

PRODUCTION, LABOUR MIGRANCY AND THE CHIEFTAINCY:
ASPECTS OF THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF PONDOLAND, ca. 1860-1930.

William Justin Beinart

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School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

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Abstract: William Justin Beinart, 'Production, Labour Migrancy and the Chieftaincy: Aspects of the Political Economy of Pondoland, ca.1860-1930'.

This thesis is a contribution towards the study of the transformation of African society in South Africa under the impact of colonisation and capitalist development. It is a case study of political and economic change in one African chiefdom, the Mpondo, before and after the society was annexed by the Cape Colony in 1894. In the first chapter, an attempt is made to analyse the nature of the economy of the chiefdom prior to colonial rule, to discuss the relationship between chiefs and people, and to assess the effects of the penetration of colonial traders into the area. The second chapter, dealing with the response of the Mpondo chiefs to economic change, argues that the political conflict between the chiefs and colonial powers in the late nineteenth century must be located in the struggle for control over trade. Responses to Rinderpest (1897), the opening of colonial markets for Mpondo grain and attempts to mobilise a migrant labour force from Pondoland are analysed in chapter three. It is suggested that the simultaneous increase in grain production and migrancy can only be explained if the particular form of early migrancy and the structure of Mpondo homesteads is understood. Chapter four illustrates the effects of state intervention in Pondoland after Union (1910). While the Mpondo were blocked from markets for much of their produce and more deeply incorporated into the capitalist economy as migrant labourers, changes in patterns of cropping and family structure enabled output to be maintained. In chapter five, it is argued that the Cape and Union governments, after attempting, initially, to destroy the chieftaincy, allowed the chiefs some leeway in order to maintain control in Pondoland. The survival of chiefly authority, especially insofar as it included control over the distribution of land, had important implications for the nature of production and stratification in the area. Rural differentiation, emerging rural class divisions, and conflicts and alliances in rural politics are discussed in chapter six.

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Frank Deyi acted as interpreter throughout my stay in Pondoland. Interviewing would have been infinitely more difficult if I had not had the benefit of his deep knowledge of the geography and people of the area. Mr. and Mrs. S. Ntloko, formerly at Palmerton, provided myself and my wife with accommodation and constant aid. Mr. J. Mgoduka translated Victor Poto's book for me and despite his heavy schedule at a seriously understaffed school, was always willing to discuss Mpondo history. Mr. N. Webb, magistrate at Lusikisiki, and his wife extended their hospitality and smoothed the path for fieldwork.

Librarians and archivists at all the centres visited were most helpful. The many people who allowed me to subject them to interviews and consult their private papers have contributed in ways they may not have foreseen to the analysis presented. Jenny, my wife, has lived with the thesis from its inception and has saved me from some of my worst grammatical excesses; the thesis has lived with Katie, my daughter, since her conception.

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INTRODUCTION

1: Recent Literature on African Economic Responses to Colonial Penetration in South Africa.

This study attempts to investigate aspects of economic and political change in one African area of South Africa, Pondoland, between about 1860 and 1930, the period in which the region as a whole was transformed by a mineral-based industrial revolution. The approach adopted has been stimulated by the recent development of an academic literature concerned with the response of African producers to the markets created during the colonial penetration of southern Africa. Arrighi, working on Rhodesia, and Bundy, on South Africa, have argued that Africans were quick to innovate and produce substantial surpluses when presented with market opportunities in the nineteenth, and earlier part of the twentieth centuries.¹ They use their evidence to dismiss the notion of a 'dual economy' in southern Africa which has informed some of the leading studies of the economic history of the area. Authors using the latter theory have differentiated between a dynamic, capitalist, European agricultural sector on the one hand and a subsistence-oriented African sector on the other; the 'backwardness' of the African areas in the twentieth century

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1. G. Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: a Study of the Proletarianisation of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia', Journal of Development Studies, VI (1970), 197-234 and 'The Political Economy of Rhodesia', New Left Review, 39 (Sept.-Oct. 1966), 35-66; C. Bundy, 'The Emergence and Decline of a South African Peasantry', African Affairs, 71, 285 (1972), 369-388, 'The Transkei Peasantry, c.1890-1914': "Passing through a Period of Stress", in R. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds.), The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa (London, 1977), 201-220 and 'African Peasants and Economic Change in South Africa, 1870-1913, with particular reference to the Cape', D. Phil., University of Oxford, 1976.

is explained by such factors as lack of adaptability, adherence to custom, land shortage and overpopulation.¹ Bundy and Arrighi do not dispute that an increasing majority of Africans were unable to meet even their subsistence needs on the land after the turn of the century and had become migrant labourers or permanent proletarians. They argue, however, that the decline in African production should be understood in the context of the nature of African involvement in the capitalist economy of the region, rather than the absence of such involvement.

Although a number of authors have previously remarked on the extent of trade between Africans and colonial merchants, Bundy and Arrighi have been the first to analyse systematically the rise and fall in African production.² As Bundy deals specifically with South Africa, and draws a good deal of his empirical material from the areas taken over by the Cape Colony of which Pondoland was one, his analysis merits more detailed attention. His work is structured around two central ideas: the emergence of a peasantry and the process of underdevelopment.³ The former concept, he maintains, best describes the transformation of African societies from chiefdoms engaged in minimal exchange beyond their boundaries to communities of surplus-producing

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1. Bundy cites in particular historians of the 'liberal' school: C.W. de Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor in South Africa (Cambridge, 1937) and A History of South Africa: Social and Economic (Oxford, 1941); D. Hobart Houghton, The Economy of a Native Reserve, vol. 2 of the Keiskammahoek Rural Survey (Pietermaritzburg, 1952) and The South African Economy (Cape Town, 1967).
 2. See especially, H.M. Robertson, '150 Years of Economic Contact between White and Black', South African Journal of Economics, 2 (1934); I. Schapera, 'Economic Changes in South African Native Life' in G. Dalton (ed.), Tribal and Peasant Economies (New York, 1967); S. van der Horst, Native Labour in South Africa (London, 1942); D. Welsh, The Roots of Segregation (Cape Town, 1971), chapter 10; D.M. Goodfellow, A Modern Economic History of South Africa (London, 1931).
 3. Bundy, 'African Peasants and Economic Change', 1-22. References to Bundy are based on this study unless otherwise specified.

households, linked through traders to the colonial economy and usually dominated politically by the colonial state. His definition of a peasantry rests heavily on the work of Wolf and, in the African context, of Saul and Woods.¹ The concept of underdevelopment, taken over from Gunder Frank's studies of Latin America, and first applied to South Africa by Legassick, while describing conditions of poverty and backwardness, relates them to the effects of capitalist development in the colonies.² Monica Wilson has also used the term peasant in her chapter on African society in the second volume of the Oxford History of South Africa, but though she notes many of the same processes that attracted Bundy's attention, she does not always share his respect for chronology nor his theoretical framework, especially in regard to underdevelopment.³

Bundy argues that the emergence of a peasantry in the Eastern Cape was not merely the result of the availability of markets but that important groups within the colony found it in their interests to restructure African society.⁴ Missionaries, who established stations in the African areas during the first half of the nineteenth century, sought to change the lifestyles of their converts as well as win their minds; traders and merchants encouraged the growth of demand for their imports and the production of commodities which were suitable for sale in colonial and metropolitan markets; administrators valued peasant communities as buffers

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1. E. Wolf, Peasants (New Jersey, 1966), especially 3-11; J.S. Saul and R. Woods, 'African Peasantries' in T. Shanin (ed.), Peasants and Peasant Societies (Harmondsworth, 1971), especially 105-6.
 2. A. Gunder Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America (Harmondsworth, 1971); M. Legassick, 'Development and Underdevelopment in South Africa', unpublished paper, 1971.
 3. M. Wilson, 'The Growth of Peasant Communities', in M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.), The Oxford History of South Africa, vol.II, (Oxford, 1971), 49-103.
 4. Bundy, 'African Peasants and Economic Change', chapter 2 and passim.

against the sometimes hostile chiefdoms beyond them. Wilson also stresses the role of missionaries in the formation of a peasantry and, following authors such as Redfield, sees cultural change, in this case the adoption of Christianity, as a critical element in the transformation of African society.¹ The Mfengu, who fled to the Eastern Cape from Zululand and Natal during the 1820s, became the prototypical peasants in the area taken over by the Cape. Their chiefdoms had been destroyed, they were split off from the Xhosa amongst whom they had first sought refuge, they became wards of the missionaries and allies of the colony in its frontier wars, and they were highly receptive to innovation, education and elements of colonial culture.

Not only was the creation and survival of an African peasantry important to some colonial interests, but the peasantry was, to a limited extent, able to influence the direction of Cape 'Native policy'. A qualified but colour-blind franchise was entrenched in the colony after the grant of Responsible government in 1854. Davenport and, especially, Trapido have shown that in those Eastern Cape constituencies where considerable numbers of Africans were enfranchised, they began to use their vote to ensure that sympathetic candidates were returned.² Some merchants, Trapido goes on to suggest, whose position was closely bound up with that of the peasantry, cemented electoral alliances with African

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1. Wilson, 'Growth of Peasant Communities', 49-53; R. Redfield, Peasant Society and Culture (Chicago, 1956), and 'The Social Organisation of Tradition', in J. Potter, M. Diaz and G. Foster (eds.), Peasant Society (Boston, 1967).
 2. T.R.H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond (Cape Town, 1966), 118-123; S. Trapido, 'White Conflict and Non-white Participation in the Politics of the Cape of Good Hope, 1853-1910', Ph.D., University of London, 1970, and 'African Divisional Politics in the Cape Colony, 1884 to 1910', Journal of African History, IX, 1 (1968), 79-98.

leaders.¹ The ideology projected by this alliance formed an element in Cape liberalism, a tradition which sought to defend African rights to land and to the vote against attack from less sympathetic groups in the settler population.

Although the particular political configuration that sustained a peasantry in the Eastern Cape was peculiar to the area, Bundy and Wilson both apply the term to South Africa as a whole. Missionaries penetrated chiefdoms well beyond the borders of the Cape and, in any case, the peasant response was not limited, they suggest, to those who became converts or found themselves under the direct political domination of the colony. By the last few decades of the nineteenth century, traders had established stations throughout the area which became known as the Transkeian Territories and even those communities settled furthest from the centres of colonial trade were exporting produce and importing manufactures.² Bundy produces evidence of a similar response in Natal, the Orange Free State, and the Transvaal where colonial rule took a significantly different form.³ The nature and timing of the response varied from area to area. But Bundy argues that most African communities in South Africa, whether composed of landowners, tenants on land owned by Europeans, or people settled in districts in which communal tenure remained intact, can be regarded as part of the peasantry.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, independent African producers in district after district found their position undermined.

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1. S. Trapido, 'Liberalism in the Cape in the 19th and 20th Centuries', Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries, Collected Seminar papers (ICS., SA Seminar), vol.3 (1972-3), 53-66.
 2. Bundy, 'African Peasants and Economic Change', chapter 3.
 3. Ibid., chapters 6 and 7.

