, Shaka's decision to launch an attack on the Cape Colony is the beginning of his undoing. The lesson was there for Buthelezi, and any other black leaders, that a successful outcome for either party is predicated on close cooperation with the other. The alternative portrayed in *Shaka Zulu* is that everything will go up in flames and chaos will prevail. "Out of ashes will come more poverty," commented Faure, "and children will be denied opportunities to be educated. It will pave the way for

Marxism and set the country back."[56] The end of the series is, of course, open to a more subversive reading than Faure allows--that Shaka's failure is the inevitable and only consequence of co-operation with Farewell. The final fires can be seen as the cleansing flames of revolution out of which a new order could arise.

The monopoly of power by the Swallows and the way in which they control the telling of Zulu history, while reassuring to white viewers, was a source of enormous embarrassment to Buthelezi. At a King Shaka's Day rally a few weeks after the special preview screening, Buthelezi attacked white historians, and Fynn in particular, for the distortion of Zulu history, especially the depiction of Shaka as a bloodthirsty tyrant. He railed against the Europeans' indiscriminate scattering of their semen across Zululand.[57] Buthelezi's virulent attack, widely reported in the press, successfully obscured a central contradiction between the rhetoric surrounding *Shaka Zulu*--the present Zulu king described it as a production of Zulu history "As seen through my people's eyes"--and the fact that the series portrays Zulu history through the eyes of a white visitor

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[56]Interview with Faure, *Daily News*, 6 October, 1987.

[57]*Drum*, January, 1987. Also see *The Sunday Tribune*, 21 December, 1986.

and a white director.[58] Moreover, although the series did show Shaka to be a leader of calibre and talent, it also repeated the old stereotype of his psychological imbalances. It incorporates a host of very "unZulu," untraditional features that had at least some critics wondering how it could have been approved by the Zulu royal house.[59]

In fact, Buthelezi could not have afforded to disassociate himself from the series, despite its flaws. *Shaka Zulu* was a powerful endorsement of the kwaZulu leadership, needed urgently by Buthelezi at the end of 1986 as the battle for popular support in Natal was enjoined by the UDF and COSATU. *Shaka Zulu* also put Buthelezi on the spot in another respect. More than any of the other South African "ethnicities," the Zulu identity is founded on "traditionalism." Indeed, Inkatha draw heavily on the symbols and institutions of the past. Inkatha forces are called *impi*(s) or *amabutho* after Shaka's armies. The positions of its leadership are justified through reference to traditional rank. Buthelezi, for example, traces his ancestry back to Shaka

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[58]*The Star*, 4 October, 1986; *The Sunday Star*, 12 October, 1986; *Souvenir Brochure*, p.12; interview with Faure, *The Houston Chronicle*, 8-14 March, 1987; *The Guardian*, 6 July, 1987.

[59]*Drum*, January, 1987.

on the maternal line.[60] *Shaka Zulu* is virtually the only visual rendition of the Shakan period in existence, and with it, the SABC had vividly and powerfully appropriated the lynchpin of Inkatha ideology. Buthelezi could not have afforded to have lost the opportunity of riding on the dramatic success of the series. Its screening provided a chance too valuable to miss for Buthelezi to make connections between himself and his illustrious predecessor. The price was to concede the point about white narration and other objectionable features of the series. Indeed, this compromise reflects the essential compromise of Buthelezi's political vision. In this, and in the depiction in the series of Shaka as "both the master and the victim of his regime," what Marks has termed the "ambiguities of Buthelezi's dependency" were starkly revealed.[61]

In spite of itself, however, the series showed that whites are dependent in a similarly ambiguous fashion. Their options are limited--as Farewell acknowledges, they have nowhere else to go. In the series, the whites cannot shape the course of events in terms of their interests alone. Shaka falls short of the demands made on him by the presence of the Swallows, and Fynn and

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[60]G. Buthelezi, *Power is Ours*, New York, Books in Focus, 1984.

[61]Marks, *Ambiguities of Dependence*, conclusion.

Farewell suffer in the process as much as Shaka's own subjects. The South African state in the 1980s was, in turn, itself equally dependent on the co-operation of Buthelezi in the "reform" scenario. As Marks noted, "[Buthelezi] constantly faces the state with his contradictory presence both as critic and as collaborator extraordinary.... He is simultaneously needed and feared."[62]

It is a striking feature of the series, and of the analogy that it sets up, that so much hinges on the abilities of key individuals. Shaka's rise to power, for example, is explained in terms of the prophecy. For those viewers who may doubt the power of magic, an alternative explanation is offered through reference to Shaka's character. He is ambitious, able and successful. All the action revolves around him. Clearly, the centrality of a single leader in the series is an important dramatic device. The "Great Man" theory, however, promotes the idea that history is made by leaders, not by ordinary men and women. It suggests that they, by virtue of their exceptional abilities, can best judge the way forward. This perspective denies the struggles of ordinary people and their capacity to shape their own lives. Moreover, as the series so vividly

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[62]Marks, *Ambiguities of Dependence*, p.123.

showed, it implies--following Shepstone--that whoever controls the leader, controls the people. When the attempt is made on Shaka's life, Farewell comments, "We need Shaka alive. If we can control Shaka's soul, we can control the whole of southern Africa." In denying ordinary people access to power, the South African state and Buthelezi stand united against the radical and militant popular movements.

Tomaselli has argued that *Shaka Zulu* "endorses apartheid discourse which holds that blacks are 'different' and should develop in their 'own areas,' safely out of white civilisation."[63] In fact, *Shaka Zulu* was no mere "racist propaganda:" on the contrary, it advocated interracial interaction and mutual dependency. But it was not a simple rendition of the most progressive or coherent "reform" line coming out of Pretoria in the mid 1980's. A close look at the production reveals both the promotion of the "reform" vision and its limitation, its confusions as well as its subversion, in numerous and varied ways. The contradictions and ambiguities of the series reflect its production during a period when the political landscape of South Africa was altering rapidly and when the nature of domination itself was in ferment. Rather than a reflection of a dominant ideology, *Shaka*

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[63]Tomaselli, "Camera, Colour and Racism," pp.9-11.

Zulu was actually about the process of a struggle for a new hegemony in South Africa--one which was not fully worked out by any of the parties involved.

Chapter Ten

The Real Goat: Identity and Authenticity in Shakaland[1]

> [T]he frantic desire for the Almost Real arises only as a neurotic reaction to the vacuum of memories; the Absolute Fake is the offspring of the unhappy awareness of a present without depth.
>
> (Umberto Eco, *Travels in Hyper Reality*[2])

Introduction: In search of the real Zulu

Zulu ethnic tourism--the consumption of "Zulu" history and culture *in situ* by outside visitors--has been actively marketed for much of the twentieth century and is part of the growing international commodification of African culture. Tourism is of increasing significance today in South Africa's otherwise sagging economy. Current scenarios indicate that tourism is one of the few viable economic sectors in the country, and it enjoys a domestic and foreign investment priority.

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[1]This chapter draws on a period of collaborative work with Eleanor Preston-Whyte. The material in the chapter was accumulated in the course of a number of visits to **Shakaland**; discussions with audiences and staff at the resort; interviews with the director of **Shakaland** and with travel agents; and a survey of travel writings and publicity material on **Shakaland**.

[2]Umberto Eco, *Travels in Hyper Reality*, San Diego, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990, first published in Italian in 1976, pp.30-1.

The particular local features which tourism developers seek to promote are the scenic beauty of the country, the game parks, and the African heritage. Zulu history and culture is the form of the country's "African heritage" most favored for exploitation by promoters because of its distinct and potent public image. It is an image endowed with a deep historical background, dominated by three central organizing elements that are themselves well-known both within and beyond kwaZulu: Shaka; the Zulu defeat of the guns of the British empire at the battle of Isandlwana of 1879; and, finally, the figure of Gatsha Buthelezi, the self-promoting, publicity-seeking, contemporary political leader.

The representations of "Zuluness" that occur in tourist contexts have been dismissed by academics and politicians as "simply" commercial, and the connections between them and the shaping of popular consciousness is ignored. But, as the work of Eleanor Preston-Whyte has shown with regard to Zulu art, tourist centres are important sites for the manufacture of both ethnic identity and notions of tradition and culture.[3]

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[3]Eleanor Preston-Whyte, "Trading Networks and Money-Making at a 'Traditional Zulu' Market", paper delivered at the University of Cape-Town, n.d. Also see Dean MacCannell, "Reconstructed Ethnicity: Tourism and Cultural Identity in Third World Communities", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 1984, pp.375-391; and P. van den Berghe, "Tourism and Recreated Ethnicities", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 1984, pp.343-52.

Most studies of Zulu ethnicity to date are concerned with the reconstruction of the actions of leading political figures, their motivations for, and manner of, invoking and manipulating a Zulu identity.[4] Important directions that yet need to be pursued concern questions of how such identities are made real to, and by, the people involved, i.e. both those designated and those who designate.[5] Put another way, the question concerns what ideas about identity people will develop or buy into, and why and how this happens. It demands exploration of the relationship between the creation of perceptions of reality and the making of identities. One approach--discussed in chapter two--to answering this question is

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[4]South African academics have attempted to analyze the emergence of conflict framed in ethnic terms. Developing the proposal that ethnic identities, and the sets of markers associated with them, are neither innate, nor are they immutable past features ordained to survive into the present, their work seeks, for the most part, to trace historically the emergence of a Zulu ethnic identity and to specify the circumstances of its making. These attempts have identified political conditions which gave rise to situations of ethnic mobilization, and have shown how, for their special power and appeal, they demand embeddment in a particular history. S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence: Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth-Century Natal*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986; Marks, "Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity," pp.215-240; N.Cope, "The Zulu Petit-Bourgeoisie and Zulu Nationalism in the 1920s: Origins of Inkatha", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol. 16, no.3, 1990, pp.431-51; See also the work of Maré and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*; G. Maré, "The Past, the Present and negotiation politics: the role of Inkatha", paper presented to the Africa Seminar, University of Cape Town, 1989; P. Forsyth, "Inkatha's Use of History," unpublished MA thesis, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1990; Harries, "Imagery, symbolism and tradition"; and Golan, "Inkatha and its use of the Zulu Past."