Bundy traces the process of decline to the economic revolution in South Africa predicated on the discovery and exploitation of minerals. While the growth of mining capital opened up new markets, enabling 'some peasants...to consolidate, and others to enjoy for the first time, modest economic success', it also heralded new pressures on the African population.¹ The constellation of interests that became dominant in the Cape Colony was one which viewed the African areas primarily as a source of labour for the new industries. Colonial rule was extended over chiefdoms which were still unannexed; those which resisted lost some of their land. Many of the African districts, particularly in the Eastern Cape, became overcrowded. New markets also stimulated an at first hesitant, but increasingly sustained, development of capitalist agriculture on European farms. Tenants were deprived of their access to land or forced to spend more of their time labouring for their landlords. By the first decade of the century, if not before, many African producers found they could no longer compete on colonial markets. As the terms of trade turned against them, and as natural disasters took a more serious toll, peasants were driven into debt which they could only repay by selling their labour. At first, such processes tended to increase differentiation in the African population, for some were able to retain their independence from the labour market for longer than others. But, Bundy argues, the great majority of Africans soon became dependent on some wage income; by 1913, the date at which his investigation ends, the peasantry was under very severe pressure. (Wilson suggests that agricultural decline only affected some African areas from the 1930s.)²

The majority of African workers became not permanent wage labourers, but migrants who retained some land on which they left their families and

1. Ibid., 148 and chapter 5.

2. Wilson, 'Growth of Peasant Communities', 56.

to which they returned after spells of work. Wolpe and Legassick, in their analyses of the development of capitalism in South Africa, argue, with varying emphases, that the mining industry, the dominant group within the state, needed large amounts of cheap unskilled labour and the system of migrancy enabled it to pay wages that were below the level necessary to sustain a family, or a worker for the whole of his life.¹ The ideology and policy of segregation, which both restricted African land purchase and reserved areas of land for exclusive occupation by Africans, arose in response to the demands of capitalist growth and underpinned the migrant labour system. African agricultural production declined further as migrancy became entrenched but it did not cease completely as many African families still had access to some land.

2: The Case of Pondoland

Although Bundy and Wilson give a good deal of attention to the Transkeian Territories in their work, both are concerned with a broad investigation of the peasantry in South Africa as a whole. Bundy himself characterises his work as an 'initial survey'.² A more thorough understanding of the nature of, and variations in, African economic responses to colonisation must be based on more detailed analyses of smaller regions and less overarching problems. This thesis builds on the advances made in previous studies by concentrating on an area inhabited by the people of one chiefdom in pre-colonial times. The focus

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1. H. Wolpe, 'Capitalism and Cheap Labour-power in South Africa: from Segregation to Apartheid', Economy and Society, (1972), 425-456; M. Legassick, 'South Africa: Forced Labour, Industrialisation, and Racial Differentiation' in R. Harris (ed.), The Political Economy of Africa (Cambridge, Mass., 1975) and 'South Africa: Capital Accumulation and Violence', Economy and Society, 3 (1974).
 2. Bundy, 'African Peasants and Economic Change', iii.

is specifically on Eastern Pondoland (Qaukeni), the seat of the senior house of the Mpondo paramountcy, although comparative information on Western Pondoland (Nyandeni) has been introduced at various points. By its very nature, a local study of this kind cannot provide the basis for a reassessment of the nature of the peasantry in South Africa as a whole. Such a task will clearly have to be confronted in the future for, while Bundy's concepts and approach may be adequate for parts of the Eastern Cape, even the few studies of other parts of southern Africa that have appeared suggest that a variety of very different structural situations were thrown up in the course of colonisation.¹ But this thesis has the more limited aim of contrasting the evidence on economic and political change in Pondoland with the models put forward by Bundy, Wilson, and others, whose analyses are not directly applicable to the area. It is hoped that attention will also be focussed on issues which have not yet received adequate treatment and which may be of importance in examining African responses elsewhere in the subcontinent.

A more detailed analysis of a relatively small section of the African rural population has been made possible by the availability of sources which have either not been used at all or have been exploited unsystematically. While Bundy has relied largely on the voluminous printed papers of the colonial governments, on mission sources and contemporary published literature, much of this study depends heavily on

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1. H. Slater, 'The Changing Pattern of Economic Relationships in Rural Natal: 1838-1914', ICS, SA Seminar, vol.3 (1972-3), 38-52; W.G. Clarence-Smith and R. Moorsom, 'Underdevelopment and Class Formation in Ovamboland, 1845-1915', Journal of African History, XVI, 3 (1975), 365-381; S. Trapido, 'Landlord and Tenant in a Colonial Economy: The Transvaal 1880-1910', Journal of Southern African Studies, 5, 1 (1978), 26-58; N. Etherington, 'African Economic Experiments in Colonial Natal, 1845-1880', African Economic History, 5 (Spring, 1978), 1-15. See also essays in Palmer and Parsons, Roots of Rural Poverty.

unpublished collections, particularly those of the Secretary of Native Affairs in the Cape Colony, of the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, and of one of the trading firms in Pondoland. Interviews were held in some Pondoland districts in order to supplement the archival material. Wilson's earlier works, published under her maiden name of Hunter, result from long spells of anthropological fieldwork, beginning in the 1930s when she undertook a major survey of Pondoland itself.¹ The oral material collected for this thesis cannot be compared with the rich detail of that in her book on Pondoland, Reaction to Conquest, and the nature of oral material available on the period prior to 1930 has changed considerably in the forty-five years since her study was done. Yet even a limited number of interviews, conducted with an eye on historical processes rather than on the problem of 'culture contact', which was central to the anthropological debate of the 1930s, have provided, when used alongside her book, information which was not available in the documents. Because of the inadequacy of the oral material, and because of the difficulties that were experienced in integrating it with archival sources, this thesis has, in the main, been structured around collections of documents. The sources available on Pondoland could have sustained an even more limited study of some of the periods covered here; at the same time, information on certain important problems was lacking. A more detailed note on the strengths and weaknesses of the material collected, and on some of the gaps in the analysis, is appended.²

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1. M. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest (Oxford, 1936). The second print (1964) of the second edition (1961) of this book has been used throughout this study. It has a new introduction, but the original text is not altered.
 2. Appendix 1.

The Mpondo chiefdom was, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, one of a number of independent African polities - known collectively in the literature as the Nguni - located between the Drakensberg mountains and the eastern seaboard of southern Africa. The chiefdoms to the north-east of Pondoland were either scattered by, or absorbed into, Shaka's Zulu kingdom in the early decades of the century.¹ Those to the south-west, the various Thembu, Xhosa, Mpondomise and Bomvana groups retained, as did the Mpondo, their independence. Mpondo settlements lay on either side of the Mzimvubu river, one of the major watercourses draining from the mountains to the sea; the chiefdom had been in this area, particularly on the eastern side of the river, for perhaps two centuries.² It is difficult to form any precise picture of the nature of Mpondo society prior to the advent of literate colonial visitors to Pondoland in the 1820s, although a systematic collection and analysis of oral traditions may provide the skeleton for a reconstruction of the chiefdom in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.³ However, even a superficial look at the traditions and genealogies suggests that the Mpondo were, by

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1. The most detailed survey of African polities, prior to Shaka's reign, in what became Natal and Zululand is in A.T. Bryant, Olden Times in Zululand and Natal (London, 1929).
 2. Victor Poto Ndamase, Ama-Mpondo Ibali ne-Ntlalo (Lovedale, 1927), 1; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 396-7; M. Wilson, 'The Nguni People' in M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.), The Oxford History of South Africa, vol.I (Oxford, 1969), 78-95; R. Derricourt, 'Settlement in the Transkei and Ciskei before the Mfecane' in C. Saunders and R. Derricourt (eds.), Beyond the Cape Frontier (London, 1974).
 3. Published Mpondo traditions include Poto, Ama-Mpondo; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest; W.D. Cingo, Ibali lama Mpondo (Palmerton, 1925); J.H. Soga, The South Eastern Bantu (Johannesburg, 1930). There are, in addition, a number of published and unpublished traditions of neighbouring chiefdoms which shed light on Mpondo history.

this time, a substantial polity consisting of a number of subchiefdoms, under their own hereditary leaders, subordinated in varying degrees to a paramount lineage (the Nyawuza) with which most claimed some genealogical connection. Like their neighbours, the Mpondo probably subsisted on hunting, herding of cattle and to a lesser degree small stock, cultivation with hand-held implements, and gathering.¹ They smelted and forged metals and produced a range of craft goods from metal, reeds and grasses, clay, hides and skins. Like their neighbours, they were a polygynous society, and probably lived, prior to the 1820s, in large homesteads dispersed over the area of the chiefdom.

After the Mfecane, the period of conflict that accompanied the rise of the Zulu kingdom, Faku, the Mpondo paramount chief at the time, was able to absorb many refugees from Zululand and Natal under his authority and consolidate perhaps the largest chiefdom on the east coast, south of the Zulu themselves.² The geographic position of the Mpondo, midway between the colonial centres in the Eastern Cape and Natal, cushioned them from the worst effects of settler colonialism in the first half of the nineteenth century. They did not participate in the long series of wars between various Xhosa chiefs and the Cape, nor in the famous cattle killing of 1857.³ In fact Faku signed a treaty with the Cape Colony in 1844 which recognised his paramountcy over an area far larger than that actually inhabited by his immediate followers. The Mpondo chiefs were careful to avoid direct confrontation with the

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1. For the Xhosa at this time see W. Fehr, Ludwig Alberti's Account of Tribal Life and Customs of the Xhosa in 1807 (Cape Town, 1968); J. Peires, 'A History of the Xhosa c.1700-1835', M.A., Rhodes University, 1976; Wilson, 'The Nguni People'.
 2. The remainder of this section summarises arguments in the thesis and is only footnoted when comparative works are mentioned.
 3. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 7.

expansionist colonial governments in the latter half of the nineteenth century and were able to retain most of the land on which their people were settled. The area was only annexed to the Cape in 1894, almost a century after settlers had begun to encroach on the land controlled by the Xhosa chiefs and two decades after direct colonial control had been established over the chiefdoms surrounding Pondoland. The particular experience of the Mpondo in the nineteenth century serves to raise questions concerning the continuities in production and social structure in the period after the advent of colonial traders in the 1860s, and even after annexation, as much as the changes. Any study of the Mpondo response to colonisation must make some attempt to come to terms with the nature of pre-colonial society.

In concentrating on the process of peasantisation, Bundy and Wilson have presented a relatively static picture of the economy of pre-colonial societies. Evidence on Pondoland in the nineteenth century suggests that, within limits determined by social organisation and technology, the economy was flexible, and the intensity of various economic activities differed considerably through time. The balance between cultivation and pastoral activities changed more than once, depending on the situation in which the people found themselves. An understanding of such shifts in production is essential if the specific nature of the Mpondo response to capitalist penetration is to be understood. This point is not intended to minimise the importance of the structural changes which took place during the expansion of colonial power. However, it is equally misleading to ignore the rhythms of change in the pre-colonial economy and the manner in which they became bound up into, and shaped, structural change.

Furthermore, although Bundy and Wilson have mapped out the social organisation of production in Nguni society, and Wilson, in particular, has contributed a great deal to an understanding of these chiefdoms,

neither considers the changing nature of appropriation and redistribution of resources by the chiefs in their studies of peasantisation. In addressing questions formulated by Marxist anthropologists in their studies of very different societies to the material on Pondoland, and in returning to the historical and anthropological work on more centralised African chiefdoms, it became clear during the course of this research that the transformation of Mpondo society could not be understood without reference to such relationships between chiefs and commoners.¹ Bundy regards the homestead as the basic unit of production in pre-colonial Nguni society.² Yet during and after the Mfecane, the Mpondo chiefs were able to organise and control labour, especially male labour, in communal activities such as hunting, raiding, and perhaps crop production, which became vitally important as the Mpondo had lost many of their cattle. Even when cattle were re-accumulated through raiding, and the trade - much underestimated in the literature on the 'Cape Nguni' - which resulted from hunting and crop production, the chiefs could draw on the labour of commoner households through a system of cattle loans. They also exacted a variety of tribute payments and fines in stock.

Bundy has used the evidence which shows the increasing extent of trade between the Mpondo and colonial merchants after the 1860s to include Pondoland in his general survey of the peasantry.³ Yet while

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1. See especially, C. Meillassoux, 'From Reproduction to Production. A Marxist Approach to Economic Anthropology', Economy and Society, 1 (1972); E. Terray, Marxism and 'Primitive' Societies (New York, 1972). For a useful review of literature on African political systems see A.D. Roberts, A History of the Bemba (London, 1973), 293-326. Clarence-Smith and Moorsom, 'Ovamboland', have focussed carefully on such relationships. T. Ranger, 'Growing from the Roots: Reflections on Peasant Research in Central and Southern Africa', Journal of Southern African Studies, 5 (1978), suggests a similar approach.
 2. Bundy, 'African Peasants and Economic Change', 25-27.
 3. For example, ibid., 129.

he examines the political conjuncture that led to the emergence of a peasantry in the Eastern Cape, he fails to examine the changing political economy in areas where colonial traders penetrated societies still under independent chiefs. The Mpondo did not become peasants after the model of the crop and wool-producing, often Christian, Mfengu. For the first thirty years after the arrival of traders they exchanged mostly cattle and pastoral products, and trade in such produce did not, in itself, necessitate a basic transformation of the nature of production in the area. The cattle trade did begin to affect the chiefs' control over resources. Reaccumulation of cattle in the middle of the nineteenth century was accompanied by a process of decentralisation in the organisation of economic activities. Many commoner households had been able to build up herds and were in a position to trade independently; surplus generated in Pondoland was increasingly appropriated by traders rather than by the chiefs and the acceptance of imported goods in exchange for cattle made the Mpondo dependent on the colonial economy for manufactures which could not be produced in Pondoland. But the chiefs were still the largest cattle owners and could, initially, best participate in trade. They were still able to command tribute and some labour from commoner households. It is in such shifts in the relations between the chiefs and people that the effects of capitalist penetration should be sought. They may be described as process of peasantisation, but the term 'a peasantry' has been avoided in this thesis, except when it is used in a descriptive sense of the people of the Transkeian region as a whole. While the concept has had great value in identifying major features of change in colonised African chiefdoms, and in placing these in the context of a broader literature, its use tends to obscure the very real differences in the relations of production in various parts of the subcontinent. It is more useful to conceive of the people in Pondoland, up to annexation, as part of a

chiefdom undergoing transformation, than as a peasant class in a colonial state.

This point is given further weight by a consideration of the response of the chiefs to their gradual loss of control over production. During the 1870s and 1880s, the paramounts became increasingly reliant on taxing trade, rather than controlling the surplus generated in the society. They demanded licences from traders, charged customs duties on boats that called at the Mzimvubu river, and even tried to levy tariffs on the roads leading to Pondoland. They also increased their revenue by granting concessions. This attempt by certain of the chiefs to transform the Mpondo state, was possible because of their continued political independence. It also gave rise to an alliance between chiefs and traders in defence of Mpondo independence, which differed markedly from that noted by Trapido in the Eastern Cape where merchants and the colonised peasantry participated jointly in the political institutions of the colony. In their definitions of the peasantry, Wolf, and Saul and Woods, stress that the peasants are a class in a society directly dominated, in the political sphere, by those appropriating surplus; that the peasantry exists only 'within the context of territorially defined colonial political systems'.¹ Bundy does not dispute this element of the definitions, but he ignores the transformation of the chieftaincy partly because he fails to consider the nature of local political authority, where it did remain intact, in the context of economic change and partly because the areas from which he draws much of his information were under colonial rule in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The chiefly response in Pondoland is more closely paralleled in, for example, those Tswana

1. Saul and Woods, 'African Peasantries', 106.

chiefdoms which remained relatively free from direct colonial domination.¹

The changing nature of the chieftaincy in Pondoland was, in part, at the root of the conflicts between the Mpondo and the colonial states that preceded annexation to the Cape in 1894 and, during the following decade and a half, the colonial administration went some way to destroying the power of the chiefs. In this period (1895-1910) Mpondo homesteads began to change their system of production more radically. They extended crop production, a process which had already begun, and exported a considerable amount of grain, especially after Rinderpest destroyed 80 per cent of their cattle in 1897. But, as Bundy and others have noted, the colonial state was, by this time, more concerned about mobilising labour from the African areas than sustaining a surplus producing peasantry. These years also mark the beginnings of mass labour migrancy from Pondoland. Migrancy has usually been seen, in the literature on the peasantry in southern Africa, as a consequence of actual decline in agricultural output or at least a decline in the reward that could be realised from rural production relative to wage labour.² Such a relationship was not clearly apparent in the evidence on Pondoland for there was a contemporaneous increase in migrancy and crop production.

According to the logic of Bundy's model it would seem that this anomaly would best be explained by increased differentiation: while some homesteads expanded production, others became dependent on wages.

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1. N. Parsons, 'The Economic History of Khama's Country in Botswana, 1844-1930' in Palmer and Parsons, Roots of Rural Poverty.
 2. Bundy 'African Peasants and Economic Change', 148-149. (Bundy does allow for emergency migrancy for the purposes of accumulation. See ibid., 165.) Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies', 203.

However, it is argued here that the income of migrants, many of whom took their whole wage in the form of an advance of cattle, contributed to the extension of production. For cattle were now essential not only as a source of food, as a medium for bridewealth payments, but also for draught. Homesteads were still large and it was possible for families both to send out sons to work and maintain rural production. The simultaneous increase in crop production and migrancy can only be explained if the division of labour and nature of control in rural homesteads is taken into account. Wilson's early anthropological work, while it does not address the specific relationship suggested here, has provided valuable material on the homesteads, but these issues have received little attention in the historical literature on the peasantry.¹

While the changes that Bundy describes in the Eastern Cape took place some decades later in Pondoland, this argument suggests they were also of a different nature. Mpondo producers were still bound up, to a certain extent, in a pre-capitalist society, itself transformed, when they began to export crops. At the same moment, they were becoming dependent on wage labour. Wage labour did not initially mark the destruction of the rural economy. The payment of wages through advances, which was also favoured by the local traders who dominated recruiting because it ensured that the wage was spent in Pondoland, enabled homestead heads to reinvest their sons earnings into rural production. Further, the controls that families were able to establish over their migrant sons suggest that migrancy, as a specific form of proletarianisation, was predicated on rural political economy as much as in the interests of mining capital.

1. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest; M. Hunter, 'The Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Status of African Women', Africa, 6 (1933), 259-276 and 'Results of Culture Contract on the Pondo and Xhosa family', South African Journal of Science, 29 (1932), 681-6.

As Bundy has illustrated so well, Africans producing on a small scale for the market encountered serious difficulties as capitalist farming developed and demands for labour from the African areas increased.¹ After the first decade of the century, traders were rarely able to market crops outside the Transkeian Territories. Export of cattle was also prevented by restrictions imposed to eradicate East Coast Fever, a serious cattle disease which devastated Mpondo herds in 1912 and 1913. But while direct intervention by the state undermined the position of African producers in other parts of South Africa, the Mpondo had not been deprived of much land nor were they affected by the legislation, culminating in the 1913 Natives Land Act, which attacked the tenantry. This Act was also the basis of segregationist land policy; the entrenchment of the African reserves and acceptance of communal tenure. It is true that by recognising the reserves, the state underpinned the migrant labour system once labour had been mobilised. But segregationist land policies also gave rural homesteads the scope to maintain their output.

Many homesteads were able to recover from the natural disasters of 1912 and 1913. In the following two decades, rates of migrancy did increase - a spell of wage labour became incorporated into the process of household reproduction - and migrancy itself contributed to the breakdown of large homesteads. Yet further changes in the system of cropping, in part a consequence of the changing nature of the homestead, probably enabled many families to produce, in the 1920s, as much as they had at the turn of the century, if not more. Partly because of East Coast Fever regulations, partly because of attempts by every homestead to accumulate sufficient draught animals, there

1. Bundy, 'African Peasants and Economic Change', especially chapter 4.

were more cattle in Pondoland than at any time in the previous few decades. Migrant wages continued to be of importance in extending rural production. It was only in the 1930s, that per capita output of grain and per capita stockholdings began to show a marked decline. This analysis does not necessarily contradict Bundy's view that the Transkeian area was 'underdeveloped' by about 1913. The large majority of Mpondo families had lost their independence from labour markets. However, the term 'underdevelopment' has been avoided as it has been used, in the South African context, to denote an actual decline in output. The people in Pondoland were undergoing a process of proletarianisation, but because of the linkages between wages and rural production, because of continued adaptations in the organisation of production, dependence on wage labour did not, up to about 1930, mean a collapse in the rural economy.

While the literature on the peasantry in South Africa has not confronted the issue of chieftaincy in the South African state, Hammond-Tooke, an anthropologist, suggests that in the Transkei, the 'prestige and traditional loyalties that surrounded their [the chiefs'] office proved remarkably strong'.¹ It is argued in this thesis that the institution not only survived in Pondoland, but that the problems faced by the administration in maintaining rural control led the state to provide some scope for paramountcy, at least to regenerate itself. The system of administration introduced by the Cape Colony after annexation was designed to minimise the power of the more important chiefs and to locate control at the level of government-appointed headmen who were directly responsible to magistrates. But when the administration faced widespread popular discontent over its attempts to introduce

1. D. Hammond-Tooke, Command or Consensus (Cape Town, 1975), 94; cf. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 429.

compulsory dipping of cattle to combat East Coast Fever in 1909, officials had to rely on a new and 'progressive' paramount chief to weather the crisis. While no radical change was made in the system of administration, certain of the paramount's demands, particularly in connection with the collection of tributary payments, were met. The administration also recognised chiefly demands for a maintenance of the communal system of land tenure.

The recognition of chiefly authority was not without its implications for patterns of production in the area. Land distribution was left in the hands of chiefs and headmen, although they were prevented from accumulating substantial areas. It was broadly in the interests of chiefs and headmen to increase their revenue from immigrant dues and fees for land allotment. They tended to become the agents of a state policy designed to squeeze as many people as possible onto the land rather than encourage a class of wealthier cash-cropping peasants. The argument put forward here is not intended as a restatement of the inhibiting effects of 'custom' in retarding development, nor is it suggested that the chiefs, by their nature, were opposed to such development. Rather, an attempt is made to locate patterns of production not only in the context of market relationships and the relationship between the South African state and the rural population, but also in the dynamic of the local political economy. The particular nature of chieftaincy in the period between about 1910 and 1930 resulted both from the limitations placed upon the institution and the way in which it was moulded and given limited scope in a changing structural situation. Some of the points made here are echoed in Shula Marks's article on chiefs and segregationist ideology in Zululand.¹ She notes

1. S. Marks, 'Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation', Journal of Southern African Studies, 4, 2 (1978), 172-194.

that the Zulu paramounts engaged in a long struggle for recognition from the second decade of the twentieth century and argues that the ideologues of segregation began, by the 1920s, to see the uses to which chieftaincy could be put in controlling an increasingly proletarianised African population in Natal.