[5]See the introduction of Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, for a discussion of the meagerness of work seeking to understand the making of identities that are rooted in notions of "nation-ness," as well as the philosophical "emptiness" of nationalism.

to seek out sites where the "imagining" of identities takes place: to distinguish conditions which promote or inhibit new and different ways of thinking about the world, and to explore sites of active thought about the nature of identity, where thought is understood to be a process involving exploration and enactment, transformation and figuration. The product of these processes is "culture" that is capable of creating boundaries that separate one identity from another. The challenge, as Benedict Anderson has put it, is to look closely at settings where "pasts are restored, fellowships are imagined, and futures dreamed."[6]

In this chapter I focus on one contemporary setting in depth, with the understanding that it is part of a bigger and infinitely complex text about notions of reality and identity that is emerging in South Africa. The pursuit of authenticity which lies at the heart of an ethnic tourist endeavor like **Shakaland**, a theme park dedicated to the representation of Zulu history and culture, makes it a revealing site for the investigation of the interweave of the creation of new realities and the making of new identities. It demonstrates one of the central arguments of this study, the way in which the

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[6]Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p.140, in which the description is used with reference specifically to language.

invention of identity is constrained by the historical processes responsible for the making of the image of Shaka.

Survey of a range of tourist sites which market "Zuluness" in one form or another reveals that they characteristically offer visions of "Zuluness" that are predicated on notions of timeless, unchanging tradition, and they stress their authenticity. **Shakaland**, by way of contrast, provides an historicized view of Zulu custom and emphasizes its own simulacrity. I explore the significance of this reversal. I probe its promises as well as its fissures and absences, to discover its subtext about reality and identity. I argue that, while **Shakaland** breaks free of many of the stereotypes that are characteristic of most representations of "Zuluness," it is a flawed enterprize that claims to explore openly questions of identity while surreptitiously imposing a structure that controls the production of the meaning of both "Zuluness" and the other identities constituted in the act of defining "Zuluness." The imposition of this structure is, I suggest, the product of a current confluence of political anxieties and market needs.

The combination in **Shakaland** of the use of a carefully edited script and often extempore cross-

cultural experience highlights both the manipulation of historical and cultural information by the creators of the resort, and the possibilities for the subversion of that control by the guides and the audiences. Indeed, **Shakaland** is as much the product of the imaginations of its employees and visitors, as it is of its creators and owners. It is also, as I will show, the product of the historical development of the image of Shaka.

Zulu Markets

Zulu ethnicity is now, and has been in the past,[7] displayed and promoted in a variety of settings. Of these, the most familiar and accessible today are the open-air craft markets that line the main roads of Natal and kwaZulu. The **Umgababa** market, some twenty-five miles outside Durban, is one of the best-known and most popular of these markets. In her study of the market, Eleanor Preston-Whyte observes that tourists like its "African flavor" and the presence of the market women sitting

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[7]The public exhibition of "Zuluness"--the people, culture and history--has a long lineage that encompasses displays both in south-east Africa, and, more commonly in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth century, in metropolitan centres like London and Paris. These include the exhibition of Zulus at St. Georges Gallery, Hyde Park Corner, in 1853; in 1862 at the International Exhibition, London; in 1886 at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition; in Hagenbreck's famous travelling show that toured the Continent in the closing decades of the nineteenth century; the 1923\24 British Empire Exhibition at Wembley; and the 1924 Aldershott Pageant, to mention but a handful.

outside their stalls weaving or crocheting--the proof that the goods sold are "the real thing". **Umgababa**, she notes, is referred to in publicity brochures and the press as a "Traditional Zulu Market." What lies at the heart of its popularity is that it epitomizes what many tourists, foreigners as well as black and white South Africans, think of as "traditional" African life.[8]

Some sightseers are content with the purchase of sunhats for use on the beach later in the day, but many seek momentoes of their visit to a particular region. As Spooner notes in his discussion of connoisseurship, they hope to take home indigenous artifacts, preferably items of exceptional quality or of some rarity. Their judgement of one item on offer as superior to another is usually made with reference to the context of the item's production. In this view,

> the real thing is not simply an artifact; it is made by particular individuals, from specially handcrafted materials, in particular social, cultural, and environmental conditions, with motifs and designs learned from earlier generations.[9]

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[8]Preston-Whyte, "Trading Networks and Money-Making," p.3.

[9]B. Spooner, "Weavers and Dealers: Authenticity and Oriental Carpets", in Arjun Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p.199.

The desire for authenticity prompts the reconstruction, usually imperfectly, of that context.[10]

The importance of the context of production to tourists who view themselves as discriminating, is fully recognized by the entrepreneurs at **Umgababa**. The notions of what is traditional, as well as the air of authenticity which pervades the market, are actively fostered by the traders and their suppliers who together orchestrate a vision of "tribal Zululand" which is given concrete form in the curios which the tourists take home. Preston-Whyte demonstrates that most traders have no idea about how things were made in the past, but invent stories to satisfy their customers. The skills of the women who manufacture beadwork for **Umgababa** are often not based on traditional methods passed from generation to generation as the tourists imagine, but were learnt at school, as part of a Bantu Education curriculum.[11] Paradoxically, much of what is sold at **Umgababa** is not made by the stall-holders, is seldom even local in

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[10]On the contribution that contextualization makes to the experiences of viewing or appreciation see Sally Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1989, especially chapter one, "The Mystique of Connoisseurship."

[11]E. Preston-Whyte and J. Thorpe, "Ways of Seeing, Ways of Buying; Images of Tourist Art and Culture Expression in Contemporary Beadwork," in A. Nettleton and D. Hammond-Tooke (eds.), *African Art in Southern Africa: From Tradition to Township*, Johannesburg, A.D. Donker, 1989, p.131.

provenance, and not infrequently, is made in Taiwan.[12] The pretence is vital not only because of tourist demands, but also because **Umgababa** is tax-exempted as a "traditional" rather than commercial market.[13]

The demand for "traditional beadwork" from markets like **Umgababa** is not confined to tourists. Such items are used increasingly at the kwaZulu capital, Ulundi, in the festivities of the Shembe church, as well as for stage and screen shows, while beadwork is further promoted in the press and on television.[14] The goods on sale at the relatively remote **Umgababa** market thus promote a vision of "traditional Zulu" that is actively shaped by a range of market tastes and needs.

More than mere goods are offered for sale at the **Phezulu** curio shop, situated in the Valley of a Thousand Hills just a short distance outside the major holiday city of Durban. In addition to Zulu crafts, **Phezulu** offers visitors a "colonial-style restaurant," a "crocodile safari," and "over 100 deadly poisonous South

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[12]Preston-Whyte, "Trading Networks and Money-Making at a 'Traditional Zulu' Market," p.3.

[13]The tax concession is augmented by significant investment in the market by the kwaZulu Development and Finance Corporations. See Preston-Whyte, "Trading Networks and Money-Making at a 'Traditional Zulu' Market," p.4.

[14]Preston-Whyte and Thorpe, "Ways of Seeing," pp.133-4.

African and exotic Snakes." The main attraction at **Phezulu** is, however, "our Zulu show." The promotional leaflet promises an "experienced guide" who "will take you into two traditional huts where you will be told about the fascinating taboos and rituals of the Zulu people." This item is followed by Zulu dancing and a "genuine" witchdoctor consultation. The multiple activities on offer suit some holiday makers, but are too tawdry and overtly commercialized for other tastes.[15]

The discerning tourist's search for an authentic experience demands more than the buying of goods at **Umgababa**, or the viewing of the "shows" at **Phezulu**. Such a tourist typically hopes to probe the back regions of the place visited, to obtain a special and intimate view into the heart of things, a view normally denied by everyday experiences and inaccessible to coach tours. **Ophapheni**, in "the heart of the Zulu country," offers an opportunity for tourists to visit an "authentic Zulu village," where it is possible to observe "skills, dress, art and the traditional Zulu lifestyle .... preserved just as it was more than a century ago" (along with "cheetah, ostrich, crocodiles, impala and nyala"). **Ophapheni** also offers accommodation in "Zulu beehive

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[15]Interview with Barry Leitch, 25 February, 1992.

huts."[16] The long journey of almost eighty miles from Durban to the remote Nkwalini valley and its conclusion on dirt roads is part of **Ophapheni's** certificate of authentification. This is "Zuluness" in its "real" setting.

"Getting in with the natives" is, however, the acme of ethnic tourist experience. **KwaBhekithunga**, also on the edge of the Nkwalini Valley, taps into this desire. It offers "an exclusive opportunity to experience the uncommercialized, authentic and true culture of the Zulu people, their customs and dignified way of life." There, "Thomas (Mbhangcuza) Fakude and his family will welcome you to share their home and with lectures and demonstrations, he will explain the beliefs, customs and culture of his people." **KwaBhekithunga**, the advertisement continues, "is Thomas's home and is not open to the public on a Daily Basis...At **KwaBhekithunga**, you as visitors are special and have the exclusive use of the Kraal. At no stage will you have the inconvenience of another party spoiling the mood." At **KwaBhekithunga** the tourist's guarantee of authenticity is Thomas himself, the Zulu *in situ*.

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[16]Azalea promotions flyer issued on behalf of the Tourist Association of Natal and KwaZulu, n.d.