The continued importance of chieftaincy also had implications for the patterns of differentiation and rural conflict which developed in Pondoland during the early decades of the twentieth century. It is certainly inadequate to conceive the major line of differentiation in this period as one between a surviving independent peasantry and a rurally based wage-labour force. Families which produced the most grain and owned most stock at the turn of the century, some of them chiefly, some immigrant had, by the 1920s, become highly dependent on the state for their income. The former, who still received income from dues, were incorporated into the bureaucracy; the latter, often Christians, had educated their children for salaried jobs in church and state. Though it was often members of these groups who were still the largest producers, and marketed some of their produce within the Transkeian Territories, their direct income from the land was only one factor contributing to their position as the wealthiest group in Pondoland, and their ability to remain independent from migrant labour. In rural crises, the paramountcy, at least, and the Christian salary earners tended to co-operate with the state.

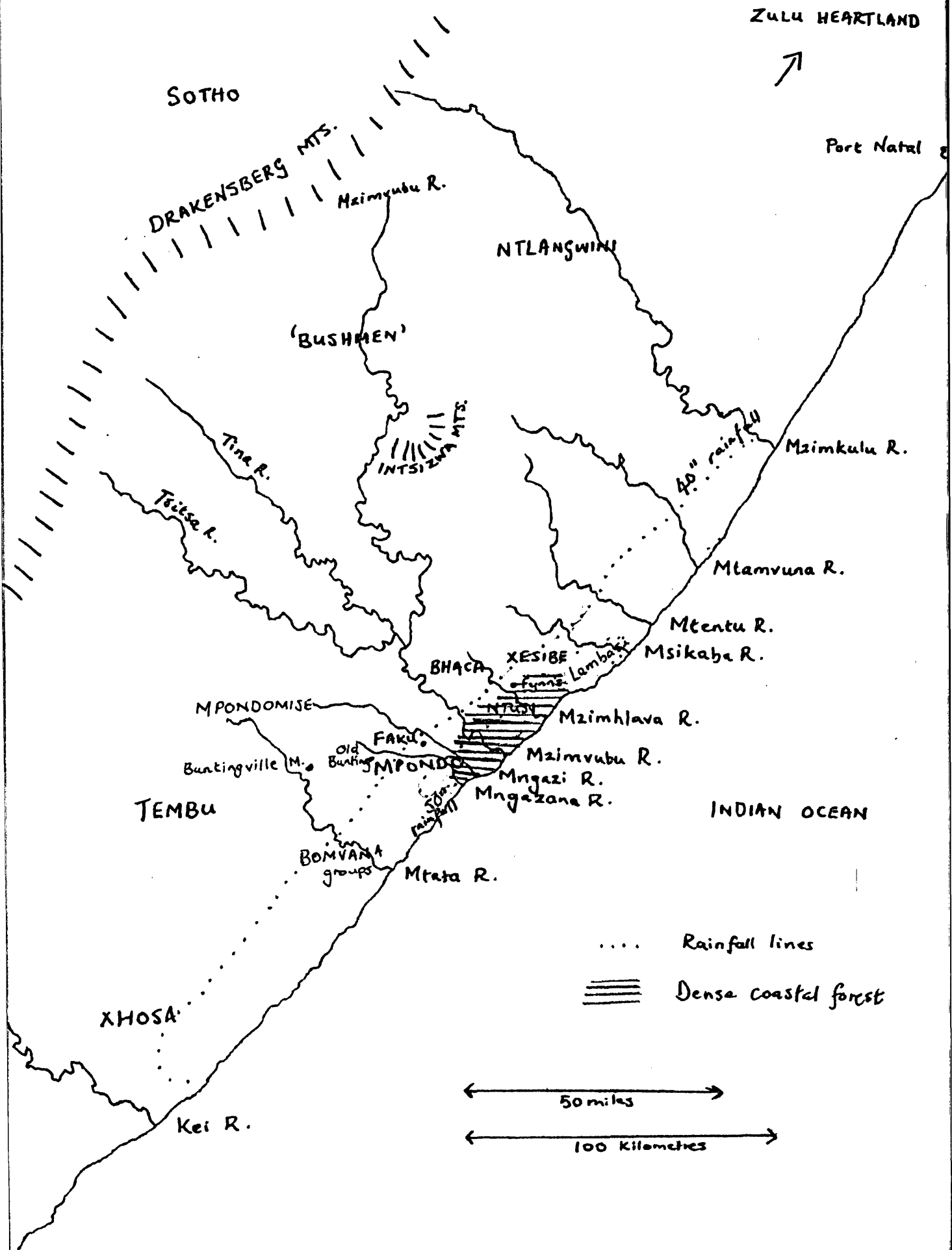
The great majority of families, on the other hand, were forced to send migrants to work as unskilled labourers, largely on the mines of the Witwatersrand and sugar estates of Natal. Patterns of stratification became increasingly related to the wage-earning capacity of male members of the homestead. The combination of state control and chiefly authority defused popular movements in Pondoland which began to reflect the emerging class division within the area. Chiefs were also able to

articulate demands, particularly in connection with the defence of communal land and rural homesteads, which resonated with those of the mass of the population. In this context, conflict was often expressed in the form of competition between claimants for headmanships and chieftaincies.

Observers of Pondoland in the 1930s attributed the traditional or conservative character of the area to lack of contact with Western civilisation or 'selective conservatism'.¹ The term 'traditionalists' has been used, with misgivings, in the later chapters of this thesis, because it is a useful shorthand to describe the bulk of the Mpondo population who rejected Christianity and the cultural changes implied by conversion, and who avoided purchase of consumer goods when possible. Its use is, to some extent, in accord with the terms 'school' or 'dressed' and 'red' (traditionalist) which have generally been employed in discussions of the rural population of the Ciskeian and Transkeian areas in the twentieth century.² However, in conclusion, some attempt is made to locate the various elements in what has been called tradition in the context of the way in which Pondoland was incorporated into the South African state. It is argued that traditionalism cannot be seen as a survival, nor as a matter of choice, but that the character of rural society in Pondoland resulted directly from the particular way in which it had been transformed in the previous few decades.

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1. See, for example, Smuts in Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, Foreword; H. Rogers, Native Administration in the Union of South Africa (Johannesburg, 1933), 50; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 548-554.
 2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest; Wilson, 'Growth of Peasant Communities', 74-76; P. Mayer, Townsmen or Tribesmen (Cape Town, 1961, 1974), introduction and passim.

MAP 1: SKETCH MAP OF PONDOLAND AND VICINITY, 1830s.



Chapter 1

ECONOMIC CHANGE IN PONDOLAND
IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

1: Production and the Material Basis of Chieftaincy;
The Period of Close Settlement, 1828-1838.

During the 1820s, the Mpondo were continually exposed to attack from the north. Offshoots from the Zulu state and the Zulu army itself substantially cleared the large area between the Tugela river and Pondoland of its inhabitants. Many of the broken chiefdoms fled towards Pondoland and beyond; some clashed with the Mpondo on their way.¹ Zulu impis twice raided Pondoland and, by the time of their second expedition in 1828, Faku, the Mpondo paramount chief, had been forced to retreat with most of his people into the deep river valleys and dense coastal forests on the western side of the Mzimvubu. When he was questioned by the first colonial military official to visit Pondoland, who found him in retreat ten days after the Zulu armies had departed, Faku bewailed the fact that 'his people had lost all their cattle and had nothing to live upon or make clothes of'.² Their homesteads and grain stores on the eastern side of the Mzimvubu had been destroyed.

In order to protect themselves from the Zulu and other raiding chiefdoms on the southern periphery of the Zulu state, the Mpondo

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1. Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 6-11; J. Stuart papers, Killie Campbell Library, 61/41, 16ff; 62/63, 1-2; 62/63, 21ff.; 62/64, 2.
 2. Public Records Office, Colonial Office (PRO C.O.) 48/125, Report by W.B. Dundas, 15.8.1828.

concentrated their settlements close to Faku's new homestead on the Mngazi river and in neighbouring valleys. Early missionary visitors, exploring the possibility of opening a station among the Mpondo, were struck by the nature of settlement in the area. In 1830, Boyce wrote that:

from one hill near the Great Place, Mr. Shepstone counted a hundred kraals, each of which contained from twenty to forty houses, which, after the usual manner of counting in this country, will give more than ten thousand inhabitants; and the view from the hill took in the population of one river, and the parts adjoining.¹

These visitors had travelled up to Pondoland through the Xhosa and Thembu chiefdoms where the homesteads were not only more scattered, but smaller. The 'other races of Kaffers nearer the colony', with whom they contrasted the Mpondo, were 'more safe from predatory attacks' and, as they were still more dependent on pastoralism, 'love[d] to roam at large with their herds, over extensive tracts of country'.² With no cattle, the Mpondo had no need to find grazing grounds and were therefore able to maintain the dense settlements which were so essential for defence.

Faku and his people remained in these sheltered valleys west of the Mzimvubu at least until 1838 for although Shaka died in 1828, the threat of attack from the Zulu and other raiding chiefdoms had not abated. During this period, a Methodist missionary station was established at Buntingville and the paramount was visited by a number of travellers and traders. Although the records left by such observers

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1. A. Steedman, Wanderings and Adventures in the Interior of Southern Africa, vol.II (London, 1835), 268, quoting journal of W.B. Boyce, 29.11.1830; see also Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society Archives (WMMS) South Africa Box 5, Boyce to Secretaries, 11.5.1830.
 2. WMMS, SA Box 7, W. Shaw to Secretaries, 25.7.1837.

are not sufficiently detailed to enable a complete reconstruction of Mpondo society at the time, they do give some clues about the adaptations made in the Mpondo economy. Faku may have exaggerated when he claimed that his people had lost all their cattle, but it does seem that these adaptations are best explained by the absence of stock. Further, the increased intensity of other economic activities often served to enable the Mpondo to reaccumulate stock.

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, if not before, the nature of army organisation in the area that became Zululand underwent significant changes, first among the pre-Shakan 'confederacies' and later, on a larger scale, in Shaka's Zulu kingdom.¹ Young men from the subchiefdoms that made up these larger polities were recruited into regiments under the direct control of the paramount chief; the regimental organisation played an important role in the expansion of the military and economic power of the Zulu chieftaincy. At the same time, male circumcision in these societies was abolished, probably as a result of the constant military demands on young men and the paramounts' attempts to destroy the identity of the subchiefdoms in which the ceremony of circumcision had been organised. The Mpondo, alone of the chiefdoms south of the Mzinkulu river, also abolished male circumcision at some time during the first half of the nineteenth century.² This evidence suggests that Faku initiated structural changes similar to those that had taken place in Zululand. However, the traditions of the Mpondo and neighbouring chiefdoms are clear on the point that 'the

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1. See, for example, M. Gluckman, 'The Kingdom of the Zulu of South Africa' in M. Fortes and E. Evans-Pritchard, African Political Systems (London, 1940); J. Omer-Cooper, The Zulu Aftermath (London, 1966).
 2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 165; Cape of Good Hope, Blue Book on Native Affairs (BBNA), G. 27-1874, 51; Cape BBNA, G. 9-1894, 75.

Pondos had no regiments recruited according to age'.¹ The armies were mobilised within the subchiefdoms and collected to fight under one of the houses of the paramountcy.²

While Faku does not seem to have been able to transform the sub-chiefdoms under his control, his army did become perhaps the most powerful on the southern periphery of the Zulu state. Close settlement, initially a defensive response, in turn facilitated military organisation for offensive purposes. Faku was able to beat the Hlangwini in battle and in 1828 contributed to the defeat of the Ngwane chief Matiwane.³ Some of the latter's followers sought refuge with the Mpondo. In 1829, he also defeated the Qwabe, another refugee chiefdom from Zululand, and established his dominance over the small Xesibe chiefdom which had moved into Eastern Pondoland. By the beginning of the 1830s, his only remaining rival in the area was Ncaphayi, chief of the Bhaca, a much feared raider whose people had twice crossed the Drakensberg in their flight south.⁴ In 1832, when the Transkeian chiefdoms were beginning to recover from the devastation of the Mfecane, Ncaphayi's raiding fortunes turned. A number of his followers had deserted him and sought refuge with Faku; he himself was forced to become tributary to the Mpondo paramount and was allowed to settle immediately to the east of the Mzimvubu.⁵

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1. Stuart papers, 61/60, 6.
 2. Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 53-54.
 3. Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 6-11; Union of South Africa, Department of Native Affairs, Ethnological Publications vol.VII, N.J. van Warmelo, History of Matiwane and the Amangwane Tribe (1938), 56, 253ff.; Stuart papers, 62/68, 17.
 4. The fullest account of early Bhaca history is in a tradition collected by W.P. Leary in the McLaughlin papers, Cory Library MS. 14,304.
 5. WMMS, SA Box 5, Boyce to Secretaries, 2.7.1832 and 31.3.1832.

Military power not only enabled the Mpondo to survive a period of acute conflict, it also gave them the opportunity to reaccumulate cattle through raids and tribute payments. Faku captured cattle from the Xesibe and from the Qwabe.¹ Ncaphayi had to pay a considerable number of cattle in return for the right to settle in Mpondo territory in 1832. In the 1830s, Faku joined forces with the Bhaca chief - it was a troubled alliance - to raid the Mpondomise, Thembu and Bomvana chiefdoms to the south and west of Pondoland amongst whom cattle stocks were still relatively high.² As Faku emerged as the dominant power in the region of the Mzimvubu river, other immigrant groups gravitated towards him and generally had to pay settlement fees.

Tribute payments, and the large majority of cattle taken in raids, accrued directly to the paramount. Faku's monopoly of spoils was in part the result of his sole right to organise military expeditions. He alone could authorise the ceremony in which the army was doctored, an essential prelude to military action. When Ncaphayi tried to doctor his own army 'to make his people strong' in 1833, Faku felt that this was 'contrary to established usages of propriety on the part of a subordinate chief' and indicated 'an intention of claiming independence'.³ He threatened war and Ncaphayi soon backed down, confirming a couple of

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1. Cape Archives, Native Affairs papers (CA NA) 623/1965, History of the Xesibe signed by W.P. Leary, 27.9.1904; Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 19.
 2. Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 12; WMMS, SA Box 7, S. Palmer to Secretaries, 27.9.1836; WMMS, Jenkins papers, Shaw to Jenkins, 2.11.1838; WMMS, Missionary Notices, September 1839, Jenkins to Secretaries, 12.11.1838; Cape Archives, Lieutenant Governor of the Eastern Cape (CA LG) 404, W. Fynn to A. Stockenstrom, 7.6.1837; J. Backhouse, Narrative of a Visit to the Mauritius and South Africa (London, 1844), 260.
 3. WMMS, SA Box 5, Boyce to Secretaries, January 1833.

years later that he would 'not go out to war again unless called by Faku'.¹ Whether or not the Mpondo paramount had been able to enforce control over military expeditions and captured cattle prior to the 1820s is unclear. But whatever the case, this source of stock became of great importance in the period during and after the Mfecane. It is possible that captives were also taken in raids and that they, as in the case of cattle, were controlled by the paramount.

Agricultural activities in Pondoland came under great pressure during the period of conflict; old lands had to be abandoned and the Mpondo had to fight raiding chiefdoms which were not constrained by the agricultural cycle. However, unlike the Bhaca, Qwabe, Hlangwini and the 'stragglng wandering natives ... not immediately under any particular chief', called 'Bushmen' in contemporary sources, the Mpondo did not rely on raiding and hunting alone for their subsistence.² Indeed, the evidence suggests that they also compensated for the loss of stock by more assiduous cultivation. Their ability to do so depended not least on the strength of their armies which, by defending the crops, played another important, though indirect, role in production. The valleys to which the Mpondo had moved were considered by contemporary observers as among the most fertile they had seen in South Africa; they often commented on the extraordinary height to which the crops and grass grew.³ The climate and grasses in the narrow sub-tropical coastal belt west of the Mzimvubu were not highly

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1. WMMS, SA Box 7, Palmer to Secretaries, 10.7.1834.
 2. Stuart papers, 61/41, 18; WMMS, Boyce to Secretaries, 2.7.1832; CA LG 404, W. Fynn to Hudson, 11.9.1843.
 3. Steedman, Wanderings, vol.I, 20, 261, 262, 281; D. Hammond-Tooke, The Journal of William Shaw (Cape Town, 1972), 167; M. Lister, Journals of Andrew Geddes Bain (Cape Town, 1949), 111, note 59; W. Shaw, The Story of My Mission in South Eastern Africa (London, 1860), 402.

suited to cattle, but the rainfall was considerably higher than in the hilly inlands from which the Mpondo had retreated, and the alluvial soils could support intensive cultivation. Henry Francis Fynn, one of the earliest visitors to Pondoland, noted that the Mpondo, in contrast to the chiefdoms nearer the colony, 'having lost much of their stock ... became agricultural and pastoral'.¹

The increased intensity of cultivation was not apparently the result of technological innovation. Hoes and digging sticks, sometimes made with locally smelted, or possibly imported, iron, but more usually of wood, remained the most important agricultural implements. Wooden hoes were adequate for the easily worked alluvial soils in an area with a high rainfall and, at a time of great conflict, iron was probably needed for assegais. It is, however, possible that crop changes enabled output to be increased. Observers noted both sorghum, the older crop, and maize in the fields. Maize had probably been introduced into Pondoland well before the 1820s but circumstantial evidence suggests that it may have been more widely adopted at this time. For it was more suited to the damp coastal areas than sorghum and, in rich soils, probably gave a higher yield. It matured more quickly than sorghum; visitors reported that two crops of maize could be reaped in a year which suggests that maize could be planted over a longer period in the spring and summer. Whereas the rainfall in areas away from the coast tended to be concentrated in the summer months (November to March), even the autumn and winter months were seldom dry on the coast.

While soil, climate and crop changes may have helped the Mpondo to produce more, they also invested more labour time into cultivation. An observer commented that the Mpondo worked harder in their fields than the Xhosa and that Mpondo men joined the women in agricultural

1. J. Stuart and D. Malcolm, The Diary of Henry Francis Fynn (Pietermaritzburg, 1969), 24.

labour, a rare phenomenon among the Xhosa.¹ There is little specific information on organisation of agricultural work at this period, but as hoes were easily made, and land seems to have been available to all, control of agricultural activities probably depended on the ability to command human labour power. There is no direct evidence to suggest that Faku was able to make his regiments work in the fields. However, the chiefs and leading men had the greatest number of wives and children and the means to extend their family labour force. If they had access to captives, the labour force under their control would have been even larger in comparison to that available to the average commoner. Further, there was almost certainly a system of communal labour at this time - it is well documented for a later period - and the chiefs could probably command attendance at work parties on their fields.² Close settlement lent itself to control of labour by the paramount.

At later stages of the nineteenth century, the chiefs do not seem to have been able to levy tribute in crops but in 1828, Faku 'appeared to have been receiving contributions from some of his people', as an official 'observed several poor creatures bring to a heap of corn small baskets of that grain and silently throw it down'.³ Though grain was distributed by the chiefs, often in the form of beer at feasts and ceremonies, Boyce, the missionary, suggested that redistribution did not always make up for the inequalities in production.

...there is now plenty of food in the land [he noted in 1831] but the improvident natives are wasting immense quantities of corn, in the manufacture of beer, so that in a few months distress will again be experienced partially by all classes of society, and severely by

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1. Steedman, Wanderings, vol.I, 261-262.
 2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 386.
 3. PRO C.O. 48/125, Report by Dundas, 15.8.1828.

by the poor dependents of the great men who will be driven to seek a scanty subsistence by digging roots in the vacant country between the Umgazi and Umtata. [His italics.]¹

It is possible that, as in Zululand, the chiefs were able to feed the armies with grain brought in from the commoner homesteads. In effect, these homesteads would have been contributing not only to the defence of the fields but also to the chiefs' revenue in the shape of cattle captured in war.

Increased crop production was partly for the purposes of consumption as cattle had provided both milk and meat which were important elements in the Mpondo diet. One tradition suggests that crops replaced cattle in bridewealth transactions and, if this was so, the circulation of grain within the chiefdom must have increased.² Grain could be stored in pits and huts for a couple of years, but the threat of attack probably discouraged bulk storage; it was safer to consume or circulate the harvest quickly. A reluctance to store grain may have been one of the factors contributing to the development of trade in grain, particularly with the inland hunting and raiding groups. It should not be forgotten that these groups could seldom grow crops at the time.

Facó's country [a visitor noted] may be considered the granary of the eastern parts of Caffre land as they, the Amampondo, annually supply the inhabitants with great quantities of maize and caffrecorn [sorghum] for which they receive in return hides, beads and cattle.³

Tobacco and also dagga (Indian hemp, or marijuana), crops grown by all the chiefdoms on the Transkeian coast, were important items of trade throughout the nineteenth century and Mpondo tobacco became widely

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1. WMMS, SA Box 5, Boyce to Secretaries, 21.4.1831.
 2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 190.
 3. Lister, Journal of Andrew Geddes Bain, 104, note 54.

known beyond the borders of Pondoland.¹ It was used by the Mpondo in the form of snuff after being ground with aloes, and in the early nineteenth century was sent, along with crops, to the inland chiefdoms and hunting groups. As tobacco was usually grown in small garden patches under the supervision of the older members of the homesteads, it is unlikely that its production was susceptible to chiefly control.

The Mpondo relied heavily on hunting in the period of close settlement to provide both an alternative source of meat and trade goods. In the early 1830s, Steedman recorded that they had been able to

...collect fresh herds from their westerly neighbours by the sale of antelope skins, especially those of the blue buck ... a favourite and costly ornament, used for the head dress of the Caffer [Xhosa] Belles.²

Skins from game were also used, especially by Mpondo women, for clothing, and other products of the chase were exchanged with neighbouring chiefdoms and even with the few European traders who began to visit Pondoland in the 1820s. The latter were primarily attracted by ivory and found, according to their reports, a fruitful source of supply. Fynn spent a considerable period of time in Mpondo territory and established a depot for collecting ivory near the Mzimvubu river in the mid-1820s.³ Andrew Bain collected 2,500 lbs. of tusks in three days in 1829 from groups settled near the Mzimvubu river.⁴

Traditions collected by Hunter suggest that the chiefs had never controlled the hunting of small game, but contemporary evidence indicates that, at this period, they did.⁵ Chiefs were able to claim the right of

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1. Steedman, Wanderings, vol.I, 252; F. Brownlee, The Transkeian Native Territories: Historical Records (Lovedale, 1923), 97.
 2. Steedman, Wanderings, vol.II, 205.
 3. Stuart and Malcolm, Diary of Henry Francis Fynn, 116-117.
 4. Lister, Journal of Andrew Geddes Bain, 120.
 5. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 95.

hunting in particular forests, allowing no intrusion without their permission being obtained'.¹ Their rights enabled them to derive revenue from the blue buck skin trade and they are reputed to have hired out forests when they did not organise the hunt themselves. As much of the game in Pondoland dwelt in the forests - the area was unsuitable for plains game such as larger buck and zebra that tended to congregate in herds on the open veld - control of the forests must have enabled the chiefs to secure a virtual monopoly over hunting. Forest game could be hunted by small parties, but a good catch depended on the marshalling of a considerable number of men: some acted as beaters while some, armed with assegais, waited for the animals to run into clearings. Forest hunting of this kind lent itself to central control although there is little specific information about the nature of hunting organisation at the time.