The real connoisseur, however, eschews these obviously commercial enterprizes in favour of sites of genuine historic significance. There are a number of projects in the area which make greater claims to "cultural authority"[17] than resorts like **KwaBhekithunga**. These include a camp at **Ondini** controlled by the kwaZulu Monuments Council. Overnight visitors are accommodated in a "traditional homestead" (with amenities) adjacent to restored sections of King Cetshwayo's newly-excavated **Ondini** residence. At this site, the accent is on authentic recreation, with the "20th century ... screened from the Ondini Homestead by indigenous parklands." Possible activities in the immediate neighborhood for guests staying overnight at **Ondini** include visiting other nearby sites of historical significance such as the graves of the early Zulu kings and a number of important battle fields. These trips demand a degree of prior knowledge of Zulu history on the part of visitors for them to be attracted to the sites in the first place, and

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[17]Karp and Kratz make a useful distinction between "ethnographic authority" ("the means through which cultural others are represented" including labels, design elements, floor plans and so on) and "cultural authority" ("claims about who controls the distribution of knowledge...the standards for what is worth knowing...claims which are intrinsically evaluative and hierarchical" and which are established in a host of ways: through links with other cultural institutions, founding ceremonies, catalogues, the collective research and experience of their curatorial staff and "ambitious and encyclopedic claims to knowledge," to mention but a few. (I. Karp and C. Kratz, "The Fate of Tippoo's Tiger: A Critical Account of Ethnographic Display," paper presented to the Anthropology Department, Northwestern University, 1992, p.2.)

for them to be able successfully to apprehend the fragmentary remains and unembellished scenes of past events. The aficionados at these sites stroll around with well-thumbed accounts of battles tucked under their arms, eyes raking the ground for spent cartridges and rusted assegai heads.

The various sites which represent "Zuluness" market their authenticity in different ways and are pitched at different categories of tourists, but one site attracts everyone from the Spanish and Zulu royal families, Johnny Clegg and Knight Rider to local school parties, and black and white family groups: **Shakaland.**[18] Described as "the new living museum to Zulu culture"[19] by one travel writer, and a "definite must for every South African and tourist" by another,[20] **Shakaland** hosted 32000 visitors in 1991, a figure vastly in excess of the number of guests at its neighbors, **Ophapheni** and **KwaBhekithunga.**[21]

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[18]**Shakaland** staff are unable to provide a detailed visitor profile. Director Barry Leitch estimates that, excluding the high numbers of local visitors that come in school parties, the number of foreign tourists slightly exceeds that of locals. He notes further that the local component is growing steadily and is expected to equal the foreign component in the very near future. While large numbers of black school children visit the resort, only a small--but steadily increasing--proportion of black guests stay in the luxury vaccommodation.

[19]*The Motorist*, 1st quarter, 1989, p.4. I am grateful to John Wright for a copy of this article.

[20]*Weekend Getaway*, October 1989, p.76

[21]Fax, Errard Sullivan, manager of Shakaland to C.A. Hamilton, 25

Located close to many of the sites already discussed, **Shakaland** is situated on white farmland adjacent to the kwaZulu homeland. The core of this resort was originally built as one of the film sets for the television mini-series, *Shaka Zulu*. Two of the cultural specialists on the film subsequently bought up the land, turning the set first, in 1986, into a film camp, and later into a "bush camp" and educational centre. In 1988, the prestigious Protea hotel chain invested in **Shakaland**, and oversaw its transformation from a small, marginally successful, operation into the major tourist attraction that it is today.

The approach to **Shakaland** is marked by a large sign in burnished orange, red, and brown that mimics the design of the title of *Shaka Zulu*. The driveway passes under a gate made up of dramatically elevated look-out posts topped with waving pennants. In the parking lot visitors are greeted by a gatekeeper in full warrior regalia and directed to a fenced walkway. A large board at its entrance introduces "Zulu" for those who may not know the basics. A potted history of the rise of the Zulu nation under Shaka is given, and its significance as one of the most dramatic events in southern African

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history is asserted. In a final flourish the resort is introduced:

> The romance which surrounds the name of the Zulu nation has lingered on for a century or more since the days in the mid 18 hundreds when their exploits were blazoned in dramatic headlines across the world. The tales of their deeds during those warring years read like the legends of forgotten time. But the Zulu epic is no fantasy! Today below the hills where once stood KwaBulawayo, the great military kraal of King Shaka, lies SHAKALAND.

The walkway is a long and winding path fenced on both sides by a dense reed screen, similar to the closed approach to a game hide and carrying the same promise of a rare sighting. The reed corridor opens into **Shakaland**, and the visitor experiences a marked sensation of entering another world.

The resort is divided into a hotel area and the immediately adjacent film set. Dining takes place in a thatched "boma" with an open campfire area, and bar. The whole overlooks the Mhlathuze dam and the rolling Ntembeni hills. The setting is, in the words of one travel writer, "spectacular."[22] Both cheap dormitory accommodation--used mainly by school parties--and luxurious guest rooms are available. The dormitories are large "beehives" made in the conventional fashion, with relatively few concessions to modern-day comforts. The

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[22]Siobhan O'Reagain in *Weekend Getaway*, October, 1989.

deluxe guest rooms are spacious bungalow structures topped by skillfully woven and thatched "beehive" roofs. The walls of the guest rooms are decorated with choice "Zulu" artifacts. The pieces--wooden neck-rests, beer-pot covers, woven grass mats etc.--are individually displayed and carry labels which give the item's Zulu name, its use, as well as its provenance and the history of its collection. Guests comment on how aesthetically pleasing the rooms are, and how the artifacts convey a sense of having been carefully selected, of being "the real thing." Indeed, the feel of the rooms is reminiscent of an art gallery and the display technique stimulates the guest into wanting to know more about the objects exhibited. "It stirs the interest" comments the travel writer.[23] Unlike a typical art gallery, however, **Shakaland** holds out the promise of further opportunities for the viewer to place the objects in context.

Large artifacts built especially for the two television series filmed at the site have been carefully preserved in the hotel courtyard. The first is "The Forge. Used in the filming of *Shaka Zulu* for the making of Shaka's spear" and alongside it is "The Boat. Used in the filming of *John Ross*". (The series *John Ross*, also set in Shakan times, was filmed on the same set, shortly

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[23]Siobhan O'Reagain in *Weekend Getaway*, October, 1989.

after *Shaka Zulu*.) The walls of both the bar and the reception area are festooned with framed press clippings and posters about the television shows. Amongst glossy portraits of the stars of *Shaka Zulu*, are accounts dating back to 1984 of the building of the set as well as that of "rustic accommodation" to house the film crews. A number of press reports and framed information sheets trace the genesis of the **Shakaland** resort out of these various components of the old location. Even the takeover of the resort by Protea hotels is documented.

The filmset section of the resort is a cross between an enlarged living diorama and a theme park. "No detail has been overlooked to ensure that visitors get an authentic, dramatic introduction to this mighty nation," notes one promotional leaflet.[24] The set was built to be the homestead of Shaka's father, a considerably less important figure than Shaka himself. It is a relatively modest establishment of some sixteen huts, which nonetheless manages to achieve a highly dramatic effect. The "Great Kraal" as the homestead is called, is a cross between an ordinary homestead built on traditional lines that might yet be found in the kwaZulu countryside and

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[24]In his article "Mickey Mouse History: Portraying the Past at Disney World" (*Radical History Review*, 32, 1985, pp.33-57), Michael Wallace remarks on a similar attention to detail in **Disneyland**, which he ascribes to Disney's cinematic roots.(see p.38)

the large royal residences still in evidence in neighboring Swaziland.

In many respects, **Shakaland** offers a holiday package that is similar to those of its competitors. The accommodation provided in the deluxe bungalows is certainly more luxurious (and more expensive[25]) than that available anywhere else, but it is only a small proportion of the total **Shakaland** clientele that avail themselves of its comforts. In contrast to resorts like **Ophapheni** and **KwaBhekithunga** however, **Shakaland** does not purport to offer tourists "the real thing," but rather the real filmset. Even the goat grazing in the Great Kraal is not represented as a "typical" feature of the Zulu countryside, but is introduced as "William C. Forager, the real goat - the one that was in such and such a scene of the film *Shaka Zulu*," while the goat's name is a play on the name of the television series' director, William C. Faure. Likewise, the Shaka in **Shakaland** does not seek to be faithful to early descriptions of the Zulu king, or even to a contemporary sketch of the monarch. Rather, the only Shaka present in

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[25]In October 1991 a deluxe double room cost R390.00 (about $150) per night, meals and "cultural experience" included. Day trips--the "Nandi experience" which offers a "two hour sampler of Zulu tradition which includes Ngoma dancing and lunch"--cost around R60.00 (about $20.00) per person, with significantly reduced rates for school trips and other large parties.

Shakaland takes the form of pictures of Henry Cele, the actor who played Shaka in the television series. In drawing attention to its genesis as a film set, **Shakaland** emphasizes its artifice.

Of course, close identification with the film series is a drawcard, prompting easy recognition by the general public of the nature of the enterprize.[26] One of the reasons that **Shakaland** does better than its competitors is that it is able to capitalize on the success of the television series and the widespread appeal of, and interest in, the historical figure of Shaka. The promotional leaflet appeals directly to this double interest:

> Experience the power of Shaka Zulu. Take a step back into time and enter the world of Shaka, King of the Zulus at his Great Kraal overlooking the Umhlathuze Lake. Shakaland, originally created for the film set of the epic Shaka Zulu, is one of South Africa's most unique tourist attractions.[27]

The positive identification of the resort with the series and with the figure of Shaka explains why some tourists

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[26]Leitch noted that **Shakaland** was launched into "the slipstream" of the television series, and that following the series, the name **Shakaland** provided "an instantly powerful image." (Interview with Leitch, 25 February, 1992.)