The evidence relating to elephant hunting and the control of tusks is contradictory. Traditions collected by Hunter are clear on the point that the paramount had the right to all tusks taken in Pondoland.² However, Fynn's contemporary account of an elephant hunt in the Ntusi subchiefdom suggests that the tusks went to the man who threw the first assegai.³ Bain was also able to trade for tusks with groups settled on the Mzimvubu without first consulting Faku. Alan Smith, who has argued that chiefly control of trade, and in particular the ivory trade, was a major factor in the process of centralisation that took place among the northern Nguni in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century asserts, on the basis of Fynn's evidence, that 'monopoly of

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1. Steedman, Wanderings, vol.I, 258; vol.II, 205.
 2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 95.
 3. Stuart and Malcolm, Diary of Henry Francis Fynn, 104.

trade may have been the crucial differentiating factor between the northern Nguni and the neighbouring groups', such as the Mpondo.¹

Fynn's experience cannot, however, necessarily be taken as proof that Faku did not control at least a substantial amount of the ivory trade. For the Ntusi subchiefdom was the only Mpondo group to remain on the eastern side of the Mzimvubu river during the 1820s where, secreted in the forests of Egosa and Mtambalala, its people lived more independently of Faku's control than those who were settled around his homestead.² Bain seems to have traded largely with groups well inland and he did so in 1829, at a time when Faku was only beginning to reconsolidate his power. Further, in addition to the traditions collected by Hunter which may, as in the case of those relating to small game, be misleading, there are other traditions which affirm that the paramount had some control of ivory. Many of the elephants in the area were concentrated inland and towards Natal, at some distance from the dense Mpondo settlements. These were the hunting lands of the 'Bushmen' and one tradition suggests that at least some 'Bushmen' groups were tributary to the paramount. When Faku began to make diplomatic overtures to the colonial government - the tradition probably refers to the 1830s - he called for his induna Diko and said:

Diko my son go and hunt elephants so that I may send government a present of ivory, perchance government will then hear my cry for help and send us aid. Diko assembled the Bushmen, who were employed by Faku as hunters in those days. He instructed them to go and kill elephants and bring the tusks. The Bushmen hunted elephants for a month and then returned bringing the

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1. 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, 1969), 183.
 2. Interview, Merriman Laqwela, Lusikisiki, 21.2.1977; Stuart and Malcolm, Diary of Henry Francis Fynn, 104-105.

tusks. They handed these to Diko saying "Diko here are your things". Diko placed the tusks at Faku's feet saying "my chief here are your things".¹

It is therefore possible that Faku was able to gain, or regain, control of ivory after Shaka's incursions into Pondoland. He certainly did have tusks available to give as gifts to the colonial and mission authorities.²

The key feature of the period of close settlement was the increased intensity of raiding, hunting and cultivation, activities that seem to have lent themselves to greater control from the centre in the particular circumstances faced by the Mpondo in the early nineteenth century. Faku and his chiefs were able to command a good deal of the product of their subjects' labour because of their control over resources and communal economic activities. The paramount probably played a leading role in interchiefdom exchange, even if he was not always able to assert his right to tusks which were only one of the items exchanged. The Mpondo did not become a military state modelled on the Zulu or offshoots from the Zulu kingdom. Faku does not seem to have been able to call on a standing army to work his fields and herd his cattle, and there are no records of military homesteads and female regiments. But the chiefdom was nevertheless more centralised, geographically and politically, than others in the Transkeian area. One observer noted that Faku's personal power was considerably greater than that of the Xhosa chiefs and he 'governed a people composed of fragments of many different tribes ... held together and harmonised in a surprising manner by his influence'.³

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1. Cape Archives, Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories (CA CMT), 3/959/6/11/2, F. Brownlee to Chief Magistrate, 4.8.1926.
 2. See, for example, WMMS, SA Box 7, J. Cameron to Secretaries, 24.5.1836.
 3. J. Backhouse, Narrative, 260; Steedman, Wanderings, vol.II, 270.

Very few colonial trade goods came into Pondoland at this time. The Mpondo did import metal products, such as knives and axes, although there were specialist craftsmen who smelted both iron and copper in the area.¹ Beads were accepted in trade, but were often exchanged again for cattle. It was above all cattle that were the most prized resources to be gained from trade and raiding for they were essential if the Mpondo were to revert to a pattern of subsistence and social reproduction that had probably been central to the society in the years before the Mfecane. Cattle were also necessary if they were to move back to their old settlements on the eastern side of the Mzimvubu and further inland, where the climate was not as suitable for intensive cultivation, given the tools at their disposal.

2: Production and the Material Basis of Chieftaincy; Dispersion and Decentralisation, 1838-1860.

Between about 1838 and 1844, the Mpondo gradually moved back to the eastern side of the Mzimvubu river.² Faku was spurred on by his desire to secure his claim to the land. In 1837, one group of trekkers, Dutch settlers who had left the Eastern Cape for the interior of southern Africa in protest against British rule, moved into the area of Natal, between the Zulu and Mpondo chiefdoms. They defeated Dingane, the Zulu paramount, in 1838, raided the Bhaca in 1840, and planned to remove

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1. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 100; WMMS, SA Box 20, T. Jenkins to Secretaries, 24.4.1867.
 2. D.G.L. Cragg, 'The Relations of the Amampondo and the Colonial Authorities 1830-1886 with Special Reference to the Role of the Wesleyan Missionaries', D. Phil., Oxford University, 1959, chapter 3, especially 44, 52 and 68.

those Africans who had returned to Natal in the preceding few years to the area of Eastern Pondoland. Faku was anxious to curtail trekker expansionism and, through the agency of the Methodist missionaries, approached the colonial government at the Cape for aid. Cape officials were receptive to his requests as they wished to forestall the complications that might arise from trekker dominance in Natal and, in addition, were keen to secure an ally to the rear of the Xhosa chiefdoms with whom they were in constant conflict. A colonial force was sent to Pondoland in 1843 where it camped before moving on to occupy and annex Natal. In 1844, a treaty was signed by Faku and the colonial Governor, one of a series between the Cape and independent chiefs, which recognised Faku's authority over the area between the Mtata and Mzimkulu rivers, the Drakensberg and the sea.¹ Faku promised to recognise other independent chiefs within the treaty state which was far larger than the area actually occupied by the Mpondo or controlled by the paramount. But Pondoland was to be secure from all 'claims and pretensions on the part of British subjects', including the trekkers of Natal.² Faku was given an annual allowance of £75, later £100, from the colonial treasury.

Eastern Pondoland was by no means devoid of population at this time; both the Bhaca and Xesibe were settled near the place which Faku had marked out for his own homesteads. These chiefdoms, which would not 'give room for the children of the paramount' were driven out: the Xesibe moved northwards towards the Insizwe mountains; the Bhaca, after being beaten in a major battle in 1846 in which Nchapayi lost his life, were pushed further inland beyond the confluence of the Tina and Mzimvubu rivers.³

1. Cragg, 'Amampondo', chapter 4.

2. F. Brownlee, Historical Records, 94.

3. Interview, Vulizibhaya, Bomvini Administrative Authority (AA), Lusikisiki, 10.2.1977; CA NA 623/1965, History of the Xesibe; PRO C.O. 179/2, passim, especially Garner to Moodie, 2.2.1847 and 14.2.1847, in West to Pottinger, 4.3.1847.

Many of the Bhaca cattle were taken by the Mpondo. Faku built his homesteads between twenty and thirty miles from the coast. The Mpondo subchiefdoms either drifted back to their old settlements or were placed at strategic points around the Great Place, called Qaukeni. After the defeat of Dingane, the removal of the trekker threat and the treaty of 1844, close settlement was no longer essential for defensive purposes, but it was still necessary to protect the Great Place.¹

Those of the large immigrant chiefdoms that were prepared to accept Faku's authority, such as the Cwera and imizizi, were settled on the outer reaches of Pondoland in the districts that became known as Tabankulu and Bizana. Their chiefs were allowed to maintain some of their independent powers. Many of the Mpondo subchiefdoms also retained their hereditary rulers, although they generally recognised the seniority of Faku's brothers and sons who were placed with their followers at some distance from Faku's own homestead.

While the bulk of the Mpondo people moved back to Eastern Pondoland, the area west of the Mzimvubu was not neglected. Some of the subchiefdoms which had been settled there prior to Shaka's raids, remained in the Mngazi and adjacent valleys.² In the mid-1840s, Faku sent Ndamase, his eldest son but not heir, back across the Mzimvubu as chief of the Nyanda house.³ According to tradition, succession to the paramountcy was usually reserved for the eldest son of the Great House, headed by a wife who was married late in life and whose bride-wealth was paid by the people. This rule of succession was by no means

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1. Interview, Nelson Sigcau, Mxopo AA, Flagstaff, 4.3.1977.
 2. Interview, Nex Xinwa, Gomolo AA, Port St. Johns, 27.2.1977;
Interview, Calvin Fono, Caguba AA, Port St. Johns, 26.2.1977.
 3. Following paragraph based on Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 17-21; District Record Book, Lusikisiki, tradition related by Maninha, ca.1927; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 379, 382-384; W.D. Hammond-Tooke papers, file 11-605, Correspondence on Sigcau vs. Sigcau, 1942.

absolute. Faku himself was not of the Great House and though his heir Mqikela was, Mqikela's successor was not. However, it does seem to have been rare for the eldest son of the first wife to succeed. Instead, the paramount usually placed this son, as well as minor sons, in new subchieftaincies under his authority. Not all sons became chiefs and the eldest son did not necessarily receive the largest subchieftaincy. But Ndamase had distinguished himself in battle over a long period and was, according to tradition, a powerful and popular man. After the move back to Eastern Pondoland, his followers clashed with those of Mqikela, the heir, and Faku arranged for Ndamase to become chief over all those already settled to the west of the Mzimvubu. Ndamase took his followers with him, and was accorded a good deal of independence, although he still recognised Faku as paramount. He soon expanded his authority over most of the area between the Mzimvubu and Mtata rivers, absorbing or driving out the non-Mpondo inhabitants. In about a decade after the move back to Eastern Pondoland, the Mpondo paramount had thus succeeded in regaining all the land he claimed both to the east and west of the Mzimvubu, and had occupied, or entrusted to tributaries, substantial new tracts, particularly away from the coast.