[27]In fact, **Shakaland** is not the site of either the original Great Kraal or even the miniseries' Great Kraal. That was fired in the final flaming scene of the film. It was, as we have noted, the set of the smaller residence inhabited in the film by Shaka's father, Senzangakhona, while the Mhlathuze Lake is a dam constructed in the mid-1980s that was not a feature of the landscape in Shakan times.

are initially attracted to the resort, but it alone does not account for its widespread acclaim and marked success.

While survey of what **Shakaland** offers does not assist in accounting for its greater appeal, analysis of how the resort works, and how it is apprehended by visitors is more illuminating.[28] The central feature of a visit to **Shakaland** is what is termed the "cultural experience," designed by one of the directors of **Shakaland**, Barry Leitch.[29] An anthropology graduate, Leitch has devised a script for the cultural experience that offers more information, and more accurate and often not widely-known data than any of **Shakaland's** rivals. He carefully avoids the biases, racist representations and stereotypes characteristic of the other resorts discussed, and explicitly affirms the culture being experienced. As Leitch put it,

> In **Shakaland** you are paying homage to a culture that everything else Western has tended to

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[28]A similar "cultural experience" is on offer at **Phumangena**, outside Johannesburg, which draws an equally favorable response from its visitors. Its popularity is such that mini-bus taxi drivers from the townships of Sebokeng and Mamelodi offer associations and other groups, including Sotho-speaking women's clubs, special rates for day trips. All aspects of **Phumangena** are imported up from kwaZulu and modelled on **Shakaland**, down to the staff, many of whom are related to the staff at **Shakaland**. Sotho-speaking visitors to **Phumangena** express interest in visiting **Shakaland** which they perceive to be superior to **Phumangena** but note that it is "too far" and "more expensive," as well as expressing concern about venturing into a Zulu-speaking area.

[29]*Your Family*, March, 1989.

> negate and look down upon....We are recognizing that the Western perspective is just one way of looking at things and within the Zulu perspective one recognizes that you have a whole range of intelligences; within the range of natural abilities you have a whole world there: it is the recognition that a man's intelligence and self-esteem does not depend upon whether he's got a Standard Eight or a Standard Ten [Grades ten and twelve].[30]

The script is sensitive to a relatively sophisticated international tourist market, as well as local visitors, large numbers of whom are, to some degree, aware of the distortions of African history under apartheid. Indeed, Leitch further made a point of inviting members of a local university anthropology department to inspect the resort and he incorporates material into the script from the research of Natal Museum archaeologists and university historians. The **Shakaland** script thus aspires to satisfy demanding new criteria of political sensitivity, and academic precision and respectability.

The program is taught to staff on a training course, which includes a hand-out prepared by Leitch, covering all aspects of Zulu history and life as presented in **Shakaland**. In addition, extra reading and research by the staff themselves are encouraged, guided by a source list provided by Leitch. The "cultural experience" takes place under the supervision of a "cultural adviser"

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[30]Interview with Leitch, 25 February, 1992.

following Leitch's script. At the time when the research for this chapter was undertaken, in late 1991, there were three resident "cultural advisers." All three were native Zulu-speakers with an excellent command of English. Two of them had been recruited in Durban, while the third came from the nearby town of Eshowe. They all had tertiary qualifications of one sort of another, previous work experience in business or education, and were familiar with the backgrounds of their various Zulu and non-Zulu speaking guests. These criteria were viewed by Leitch as fundamental to the task which they perform. The right sort of person for the job, Leitch noted, is hard to find. "You run into them. You can't actually advertise for them. You don't find them if you advertise for them. They are very difficult to identify."[31]

Guests gather in the "boma" to meet their adviser, and receive a short lecture which consists of an outline of Zulu history (similar to that sketched on the board at the entrance to the resort) and a summary of the development of **Shakaland**. The adviser then leads the way to the filmset homestead, telling the visitors to pick up a stone *en route*. Some distance before the main entrance, the guide pauses in front of a cabbage tree, at the base of which is a cairn of stones, and inquires of

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[31]Interview with Leitch, 25 February, 1992.

his followers if they know what they are looking at. While they may have seen such a cairn before, even his Zulu-speaking guests struggle to give an account of it. They have halted, explains the adviser, in front of an *isivivane*, in earlier times a marker of important routes of travel. On nearing the *isivivane*, he continues, travellers would pick up a stone, spit on it and toss it onto the pile, thereby marking the stages of their journey while they paused to gain their bearings, and to appraise themselves of any threats abroad. The adviser then spits and throws his stone, urging the visitors to do likewise. "When you spit on a stone and place it there, you are placing yourself in that area, greeting the spirits of that area and asking for good luck." The cairn thus grows with the passage of every party, and all leave behind a mark of their participation. "It's a kind of communality thing," remarked Leitch.[32]

Behind the *isivivane* is a model of a homestead which the guide uses to explain the layout of what is described as a typical "traditional" Zulu homestead. He notes, for example, that the wives of the homestead head each have their own hut. He indicates that this is just a model, and that in practice few homesteads adhere to the ideal form. He goes on to say that in current times most Zulu

[32]Interview with Leitch, 25 February, 1992.

homes are built on more modern and western lines, while retaining certain features derived from the earlier structure. Implicitly acknowledging the poverty of many Zulu homes today, he points out that these days few men can afford to house their wives in separate structures, if indeed, they are wealthy enough to have more than one wife at all.

Questions from the visitors are actively solicited and carefully answered. The guides present themselves as skilled cultural translators who use examples familiar to their diverse audiences in order to illuminate a particular practice or event. Overall, the advisers whom I heard readily historicized Zulu tradition, avoided enshrining "custom" and conveyed an accessible, but complex, picture of the interweave of old and modern cultural forms used by present and past rural Zulu-speakers. In contrast to neighboring resorts, and the kwaZulu authorities in nearby Ulundi, **Shakaland** does not seek to authorize a return to tradition, but promotes instead an appreciation of "Zuluness" in diverse forms.

Reception of this script is undoubtedly highly varied and is difficult to gauge in its full

complexity.[33] One of the most striking responses is the extent to which visitors to **Shakaland** recognize as superior the quality of the information provided at the resort. They value the elements presented that deviate from the tired texts of other resorts, and frequently comment on how informative the experience is. Many visitors are sufficiently discerning to appreciate the attempt not to idealize the past. They feel that they have acquired the knowledge necessary for them to reconstruct the social context of the items that they purchase from markets such as **Umgababa**, or the artifacts which they view at exhibitions. By placing such items in context, they are increasingly confident of their ability to discern good artifacts from bad, genuine from imitation, and their status as connoisseurs is enhanced and affirmed. The promise of the guestroom decor is fulfilled.

By extension, this knowledge is seen to apply also to the tourists' understanding of "the Zulu" themselves. "You can see a real difference between the old kind of Zulu, and these new ones," commented one visitor

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[33]Assessing audience response to an exhibit like **Shakaland** poses tremendous difficulties. In addition to the use of visitor statistics, my evaluation of its reception is based on overheard audience comments and responses actively elicted in conversation with other visitors by myself and three other anthropologists who accompanied me on one trip. I have also used reviews by travel writers and interviews with travel agents.

motioning first in the direction of the Great Kraal, and then at the cultural adviser sitting a short distance away. This knowledge is viewed by many of the guests as filling an important gap created by apartheid. Such views voiced by **Shakaland** guests echo sentiments expressed in a market survey conducted by the *Reader's Digest* prior to the latter's decision to publish the revisionist *Illustrated History of Southern Africa*. In the survey, both black and white respondents, like many visitors to **Shakaland**, indicated profound dissatisfaction with the lack of information about African history available in educational and popular forums, and expressed an active desire to become better informed on the topic. The respondents objected to the biases as well as the tone and style of treatment in the few texts available. The *Illustrated History* was specifically designed to meet these needs and objections, and within six months of its publication in 1989, over 85,000 copies had been bought by a South African public hungry for a new history.[34]

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[34]For a more detailed discussion of the popular appetite in South Africa for a revised history, and the role played by the *Reader's Digest* in identifying and meeting this need, see L. Witz and C. Hamilton, "Reaping the Whirlwind: The *Reader's Digest Illustrated History of South Africa* and Changing Popular Perceptions of History," *South African Historical Journal*, May, 1991, pp.185-202. Also see chapter nine.

The public that buys the *Illustrated History* at the very high price of R85.00 (about $30.00) is overwhelmingly middle class as are the bulk of the visitors to **Shakaland**. But the impact of both the *Illustrated History* and **Shakaland** goes beyond the immediate purchasers of the respective products. Knowledge from both is passed on through school teachers and other producers of history materials and comes to inform a broader and more diverse public, and, in the case of black school children, one which has been vocal in its rejection of apartheid history.

Shakaland has, to use Mike Wallace's comments about **Disneyland**, "taught more people more history, in a more memorable way, than they ever learned at school."[35] **Shakaland** offers to recreate and preserve treasures that the folly and ideology of the apartheid order expunged. In some respects, it presents itself as the bad conscience of South Africa, and part of its attractiveness is the debt that it pays to destroyed historic cultures. For black visitors **Shakaland** further meets a basic need for temporal connectedness, the need to establish links with the past especially at a time of

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[35]Wallace, "Mickey Mouse History," p.33.

widespread community destabilization.[36] The resort offers special programs for school parties and provides take-home educational materials. Programs tailored to meet specialist needs, such as those of performing arts students, are also available. Many students leave **Shakaland** expressing urgent desires to learn to speak *isiZulu* and demonstrate new enthusiasms for, and understandings of, manifestations of African culture. Travel writer Siobhan O'Reagain, for example, noted that on their return from **Shakaland**, her children promptly began to teach their friends the niceties of the various kinds of dancing which they had watched and participated in at the resort.[37]

In another context, Rosenzweig has noted that commercial forms of history tend to take over where academic historians and institutions abdicate the terrain of popular history.[38] Such abdication is clearly manifest in South Africa today where history curriculum

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[36]There are few sites in South Africa where this happens, a notable exception being the "Art and Ambiguity" exhibition recently hosted by the increasingly politically and socially aware **Johannesburg Art Gallery.** Reviewing the exhibition, prominent critic Barry Ronge noted that it "opens another avenue along which we can see what Martin Luther King called 'the content of our character' which will inevitably define our future." (*Sunday Times*, 8 December, 1991)

[37]*Weekend Getaway*, October, 1989, p.76.