Expansion and dispersion were closely related to the reaccumulation of cattle. By 1861, a missionary complained that 'from the pastoral life which these people lead, the population of the country is a good deal scattered'.¹ Large homesteads, or groups of homesteads, were located, generally on the hill tops, at some distance from one another. The new settlements were nodes from which further movement took place stimulated largely, it seems, by the search for grazing land. In order to understand the nature of Mpondo society after the period of close settlement, and changes in the basis of chiefly power, it is essential

1. WMMS, Mason to Secretaries, 29.1.1861.

to come to grips with the nature of pastoralism. Unfortunately, this can only be done in general terms. Traditions collected and observations made at a later period must suffice in a reconstruction of the particular pattern of cattle-keeping that was practised in Pondoland.¹

It has been suggested that Faku and his leading men had been able to control a large number of the animals that came into Pondoland during the period of close settlement. They could not, however, maintain all their cattle in large herds around their homesteads. Cattle were grazed on the open veld and had no access to fodder besides the stubble left in the fields after reaping which provided some supplement during the dry winter months. Animals had therefore to be dispersed throughout the chiefdom, so that the dangers of overgrazing in any one area could be avoided. The necessity of dispersion could be met, to some extent, by a system of cattle posts and transhumance which enabled the cattle to be spread over the available grazing and water resources without a decentralisation in the ownership of stock. In the nineteenth century, if not before, the paramounts' cattle were taken to posts on the coastal plain at Lambasi, or to other suitable spots near the sea, during the winter.² The very high rainfall on the coasts of Eastern Pondoland - often over 50 inches a year - coupled with the availability of suitable grasses in this particular area, made for palatable grazing throughout the winter months.³ Stock were brought inland in the spring

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1. The following discussion is based largely on Poto, Ama-Mpondo; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest and oral material collected from interviews.
 2. CA NA 686/2609, Minutes of a Meeting held with Sigcau in Chief Magistrate to Secretary of Native Affairs, 3.3.1903; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 65; This practice was mentioned in many interviews: see, for example, interviews, Mgeyana, Msikaba AA, Lusikisiki, 14.1.1977, Elijah Mhatu, Xurana AA, Lusikisiki, 21.1.1977.
 3. Rainfall figures in the Lusikisiki and Port St. Johns District Record Books give averages of ca. 55 inches a year on the coast at St. Johns, and ca. 40 inches a year at Lusikisiki town, twenty-five miles inland and near the Great Place. These are calculated from observations in the twentieth century.

when the rains produced new grass, and were divided between the paramounts' various homesteads. Lambasi was reserved for grazing purposes - little or no settlement was allowed - and probably at that time, largely for the paramount chief.¹ Herders would be sent down to the coast for the duration of the winter months.

Despite Lambasi, it seems that the number of cattle kept in the personal herds of the leading chiefs was only a relatively small proportion of the total number of cattle in the chiefdom. In fact, systems of transhumance and cattle posts tended to be more developed in Sotho and Tswana chiefdoms where both political structures and the terrain were significantly different.² The predominant form of dispersion in Pondoland involved actual gifts or loans of cattle to individual homesteads. Much of Pondoland was broken and hilly, the land cut by streams and rivers draining from the uplands to the sea. Water was widely available and the geological formations, coupled with local variations in soil type, produced a variety of grasses within a relatively small area, a phenomenon which has been illustrated in Guy's work on Zululand.³ Each settlement could therefore depend largely in both the summer and winter months on the grazing in its immediate vicinity. The ecology of Pondoland was conducive to a system of cattle-keeping in which relatively small herds, kraaled at night and milked daily for household consumption, could be maintained at each homestead.

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1. CA CMT 3/50, Assistant Chief Magistrate to Chief Magistrate, 21.7.1898.
 2. B. Sansom, 'Traditional Economic Systems' in W.D. Hammond-Tooke (ed.), The Bantu Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa (London, 1974), 135-176.
 3. J.J. Guy, 'Cattle-Keeping in Zululand', Research Group on Cattle-Keeping in Africa, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1970 and 'Ecological Factors in the Rise of Shaka and the Zulu Kingdom', presented to Workshop on Production and Reproduction in the Zulu Kingdom, Pietermaritzburg, 1977; J.B. Daniel, 'A Geographical Study of pre-Shakan Zululand', South African Geographical Journal, 55, 1, 23-31.

While the nature of resources available to stock-keepers in Pondoland may have necessitated the decentralisation of holdings, the specific system of distribution should be located in the context of the political relationship between chiefs and people. Gifts and loans of stock were one way in which the chiefs could cement a following and no doubt took on added significance when the population began to disperse to areas where it was less immediately under chiefly control. It was, after all, no longer essential for individual homesteads to subject themselves to the chiefs in order to defend themselves against raiders. Although there were still a number of raiding 'Bushmen' groups settled on the upper part of the Mzimvubu valley in the 1840s and 1850s, they seem to have concentrated their energies on capturing stock from Natal.¹ The chiefdoms around Pondoland that had subsisted largely by raiding during the period of the Mfecane had either been defeated or had reverted to a more settled pastoral and agricultural life.

Gifts of cattle were usually made on specific occasions. Some of the animals captured in raids would be distributed by the paramount to leading chiefs and army commanders. They, in turn, would reward their followers; the criteria governing such distribution is not made clear in the available sources. Outright gifts were also given for special services to the chief, apparently at his discretion rather than as part of a uniform system of reward. The men nearest the paramount, members of the royal lineage, subchiefs and councillors probably benefitted most from his magnanimity and the councillors of the subchiefs would, in turn, attract their largesse. Cattle were slaughtered at the Great Place during ceremonial occasions such as the first fruits festival, or after military campaigns; meat, if not live cattle, would therefore be

1. J. Wright, Bushmen Raiders of the Drakensberg 1840-1870 (Pietermaritzburg, 1971).

distributed to a wide range of people in the chiefdom from time to time.

Loans of cattle to commoner households appear to have been more usual than outright gifts, and there were well established customs governing the system of loans.¹ Men from homesteads with insufficient stock would approach a chief and busa or request a certain number of animals. The ngoma (loaned) beasts, as they were called in Pondoland, would be taken to the homestead of the borrower who would supervise their grazing and have full rights to use them. After some time, the owner would reclaim his animals, but during the ceremony which was held, the increase would be divided up, some being given to the borrower outright. When a loan was taken from a senior chief - the right to loan was not, at least in later years, confined to chiefs - services, such as helping to build a cattle kraal, would usually have to be performed by the borrower. A loan could also give rise to a more permanent relationship of service, the borrower becoming an induna - the word could mean anything from a close adviser to a messenger or general dogsbody - at the Great Place. It seems that some immigrants entered into this type of relationship with the chiefs while establishing their own homesteads.

Although gifts and loans resulted in a gradual decentralisation of stockownership, for each homestead could acquire the nucleus of a herd which would increase naturally, the chiefs did have some control over labour in pastoral production. The system of loans enabled them to extract labour from commoner households which would be materialised in the portion of the increase reclaimed. The link between loans and services also gave the chiefs some access to the labour of commoners

1. Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 56; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 136-9; Discussion with M. Heathcote, Calvin Fono, F. Deyi (not on tape); Interview, Mgeyana.

in spheres other than herding for short periods. Further, various customary payments were made to the chief in stock.¹ A death duty (isizi) was levied on the homestead of each deceased male. It varied from one to ten head, depending on the seniority of the deceased, and was regarded by the paramount and the few other chiefs who had the right to levy it not only as an important source of revenue, but also as a means of identifying their immediate followers. Cattle came to the chiefs in the shape of fines for a variety of crimes against the state. Witchcraft beliefs, though of far wider importance than merely disguising the activities of acquisitive chiefs, did sanction the removal or 'eating up' of the stock in the homestead of the accused. These would then be taken directly to the Great Place. Immigrants were charged a fee of one head when they settled in Pondoland and cattle probably circulated back to the chiefs in marriage transactions as they could command higher lobola settlements for their daughters.

All these dues and payments enabled the chiefs to command a portion of the stock kept by commoner homesteads. They would, in turn, recirculate many of the animals in the ways described and also through bridewealth payments for their sons' wives. The chiefs' ability to extract stock was sanctioned by the dominant political and social ideas in the society, but the enforcement of chiefly rights probably depended ultimately on the loyalty of the indunas and the people. Loyalty and support were secured not least by generosity in the distribution of stock, especially to those who were actually responsible for the collection of dues and enforcing the decisions of the courts and the witchfinders.

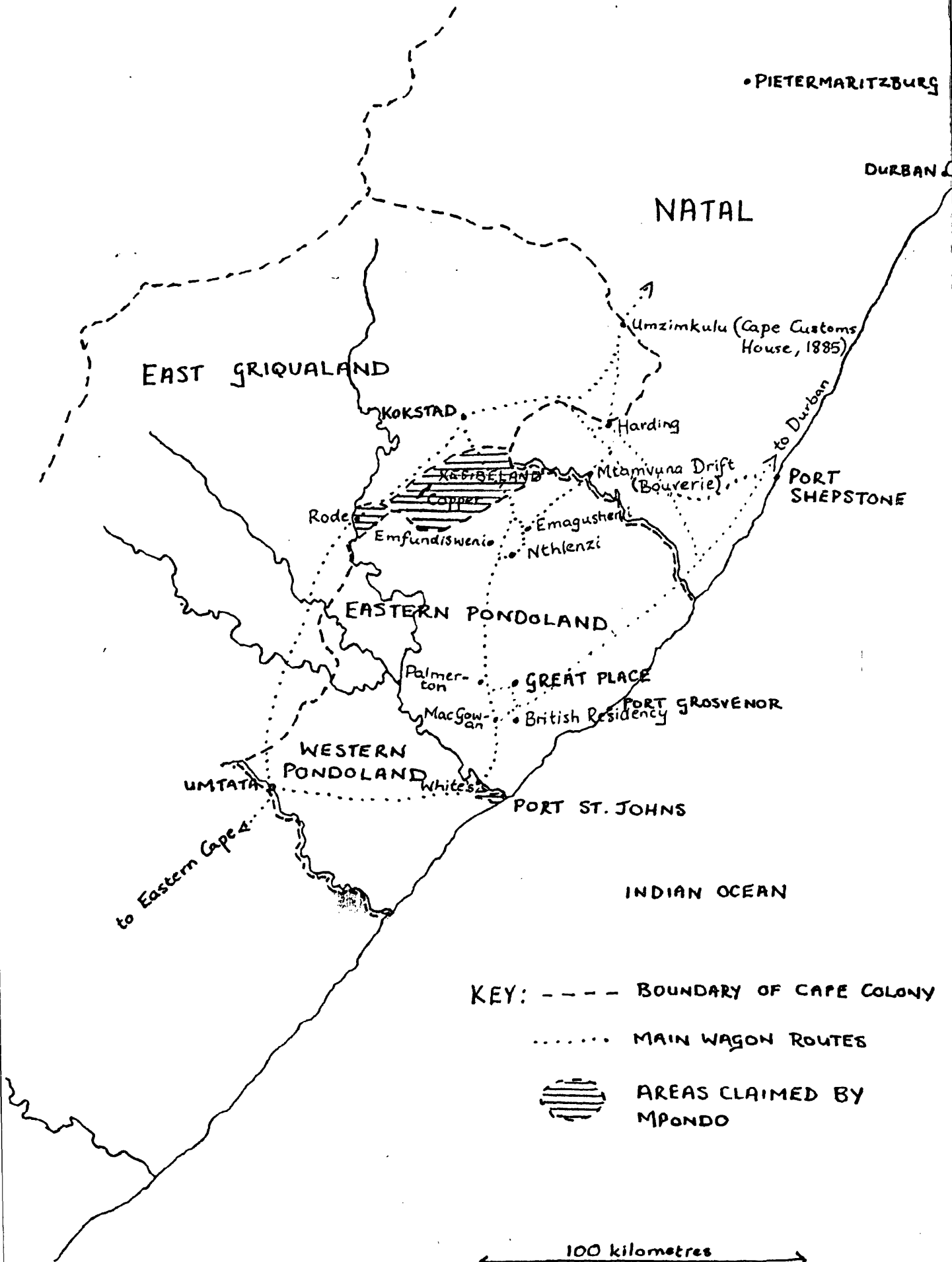
1. See Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 55; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 384-5 for a general list of payments. There are extensive discussions on the nature of tributary payments in the Archives. See chapter 2, section 4; chapter 5, section 2.