[38]R.Rosenzweig on *American Heritage*, in Susan Porter Benson, Stephen Breier and Roy Rosenzweig (eds.), *Presenting the Past: Essays on History and the Public*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1986, p.47.

writers and museum curators are immobilized by the political changes, and admit to being in a state of deep crisis.[39] In this situation, entrepreneurs perceive that there is money to be made in the provision of history to the public.[40] In order to sell its product on an already crowded ethnic tourism market, **Shakaland** distinguishes itself from other producers of "Zuluness" and other products by creating distinctions within the market, between, for example, what Leitch calls "moth-eaten, flea-bitten outfits...trotting out the same old dances" and the **Shakaland** dance team "in full cry...exerting power through the strength of the dance routine itself...able to hold its own against the best dance teams in South Africa."[41] The distinctions occur both in the quantity and the quality of the material available, but these features are not the core of its difference.

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[39]The **Africana Museum** in Johannesburg recently approached both the present author and the University of the Witwatersrand's History Workshop for assistance in reconceptualizing their displays. The despair of educators concerning the inappropriateness of present history curricula and the absence of suitable materials for teaching beyond the curricula was especially evident at the Teaching Workshop section of the colloquium on the mfecane debate held in September, 1991 at Wits University.

[40]Ford and Rockerfeller, for example, were amongst the first creators of museum villages in the United States. (See Benson *et al*, *Presenting the Past*, p.146)

[41]Interview with Leitch, 25 February, 1992.

Shakaland offers more than a compendium of knowledge, both arcane and relevant, that fills the gaps in the textbooks and satisfies the curiosity and the growing public appetite for a new history. It presents itself as providing a cross-cultural experience, an experience that is denied to many South Africans by apartheid. As the Guest Relations Officer for **Shakaland** wrote to a Natal Rotary Club,

> The Rotary Club of Eshowe have approached us with regards [sic] to sharing our "UNIQUE ZULU EXPERIENCE" with the youth of Natal. We feel, as they do, any Cross-Cultural Experience can only better the understanding between racial groups. What better place to start than with the youth of South Africa, for they are OUR future.[42]

The concern with cross-cultural experience implicitly acknowledges what the other resorts ignore, the tremendous anxieties that all South Africans have about cultural others, especially those of non-Zulu-speakers regarding "Zuluness", and addresses them by offering a site for first-hand knowledge of this feared "other."

Leaving the model of the homestead behind them, and moving forward to the entrance of the Great Kraal, the visiting party shifts from hearing about "Zuluness" to confronting it, and to coming into first-hand knowledge of it. Here, the way is blocked by a barrier pole. The

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[42]Letter, Fiona Small to Rotary Club President, 22 Jan. 1990.

adviser pauses at the pole, and calls out in *isiZulu*. Nothing happens. He then outlines to the group the appropriate Zulu etiquette for making one's presence as a visitor known at a homestead. This involves the loud calling out of the praise names of the homestead head. Knowledge of such praise names is an esoteric business, and most Zulu-speakers know the praises associated with only a few surnames, if any at all. To know the correct ones, and to call them out specifically--rather than to resort to a general alternative--is an "insider" sort of thing, and the guide takes time to teach the group the names appropriate to the homestead. Then all are encouraged to call out and announce themselves. At this point, the "homestead head" responds, appearing at the entrance of the cattle byre ahead. Appealing to the tourists' desires for insider knowledge and for "getting in with the natives." **Shakaland** draws the visitors into its script as active participants.

As befits a homestead head who sees a crowd of strangers at his door, the man collects his stick and shield and approaches cautiously, ready for come-what-may. In many respects, the homestead-head looks exactly like the men in the news photographs of Zulu *impis* at Inkatha rallies with which most of the visitors are familiar. In *isiZulu*, and following all the normal forms

of polite address, the guide tells the man, whom he refers to in English as "the chief," that he has brought a party of visitors to see his home. He explains that they want to learn about the "Zulu" way of doing things, and requests the homestead head to accommodate them. This the chief graciously assents to, the bar is drawn back, and the party is admitted. All present are introduced to the chief. The entire exercise is handled in such a delicate fashion that were it to have been the homestead of an acquaintance that the party was entering, rather than a commercially available experience, the visitors can be assured that their behaviour is in the best possible taste. Exactly what is going on, and the politeness of the entrance, are not made explicit to those members of the party who do not speak *isiZulu*, nor are they at any point directly translated. The effect is, however, unmistakable to the visiting party.

In this, as much as in the quality of the information imparted, **Shakaland** markets itself as cognizant of the sensibilities of its black visitors and the widening of the horizons of a white clientele increasingly concerned to be able to behave appropriately in African settings. Indeed, **Shakaland** prides itself on its attractiveness to black visitors and anticipates that

this section of its market will expand as tourism amongst black South Africans develops further.[43]

The visitors then enter the Great Hut which the cultural adviser prefers to name in *isiZulu*, the *indlu nkhulu*. The guide has previously explained that guests are not made welcome in a home until they have been offered beer to drink. Inside, the visitors, now the guests of the homestead head, are given *utshwala* (home-brewed sorghum beer), an act signaling their formal acceptance. The *utshwala* is drunk from a communal receptacle, with all the attendant rituals and etiquette, and it is a measure of the momentousness of this act in the **Shakaland** script that few visitors are sufficiently inhibited to forgo the experience.

In these actions, the tourists participate actively in the fantasy, but because of their own authenticity at this moment as, literally, consumers, fantasy and reality blur together such that the guests find themselves making real gestures in the theatrical setting. In this context, they have momentarily become Zulu themselves, and in so doing the image of the other that "Zuluness" embodies, that haunts many South Africans, and that figures importantly in the consciousness of foreign

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[43]Interview with Leitch, 25 February, 1992.

visitors as quintessential Africa, becomes self, and is thereby altered. The shared cup, symbolic of mutual acceptance and respect, attempts to create a new community amongst guide, chief and visitors. The drinking of the *utshwala* is the consumption of the **Shakaland** promise of a new future. In the setting of the *indlu nkhulu*--the repository of the family's most ritually and historically significant items--it is also the enactment of a symbolic connection with the past.

A discussion of Zulu dress follows the drinking of the *utshwala*, with reference to the accoutrements of the homestead head and his wife, and to items laid out on display. Here, the homestead-head takes over and discourses in *isiZulu* on all the items and their functions. His explanations are translated into English by the adviser for the benefit of those members of the audience who do not understand *isiZulu*. The mode of presentation is of an elder, well-versed in matters traditional, instructing, not only the guests, but also the younger, modern, cultural adviser. The performance achieves thus a special authority, emphasized by the many ways, including body language, in which the adviser demonstrates his respect for the older, more knowledgeable--at least in these matters--homestead head. The audience is thus made to feel that they have had the

benefit of explanations from "a real expert." The cumbersome translations serve to enhance the feeling of authenticity.

The guides at **Shakaland** play a key role as cross-cultural brokers. The "experience" is structured in such a way that the visitors must rely on their guide, allowing him to speak for them and to translate back to them, trusting him to protect them from social embarrassment in an unfamiliar world. For white visitors, this is an especially marked reversal of the forms of knowledge transmission to which they are accustomed. Indeed, the guides at **Shakaland**, while always solicitous, readily reprove guests who err in matters of etiquette, and insist that the visitors make the effort to learn material from one stage of the visit before the next commences, as in the guests having to call out the praises of the homestead head before gaining admittance, and in a tendency in the guides' expositions to use more and more Zulu terms as the experience advances. While the homestead head stands for the most traditional, the guides--sophisticated, urban Zulu-speakers--are positioned midway between the worlds of their modern visitors and those being toured, the **Shakaland** staff in their "Zulu" setting. Not only do the guides name and explain, and offer a form of knowledge

which the patrons feel has been denied to them by apartheid, but, in their dual proficiency in *isiZulu* and English, in their relaxed, though not complete, familiarity with both urban and rural etiquette, they offer an ideal, but also realistic, prototype of the new South African.

In the Great Kraal the guests develop a relationship with the homestead head that is increasingly demanding of them. The visit is structured such that their admittance is dependent on his graciousness: they are his guests, and their experience is a result of his extension of hospitality to them. The visitors are bound over to behave as guests, and not as tourists paying their way. The relationship between guests and host develops through eye contact, joking (often in translation through the guide) and an appearance by the homestead head of taking pride in making the experience available, in manifestations of his concern for the guests' education in his domain. The "experience" thus takes on the form of a normal, proper social interaction--such as might occur when adult children bring friends met in distant places home to the remote villages of their birth, and seek by introducing their parents to their friends to make each of their worlds gain in knowledge of the other. Because normal social interactions of this nature across

racial lines are rare in South Africa, the **Shakaland** enactment provides an opportunity otherwise elusive for whites to enter what they see as a black world, for Sotho-speakers to penetrate an apparently Zulu one and so on. **Shakaland** is, as Leitch put it, "..an oasis within what was an essentially an apartheid society."[44] It is a safe, controlled setting for the crossing of boundaries and barriers that elsewhere are seen to be too dangerous to breach.

This brings the first part of the "cultural experience" to a close. In the evening, dinner is taken in the "boma," followed by a tremendous display of Zulu music and dancing back up at the *indlu nkhulu*. The display is at once a mix of the old and the new, rural and township, with *masikanda* and *ngoma*[45] all contributing to the spectacle. One of the managers of the resort, a young white man who speaks good *isiZulu*, provides the commentary and explanations of the dances. As much as the cultural advisers stand for the new South Africa, so too does the young manager with his demonstrable facility in the contexts of both the dancers, and the various visitors. To see a young white person in the role of

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[44]Interview with Leitch, 25 February, 1992.

[45]*Masikanda* is a modern urban musical form while *ngoma* is a rural dance style that has its roots in first-fruits ceremonies.

cultural authority introduces the idea, at least in the minds of some white visitors, of the possibility that their submission to the tutelage of their guides will allow them access to the same confidence and authority.

The following morning, overnight visitors return to the Great Kraal, this time accessible (the barrier is removed) and familiar. They move quickly and confidently through the necessary greetings, and enter to watch the making of spears,[46] and to participate in "traditional sports." A demonstration of spear-throwing and stick-fighting ensues, in which the importance of physical prowess, agility and adherence to strict rules are emphasized. The audience is invited to try their hands at both "sports." Finally, the cultural adviser conducts the visitors to a *sangoma*'s (translated by the adviser as a "healer" and "diviner"--no "witchdoctors" here!) establishment, and significance of various tools of the trade are explained, again with the *sangoma* speaking in *isiZulu*, and the adviser translating. *Impepho* (a burning herb) is passed around for the visitors to inhale, as is common before a consultation. The *sangoma* rehearses the various steps in a diagnosis, and discusses some of the

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[46]The demonstrator was a spear-maker by trade before coming to Shakaland to practise his craft

possible remedies to common complaints.[47] Depending on the time of year, and the resort's refurbishment or provisioning needs, other opportunities to view cultural activities may be available, such as wood-carving, hut-building or beer-brewing.

The richness and variety of cultural activities and experiences that are on offer at **Shakaland** are greater than that which would be available in any other single setting, such as in the real-life homesteads of the Nkwalini valley adjacent to **Shakaland**. Not only does **Shakaland** offer a reproduction of reality that is more concentrated than the real thing, it is also more perfect. Its finish is more immaculate, its attention to detail more precise, even its construction is sounder. It is, to use a phrase of Umberto Eco's, an exercise in hyper reality.[48] This excellence is one of things that initially attracts visitors to **Shakaland**. Their search for knowledge of "Zuluness" is then broadened through the interaction in the Great Kraal into a rich experience of "Zuluness." Through this experience, "Zuluness" becomes

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[47]There is no attempt to suggest that a genuine consultation is taking place. Indeed, in response to subsequent questioning, the adviser notes that the man who acts as the *sangoma* is not a real practitioner. By comparison, the entrepreneurs behind commercial Haitain voodoo shows which are "acted" for audiences claim that on some occasions real possession occurs in the course of a show. See Alan Goldberg, "Identity and Experience in Haitian Voodoo Shows" *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 10, 1983, pp. 479-97.

[48]Eco, *Travels in Hyper Reality*.

familiar, is assimilated and is understandable. Now the visitors are ready to face the real thing.

The final thrilling experience is a visit to a genuine homestead. For this visit, smaller parties are taken by boat up the narrows of the Mhlathuze lake. The journey--over an hour long--passes through areas increasingly more remote and wild in appearance. The boat finally ties up, and the guests ascend with difficulty a steep slope to a distant homestead. Employing all their newly acquired knowledge with some assistance from the **Shakaland** staff who accompany them, the guests make a visit. Here, they experience the real thing: the homestead is small and ill-fashioned in comparison to the filmset. The poverty of the residents is evident. The visitors are given a warm welcome, reminiscent of the previous day, but it is a warmth tied to the opportunity which the visit provides for the residents to sell off a few crafts which are strategically displayed, and which are snapped up by the visitors.

Visitors enquire suspiciously if the family are employed by **Shakaland**, and are told that they are not. As Barry Leitch puts it, visitors who go "on safari" to homesteads in the area "will meet independents and not

contracted workers."[49] This assurance is the guarantee of the authenticity of the experience. Lest the visitors fear they have imposed themselves on the family, the staff offer the comfortable assurance that a properly reciprocal relationship exists between the families visited and the resort, whereby the heavily laden, the ill and the elderly are freely lifted to and fro on the boat. The combination of these features, Leitch notes, is part of

> Shakaland's special hallmark, setting it aside from commercialized concerns which feature 'ethnic experiences' totally out of their natural environment which often depend on the re-enactment of worn-out charades. Likewise, our lectures and the dancing entertainment are not all period museum pieces...The visitor will come away with insights that are not only historic, but also applicable to everyday life.[50]

The "safari" confirms the **Shakaland** message that even in its most "raw" form, "Zuluness" is not threatening, it is something that can be visited and assimilated.

The **Shakaland** script pushes visitors to move beyond the passive acts of viewing or buying, into doing and acting. They are required to embark on a journey marked by stages after the completion of which their status is altered--a change first signalled by the removal of the

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[49]*The Motorist*, p.5.

[50]*The Motorist*, pp.4-5

barrier at the entrance to the Great Kraal, and finally and fully realized in the "safari."[51] The vast number of stones on the *isivivane* are the symbol of **Shakaland's** success in this endeavor.

Turner's ideas of liminality and communitas used in the analysis of certain kinds of tourism, notably in the work of MacCannell,[52] and Fine and Speer,[53] are suggestive as to why this experience is so satisfying and how to grasp what distinguishes it from other tourist enterprizes. Drawing a connection between certain kinds of tourism and pilgrimages, these writers view tourists as

> liminoid beings who travel outside their normal routes, experiencing things outside of everyday routines. In this period of release from structure, the travellers reflect on the meaning of basic religious and cultural values,

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[51]The closest parallel to this to be found elsewhere are the refurbished ghost towns in the United States. Noting that in these towns tourists get fleeced just like the cowboys of yesteryear, Eco comments, "... since the theatricality is explicit, the hallucination operates in making the visitors take part in the scene and thus become participants in that commercial fair that is apparently an element of the fiction, but in fact represents the substantial aim of the whole imitative machine."(*Travels in Hyper Reality*, pp.42-43) A key difference in **Shakaland** is that the commercial basis of the enterprize is obscured.

[52]D. MacCannell, "Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings," *American Journal of Sociology*, 79, 1973, pp.589-603.

[53]E.C. Fine and J.H. Speer, "Tour Guide Performances as Sight Sacralization," *Annals of Tourism Research*, 12, 1985, pp.73-95.

> and may experience communitas: a quality of communion.[54]

Turner[55] sees societies as being in a dialectical process with successive stages of structure and communitas. Thus, people starved of communitas in day to day activities may seek it in the liminality of ritual. In the South African context such starvation is obvious, and in the current crisis, the need for communitas is as pressing as it is elusive, and the possibility of its achievement in **Shakaland** is especially alluring.

Staging Reality and Making Identity

For some visitors, **Shakaland** is simply a safari experience, a convenient way of viewing the other. For the majority, however, the "cultural experience" advances knowledge of a perceived other, and indeed suggests that in the new South Africa the distinctions between self and other might not be immutable nor a matter of fear.

Karp and Kratz set up an illuminating opposition between "exoticizing" and "assimilating" exhibition

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[54]Fine and Speer, "Tour Guide Performances", p.82.

[55]V. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, Chicago, Aldine, 1969, p.129.

styles. While the television series *Shaka Zulu* exoticized "Zuluness," the **Shakaland** script seeks to assimilate it, creating "familiarity and intimacy with representations and their subjects."[56] In challenging visitors to understand the past, and to use that understanding to inform their comprehension of the present, **Shakaland** encourages visitors to imagine new and optimistic futures.[57]

Shakaland thus takes on the role of an agent of redemption and healing, offering to compensate for the failure of normal institutions of social life. It is an opportunity for travellers to seek epiphany, an intuitive grasp of reality through its simple and striking setting. It creates a situation where people feel that they are beginning the work of reconstituting themselves and forging a new citizenship. The process of a visit to **Shakaland**, through the enhancement of knowledge of the other, resocializes, establishing through shared enterprize, a sense of social cohesion. A symbolic new community is created out of visitors, guides and other

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[56]Karp and Kratz, "Tippoo's Tiger", p.8.

[57]It has been argued in relation to the fractured nature of the relationship between history and memory in American life, that the repairing of this fracture through the enhancing of people's ability to imagine and create a different future through the reuse of history, is a major goal of public history. (Benson *et al Presenting the Past*, p.6.)

participants, prefiguring an ideal new South African society, possibly even nation.[58] Through revelation and progress, the visitors are transformed and in the process come to feel that they have embarked on a new set of social relationships. The staged quality of the setting is, in this instance, reassuring and facilitating of the promise of further development.

Tourism is an arena that is frequently about the enactment of cultural difference. The emphasis in **Shakaland** on differences is not an act of discrimination as it is in many other tourist settings, but "a mode of exploration and understanding."[59] The main issues which the visitors to **Shakaland** are primed to re-imagine are questions of people's differences and similarities. What Karp says about museums in general is equally pertinent to **Shakaland**:

> They define relations with communities whether they intend to or not. This process of making meaning, negotiating, debating - localized in institutions such as museums - provides the unwritten, ever-changing constitution of civil society. The social ideas of civil society are articulated and experienced through striving for consensus and struggling against the imposition of identity. Museums are one of a number of settings for these conflicting but

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[58]In these respects, **Shakaland** functions in a manner similar to "an invented tradition." See E. Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p.9.

[59]The distinction is made in Karp and Kratz, "The Fate of Tippoo's Tiger," p.2.

> simultaneously operating processes, which make social ideas understandable, but not always legitimate.[60]

Recent literature on exhibition practice recognizes that displays are seldom, if ever, politically neutral.[61] Frequently, exhibitions are the arenas in which particular definitions of identity and culture are asserted. As such they play an important role in the making of identities, or as Karp puts it, they are "sites for the play of identity."[62] While **Shakaland** is not a museum, it is an exhibit that is about identity situated in a wider context of intense conflict about identity in which all meanings of Zulu identity are highly charged.

Shakaland offers an exploration of Zulu culture, for people of other cultures, for modern, urban Zulu-speakers interested in the past, and for Zulu traditionalists today. It thus works to define a Zulu identity as well as identities which gain in definition themselves through the defining of Zulu. The definitions enacted in **Shakaland** potentially assist both Zulu-speakers and non-

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[60] I. Karp, C.M. Kreamer and S.D. Lavine (eds.), *Museums and Communities*, Washington, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992, p.6.

[61] J. Wright and A. Mazel, "Controlling the Past in the Museums of Natal and KwaZulu", *Critical Arts*, 5,3 1991, pp. 59-77.

[62] I. Karp, "On Civil Society and Social Identity," in Karp *et al*, *Museums and Communities*, p.19.

Zulu-speakers to legitimize themselves in a new way. Mutual definition of identity means that the resort is able to ratify different things for different people. While **Shakaland** offers a unique setting for this process, it does so on its own terms. The illusion which enables the **Shakaland** project is also a source of fraud, the script a form of closure and limitation.

Leitch's program expressly banishes discussion of material on politics. Apartheid relations are eschewed.[63] Nonetheless, the script is designed by the white anthropologist, the hotel is run by a white manager, and the land on which it is built is just outside kwaZulu, in an area designated white. Leitch believes that one of the truly distinctive features of **Shakaland** is the "Zulu" relationship at the resort between the white owners and managers on the one hand, and the Zulu-speaking staff on the other. He described how the resort is run on a headman system, with dispute resolution between the staff and the management conducted through the two headmen. Relating proudly how in one instance, when the general manager erred in following procedure, he was subject to a fine imposed by the headmen, Leitch commented,

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[63]Interview with Leitch, 25 February, 1992.

> The two patriarchs of **Shakaland** are myself and my partner, Kingsley Holgate. We are essentially White Zulus. We conduct ourselves very much in the Zulu fashion. We don't conduct ourselves in a white fashion...and the whole way that we run **Shakaland** is exactly the same way as the head of a kraal or the head of a family would run a family in the rural areas....We formed **Shakaland** with people who have evolved with us. A lot of the dancers are people I have been friends with since my childhood...or people that my partner Kingsley has gleaned, people that have tacked on to him along his journey through life, people that have then come together in a kind of nexus at **Shakaland**. That's where the whole thing is distilled. So our roots in many cases go back to our childhoods. It is a truly South African situation, minus the negativity and the violence.[64]

But, violence is not absent in the resort's labor relations and the hard realities of "patriarchal" relations inadvertedly reveal themselves in the domineering behaviour of the white hotel personnel at the resort towards black employees. In response to questions probing the day-to-day running of the resort, one member of staff described how the white manager threatened them saying, "You are all Inkatha, and I am ANC, so you had better watch out."[65]

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[64]Interview with Leitch, 25 February, 1992.

[65]At **Phumangena**, the guide described the Great Hut as the venue of all important discussions in homestead, and as the site for conflict resolution. He went on to say that when labour disputes broke out in the resort between the workers and the manager, discussions would convene in the Great Hut.

Similar fissures and contradictions are revealed in the "cultural experience" itself. Because the script depends on the interaction of guides and guests, on the frankness of the guides, and on the first-hand testimony of the guides and those being toured, there is space for its subversion. Indeed, when guests ask questions to which they do not know the answer, the advisers readily refer the questions to "actors" being viewed--mostly local Zulu-speaking inhabitants with a rural backgrounds, people like the chief--and thereafter incorporate the replies into their repertoires. The education of the guides in this form gives the "actors" a voice that is not scripted. These voices are frequently nationalist, even chauvinist--"The Zulu are the most powerful people in all the country; only the Zulu are really kings"--in forms expressly avoided in the script.

On some occasions the performers, guides and visitors fail to communicate in the manner envisaged by Leitch, and the cultural experience takes unscripted forms. The visit to the Great Kraal, with its emphasis of the division of the homestead into separate male and female domains, is readily transformed through gender-based banter between guides and audience into crude

stereotyping of the role of women in Zulu society.[66] The displays of spear-throwing and stick-fighting are likewise easily subverted by audiences brimming with popular images of Zulu ferocity into confirmations of the stereotype of innate Zulu militarism. Recalcitrant audiences, reluctant to submit themselves to the tutelage of their guides, sometimes remains observers rather than becoming participants, and for them, **Shakaland**, like **Phezulu** or **Ophapheni**, continues to be a celebration of difference, a site for the viewing of the exotic and the primitive.

In addition to attempting to broker between the many worlds of their audience, the guides often have to move beyond Leitch's prepared text, to reach into their own experience. The advisers consistently introduce into the discussion images and comparisons drawn directly out of an experience of a South Africa wider than **Shakaland**. In explicating the Zulu **amabutho** system, one adviser drew a comparison with the South African Defence Force and its division into battalions, referring by way of example, to one of the army's most notorious divisions recently stationed in Natal and accused to committing a range of atrocities. To many readers of the daily newspapers, the

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[66]E. Preston-Whyte, "The Real Zulu?", paper presented to a special panel on **Shakaland** at the Association for Anthropology in South Africa Annual Meeting, 1992.

very naming of "32 Battalion" is chilling. Likewise, in attempting to explain rituals observed around death, and the significance of branches of the buffalo thorn tree in bringing home the spirit of a relative who has died in distant parts, one adviser began his example thus: "If you are working on the mines and get shot and die in Johannesburg...," this in 1991, the year in which the terror of the train massacres and hostel clashes involving Zulu-speakers, besieged the consciousness of all South Africans. Violence is the very sweat of the resort and it seeps through its carefully overstitched seams.

These examples alert us to a massive silence in the resort's script: the absence in **Shakaland**'s exploration of identity of present-day ethnic violence, of the massive furor in the press and other public domains concerning issues of Zulu militarism, cultural weapons and nationalism. "We are a proud people with warrior blood in our veins," is a frequent refrain of the traditionalist leadership of kwaZulu.[67] "...[O]nly warriors," claims the Zulu king, Goodwill Zwelethini, "could have put KwaZulu together under the direction of

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[67]Zulu king, Goodwill Zwelethini, quoted in the *Weekly Mail*, 19 December, 1991-2 January, 1992.

that great and illustrious founder, King Shaka."[68] Zulu-speaking hostel dwellers endorsed the king's description of innate Zulu militarism: "Zulus are born fighters who can respond spontaneously to any attack." Another elaborated on the origins of this militarism, "The Zulu Nation is born out of Shaka's spear. When you say 'Go and fight', it just happens."[69]

In South Africa, claims about what "Zuluness" really is, are made against the backdrop of conflict that began in Natal, in the mid-1980s, and which surged dramatically in the 199os across the Reef. The violence most frequently saw Zulu impis (armed groups of men)--often made up of hostel dwellers--pitted against neighboring communities of non-Zulu-speakers and supporters of the ANC. Political negotiations ground to a standstill as the ANC demanded that the Government ban the carrying of "cultural weapons" by its Zulu-speaking opponents. In response, the Zulu king accused the ANC of having insulted his manhood and "the manhood of every Zulu man," with its demand.[70]

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[68]Shaka Day speech, King Goodwill Zwelethini, Eshowe, 1991.

[69]Both quotes from the *Weekly Mail*, 30 August-5 September, 1991.

[70]Quoted in the *Weekly Mail*, May 30-June 6, 1991.

Journalists besieged university anthropology departments, the imagined "experts" on the matter, with urgent questions: "What is a 'cultural weapon'?" "Is it real, this Zulu tradition 'thing'?" Finally, when asked to judge whether "fold-up spears ...roughly 50cm long...[with] detachable blades that screw into rectangular metal bases, and ...fit snugly into an easily-concealable sheaths made of industrial tape" were *bona fide* "Zulu cultural weapons" some of us contemplated unplugging the telephones.

The controversy surrounding these definitions of "Zuluness" and concern over their authenticity involves questions which range well beyond the identities of the people who describe themselves, or who are designated by others, as "Zulu." The backdrop to these questions is the painful emergence of the so-called new South Africa, and the controversy includes struggles over what ideally will constitute this new society, as well as over changing and sometimes contradictory meanings of what it is to be "black" or "white", "Zulu", "Sotho", "Afrikaner", and so on.

Shakaland offers a vision of identity and reality that is a response to these struggles, but which, paradoxically, must deny their existence to be effective.

In **Shakaland** as designed by Leitch, the "tyrant" of history, Shaka, is Henry Cele, an actor, and assegais and sticks are instruments of sport, not weapons of war. The script attempts to banish from the stage the conflict between the ANC and Inkatha.

Conclusion: Faith in Fakes[71]

Shakaland is not so much about Shaka as an invocation of the metaphor of Shaka as open to negotiation with whites, an analogy that is drawn directly out of the historical narratives about his foresight in sending an embassy to the Cape and his vision of the coming of whites. As such, **Shakaland** does more than simply market Zulu history and culture. In the current situation of massive social and political upheaval in South Africa, the **Shakaland** product is successful because it addresses an important need for a new post-apartheid knowledge of Africa. It does so in the form of an accessible and polished package that can conveniently be completed in one or two days. At one

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[71] *Faith in Fakes* was the original English title of Eco's essay on exhibitions in the United States, *Travels in Hyper Reality*, cited at the beginning of this paper. The change of title for the San Diego edition was presumably a strategic softening of the critique to assist sales in the United States. I am grateful to Adam Ashforth for this choice detail.

level, it is a relatively praiseworthy didactic and celebratory endeavor, and its product is of sufficiently high quality to satisfy a new and more demanding connoisseurship on the part of its customers. At the level of cross-cultural communication through the provision of information, it also enjoys significant success, so much so that it provides a crucial reassurance to its participants regarding a culturally heterogenous future. But **Shakaland** does more than provide new knowledge; its real product is knowledge through "experience."

Many of the visitors, but most especially the white visitors, come to value not so much their viewing of the filmset and the acquisition of information about Zulu history and life, but their engagement with "Zulus"--the "advisers" and the "actors"--in a shared experience. They are satisfied by the interaction rather than the setting and the lecture, although the latter are, of course, essential prerequisites for the former. In the course of the experience, **Shakaland** successfully makes the other familiar and comfortable for its patrons. "Coexistence" wrote one travel writer, "is what **Shakaland** is all about."[72]

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[72]*Weekend Getaway*, October, 1989, p.75.

While the conventional mode of knowledge of Africa, that of white mastery and manipulation, seems exorcised, it is not. Patrons gain a new and more sophisticated authority over "Zuluness" through the acquisition of knowledge and experience. Close examination of the resort reveals that it is governed by a script created by a white author and shaped by weighty market constraints, notably the need for manifestly "authentic" reassurances. In South Africa today, **Shakaland** shares the peace-of-mind market with security companies, gunshops and prayer. It is part of a search for security and control in an increasingly volatile and unknown world. Violence is excised because it would confound the vision of smooth transformation and the ritual reassurance that is **Shakaland's** special product.

The methodology of the **Shakaland** experience is fundamentally depoliticizing. The script places the guest in the position of an "I-witness" in the sense employed by Clifford Geertz.[73] By using his or her experience ("I was there, I saw it happen") to testify to the reality of the experience, the range of imaginings is limited to the alternatives posed by **Shakaland**. The **Shakaland** vision of reality is further entrenched and

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[73] C. Geertz, *Works and Lives: the Anthropologist as Author*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1988.

made difficult to challenge because the structure of the experience ensures that the visitor takes responsibility for the act of imagining, and thereby makes the visitor complicit in **Shakaland**'s vision of the future. **Shakaland** sets strict limits on what that future entails. Where, as sometimes happens, visitors resist the **Shakaland** script and construct their own exhibit out of the film set, they substitute viewing for experience, thereby symbolically denying their shared inhabitation of the same world as Zulu-speakers. The success of **Shakaland** lies, at least in part, in its capacity to meet and accommodate visions of both the new and the old South Africa.

As the most realistic representation of Shakan times, **Shakaland** enjoys a powerful visual monopoly over representations of the period, and it is likely to influence museum curators, film makers and, indeed, historians in any future attempts to envision precolonial times. It has successfully constituted itself as a new repository of knowledge and functions to blur the boundaries of public and institutional history, high and popular culture. It is thus a powerful form of iconic knowledge. To understand the past, one must have an image of it, of the period. Where there are no photographs and so few drawings or other contemporary

visual materials, reconstructions dominate. The iconic knowledge offered through **Shakaland** is in this context absolute and complements personal experience.

Shakaland has become a site for the production of both history and social ideas. Yet, because it promotes itself as fake, as a fantasy experience, the ideas which it advances so successfully disguise their political potency and seep unchallenged into popular consciousness. While the **Shakaland** reconstructions are executed with absolute fidelity to reality, yet openly admitting their artifice, the script covertly excludes and suppresses other more uncomfortable realities. The "real Zulu," like the "real goat," is defined by grand gestures of imposture. Visitors to **Shakaland,** whether experiencing or viewing the resort, thus place their faith in a double fake.

Chapter Eleven

Conclusion

Exploration of the moment of initial contact between the Zulu kingdom and early British traders based at Port Natal reveals that the origins of the traders' representations of the Zulu king, Shaka, lay in their experiences in the Zulu kingdom and neighboring Natal in the 1820s, and in the ideas of the Africans amongst whom they lived and travelled. The drama of Theophilus Shepstone's assumption of the mantle of Shaka highlights his appropriation of indigenous understandings of Shaka and Shakan rule to provide a model for the Natal system of Native Administration. While Shepstone's particular gloss on Shaka as a talented ruler was, for a time, overwhelmed in the run up to the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, when the British authorities sought to use Shaka as an emblem of unacceptable Zulu despotism, the Shepstonian interpretation continued to underpin native policy-making well into the twentieth century. The image of the Zulu, and of Shaka, which was promoted in the enormously popular fiction of Rider Haggard, was essentially Shepstonian, and like his views, was infused with elements whose origins lay ultimately in African views.

Recognition that the roots of the image of Shaka lie in indigenous discourses assists historians seeking sources for Shakan times. In the case of Shaka (and possibly for precolonial southern Africa more widely), historians have access--not unmediated, but access nonetheless--to indigenous views and understandings of Shaka embedded in the texts of officials like Shepstone. More significantly, the historian of Shakan times can use the extensive notes of conversations with Africans identified as historically knowledgeable, made by the colonial offical, James Stuart. In these texts, the primary mediation is that of Stuart himself. Stuart drew directly on Shepstone's reading of Shaka, and made similar arguments about the modelling of the Native Administration on the Shakan system. Stuart, even more than Shepstone, believed that to be effective, native policy had to be based on an accurate understanding and in-depth analysis of indigenous institutions and practices. This belief gives a particular character to the *James Stuart Archive* of African historical testimony, and offers a limited, but important, guarantee of the integrity of the recorded texts.

In providing aspects of colonial discourse with form and content, then existent African discourses limited the colonial imagination, and constrained colonial practices.

They were not the only limits: trading imperatives, the fiscal reticence of the Natal authorities, the political and financial underpinnings of enterprizes like *Shaka Zulu* and **Shakaland**; not to mention the history of the making of the image of Shaka itself, all circumscribe the activities of invention and imagination.

The issue of expertise is closely linked to an argument about limits. One of the central constraints was the necessity for the use of concepts in native administration which were recognized by the African population. The identification and interpretation of such concepts demanded of colonial officials like Shepstone and Stuart significant expertise in "native affairs." Shepstone demonstrated his expertise by acting out in public ceremony the role of Shaka. Stuart sought to attain for his researches and knowledge the status of scientific objectivity and professionalism. This underlay his concern with orthography, as well as his contacts with scholars like the anthropologist A.C.Haddon and the linguist, Alice Werner, and prefigured the establishment of Anthropology and Bantu Studies Departments in South African universities designed to service native--or by then, as it was known, Bantu--administration. *Shaka Zulu* and **Shakaland** are similarly grounded in complex statements about authenticity and the

use of "cultural" experts and expertise. The designation of the historian Wright and the archaeologist Mazel as "academic body servants," speaks to the most recent developments over the issue of this kind of "expertise," and the capacity of "experts" to analyze Shakan times.

Historians remain animated by the question of what Shaka and Shakan times were really like. To that end, scholars like Jan Vansina have identified the importance of well-grounded methodological approaches to previously neglected oral sources. Such advances are implicity challenged by work on the discourses of the other and the construction of the colonial subject. Historians seem to have little hope of reconstructing Shakan times when all the texts available to them are reduced to the status of imperial fictions. The historical narratives, textual readings and arguments presented in this study challenge the idea of the inescapability of a discourse that kept the colonizers from engaging with the actuality of the lands they sought to dominate, and that keeps historians from engaging with the past which they seek to study.

The potency of the symbol of Shaka in South Africa today is neither the consequence of how great Shaka really was, as Kunene would have it, nor is it the result simply of clever political manipulations in the present

by Zulu nationalists. It is a product of the historical association within it of indigenous conceptions of sovereignty and the practices of colonial domination. The vision of discipline which journalist Barry Renfrew conjured up with his picture of "three thousand of them breathing together, sound[ing] like the purring of a giant cat," is an image with its roots in indigenous ideas, reinterpreted by Shepstone as the basis for native administration, reinforced by the Zulu victory at Isandlwana in 1879, popularised in the novels of Rider Haggard, rehearsed in the many texts of Stuart--synthesized and unsynthesized--and explored again, in different ways, in *Shaka Zulu* and **Shakaland**. In the historically developed discourses on Shaka, however, the corollary of the image of discipline is violence and domination.

The significance of Shepstone's intervention was that he appropriated not just the concept of Shakan despotism with its associated ideas of discipline and violence. He also developed another indigenous element, the deathbed prophecy of Shaka. The prophecy, interpreted to foretell white dominance, is just as firmly entrenched an element of contemporary "Zuluism" as the images of discipline and violence, and likewise demands historical explanation for its potency. The

appropriation by Shepstone of the device of prophecy reveals that the incorporation of indigenous historical ideas was not simply an adoption of their content, it also involved an assumption of their form.

When, in a letter to the Johannesburg newspaper, *The Star*, a Dr. Ntlotleng claims that Gatsha Buthelezi will never rule, for "Even Shaka Zulu said so before he died," he is not reproducing, in an unthinking fashion, the imperial fantasies of a nineteenth-century European traveller or administrator. His call on the Shakan past is an argument about the nature of history itself, and draws its form and content from the complex history of the image of Shaka.

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Recent Publications
The Mfecane Aftermath, (editor and contributer), Johannesburg and Pietermaritzburg, University of Witwatersrand Press, Natal University Press, forthcoming.

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