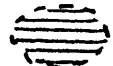
The reabsorption of cattle into the economy in the middle of the nineteenth century was accompanied by a decrease in the intensity of other productive activities. Although raiding continued, especially from Western Pondoland, there was a decline in the level of conflict in the area around the Mzimvubu from the 1840s. In 1867, Thomas Jenkins, the Methodist missionary, noted that 'this tribe has had comparative peace for thirty years past'.¹ Elephants were exterminated by the 1840s, and the inland parts of Eastern Pondoland were not as rich in small game as the coastal forests; it seems that the numbers of some wild species began to decline, as did the returns from hunting. Those who moved away from the rich alluvial soils and high rainfall of the coastal belt probably concentrated less on agriculture. Male labour was increasingly absorbed into pastoral activities for there was a taboo on the handling of stock by women.

The decline of hunting and raiding, which depended on marshalling large parties of men, and the dispersion of settlement, which weakened the paramount's ability to command communal labour in the fields, resulted in a gradual decentralisation of productive activities. Although the paramount was the largest stockowner, although he was able to extract cattle from the homesteads and, to some degree, control the circulation of cattle in the chiefdom, he was not able to establish direct control over labour in pastoral production. Many of the lesser chiefs could also hold courts, loan cattle, arrange witchcraft charges and even claim death and immigration dues, though they had never been able to command the cattle from raids, nor ivory. There was a gradual shift in the relationship between the paramount and lesser chiefs which

1. WMMS, Natal District, Minutes and Reports, 28.11.1867, Report of Emfundisweni Circuit, signed Thomas Jenkins.

MAP 2: PONDOLAND in the 1880s; TRADING STATIONS and WAGON ROUTES



KEY: - - - - BOUNDARY OF CAPE COLONY
 MAIN WAGON ROUTES
 AREAS CLAIMED BY MPONDO

100 kilometres

seems to have been directly related to the reabsorption of stock into the economy. Political authority was also decentralised, a process which became more marked as Faku entered his dotage in the mid-1860s and his son Mqikela took over the paramountcy.¹

3: Colonial Traders, the Cattle Trade and New Imports, 1860-1880

In the early phases of contact between the Mpondo and colonial traders, during the 1820s and 1830s, chiefly control over production does not seem to have been undermined. Indeed the paramountcy was at the height of its power for a decade or more after the ivory traders, such as Henry Fynn and Andrew Bain, visited the area. If Faku was able to claim the ivory taken in hunts in Pondoland, this trade probably bolstered his political power by providing him with cattle, beads and metal goods to distribute to his subjects. But his control over trade was, as has been suggested, rooted in his control over communal labour, and ivory was certainly not the critical element in the emergence of paramount power.² The chiefs were not, it has been argued, able to maintain so tight a control over labour in pastoralism, the most important economic activity by the 1850s and 1860s. Consequently, it will be suggested in the following two sections, chiefly control over trade diminished when Pondoland was more thoroughly penetrated by colonial traders after the 1860s.

Although Fynn established a temporary trading base near the Mzimvubu during the 1820s, there is no evidence to show that ivory attracted settled traders to Pondoland. After the ivory trade collapsed in the

1. See chapter 2, section 1.

2. Compare E. Terray, 'Long-distance Exchange and the Formation of the State', Economy and Society, 3,3,1974.

the late 1830s, the Mpondo had little to offer on colonial markets and their limited demand for colonial metal goods and beads could be satisfied by interchiefdom exchange, wagons passing from the Cape to Natal and sporadic visits by coasters to the river mouths. It was only from the late 1840s, when the White family and others started regular coastal shipping between Port Natal and the Mzimvubu mouth, in association with George Cato, a leading Natal merchant, that more permanent stations were established.¹ All the river mouths on the Transkeian seaboard were blocked by sand bars, but there was often a sufficient depth of water in the channels through the Mzimvubu bars to allow ships of shallow draught to pass. Further, the Mzimvubu was navigable to a point about ten miles upstream from the mouth. It was at this point that the traders began to build their stations, as the banks near the mouth were too precipitous for wagon traffic.

The traders initially exported skins, gum from mimosa trees and 'black ivory' - timber from the dense indigenous forests near the settlement.² The goods they imported went largely to the Methodist mission station at Palmerton, recently founded on the eastern side of the river. Thomas Jenkins, the missionary appointed to Pondoland in 1838, had moved across the river with Faku; he built his new station within easy reach of the Great Place and less than twenty miles from the spot at which the traders were to settle. Although there was no rapid growth of converts, Jenkins was given control of some land and a small community, largely of immigrants, began to collect around him. The people on the mission station, often from areas which had been more

1. WMMS, Jenkins papers, item 19, Shaw to Wesleyan Missionaries, 25.9.1847; A.F. Hattersley, The Natalians (Pietermaritzburg, 1940), 33; Cato papers, Killie Campbell Library, MS.1581 and MS.1557, H.F. Fynn to G. Cato, 11.7.1849.

2. Cato Papers, MS.1557, H.F. Fynn to G. Cato, 11.7.1849.

thoroughly penetrated by colonial traders, were more receptive to colonial goods than the Mpondo people around them.

Faku did not attempt to limit the activities of traders to providing goods for the mission stations: he had agreed that British traders should have access to the whole of his chiefdom in the treaty of 1844, a position confirmed in a separate agreement with Natal.¹ The demand for imports, particularly blankets and firearms, began to increase in the late 1850s, and by 1861 a visitor noted that there were 'four trading stations, inhabited by upwards of thirty Englishmen, some of whom were accompanied by their families', at the new settlement called Port St. Johns.² The hinterland of the port expanded rapidly. In the early 1860s, goods were being supplied to the second new Methodist mission station at Emfundisweni, over sixty miles from St. Johns, and to the recently established Griqua settlements in 'Nomansland' which were even further inland. However, the volume of trade through the port remained low, nor did it grow significantly after this initial spurt. In 1859, less than 1 per cent of Natal's total imports came from St. Johns and little more than 3 per cent of her exports were sent there; these percentages declined in the next two decades.³ The number of ships calling from Natal between 1857 and 1877 averaged four and never exceeded ten in any one year. (Table 1.) Trade through St. Johns was hampered by the bar at the river mouth, by the difficult wagon-routes from the coast to the interior of Pondoland, and by the high cost of shipping small loads from Port Natal. Furthermore, the nature of trade between Natal and Eastern Pondoland began to change dramatically in the 1860s.

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1. B.A. le Cordeur, 'Natal and the Transkei, to 1879', in Saunders and Derricourt (eds.), Beyond the Cape Frontier; WMMS, Jenkins papers, Item 81, Jenkins to Shaw, 21.8.1854.
 2. PRO C.O. 48/408, Report by Currie, March 1861.
 3. Calculation from figures in B.A. le Cordeur, 'The Relations between the Cape and Natal, 1846-1879', Archives Yearbook for South African History, 1965, vol.I, 244.

In 1866, Jenkins informed a visitor that the Mpondo had started to export cattle on a large scale.

Twentyfive years ago [he is reported to have said] not a cow or even a goat could be purchased at any price in all Pondoland. I knew a trader who came with a wagon load of goods for trade, and after spending five or six months, he bought an inferior lot of calves to the value of £7/10/- which the missionary had previously acquired for his own family use. Now thousands of cattle are bought and sent out of the country annually.¹

Pastoral products - hides and horns - began to be exported in some quantity at the same time. While these could be taken out through Port St. Johns - 3,840 hides left by this route in 1862 and at least 6,437 in 1863 - cattle had to be driven overland to Natal markets.² The export of cattle was accompanied by a proportionate increase in the amount of manufactured goods imported into Pondoland, most of which were brought in by traders on their return journeys overland. Though the volume of trade through Port St. Johns remained relatively static until the mid-1870s, the overland trade expanded rapidly.

The impetus behind the expansion of trade between Natal and Pondoland resulted from both a commercial boom and a high demand for stock in the colony. During the 1850s and early 1860s there was rapid commercial growth in Natal as credit from overseas sources, and from the growing number of local banks, became available.³ Natal merchants imported large quantities of goods direct from Britain and, as demand within the colony was limited, depended increasingly on markets which

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1. W. Taylor, Christian Adventures in South Africa (London 1867), 446.
 2. PRO C.O. 179/68, Table of Exports and Imports through St. Johns in Scott to Newcastle, 21.11.1863.
 3. B.J.T. Leverton, 'Government Finance and Political Development in Natal, 1843 to 1893', Ph.D., University of South Africa, 1968, Chapters II and III.

were further afield. Although the major thrust of their commercial activities was 'overberg', into the interior of South Africa, where wool and products of the hunt could be bought for export to metropolitan markets, some merchants also began to push goods north into Zululand and south into Pondoland. When the boom collapsed and overberg markets became uncertain in the mid-1860s, exports to Pondoland were, if anything, increased, for the merchants were left with a large amount of unsold goods on their hands. In 1867, one merchant supplied nearly £3,000 worth of goods to this unexploited area, considerably more than was being taken through Port St. Johns at the time.¹

All overland trade was dependent on ox-wagon transport - one source suggests that as many as 11,000 wagonloads left Port Natal for the interior in 1863 - and therefore created a large demand for draught animals.² British settlers on the coast of Natal were also experimenting with a variety of cash crops; when sugar farming proved successful from the late 1850s, demand for draught animals in cultivation also increased. At the same time, the supply of cattle within Natal was drastically reduced by the spread of lungsickness (bovine pleuropneumonia), introduced into the colony in the mid-1850s.³ The disease became endemic and not only were there substantial losses of stock, but stock farming became hazardous and settlers found it more profitable to invest in crops. Little wonder that Natal merchants began to look outside the colony for cattle.

Though the cattle to be found in Pondoland were untrained, they were regarded, once they had been broken in, as amongst the best draught

1. Killie Campbell Library, MS.6251, B. Greenacre to ?
9.4.1867.

2. Leverton, 'Government Finance', 104.

3. F. Algar, Handbook to the Colony of Natal: 1865 (London, 1865), 24; Leverton, 'Government Finance', 48.

and breeding animals, for they were bigger than the Zulu cattle and more suited to coastal conditions than those from the interior.¹ The profit that could be realised by traders who bartered for cattle, then trained them and sold them in Pietermaritzburg, provided a further incentive to the trade. Cattle which cost between thirty and sixty shillings worth of goods in Pondoland could be sold in Natal for between £4 and £6 cash.² Further, the cattle trade was not hampered by the lack of adequate roads into Pondoland for the animals could be driven direct over the veld. Hides, always in demand in metropolitan markets, were relatively light in relation to their value. A full wagon-load - between three and six thousand pounds weight - was worth from £60 to £120 in Natal, and sufficient profit could be made to justify the difficult overland trip to Pondoland.³ Stock farmers in Natal began to recover from the mid-1860s when lungsickness was controlled by inoculation, but the demand for Mpondo cattle did not decrease. They were still valued for crossing with imported breeds and as slaughter animals. When the Kimberley and Transvaal markets expanded rapidly in the 1870s, demand for draught oxen again soared; the Natal herds now began to suffer from a tick-borne disease known as redwater. The price of oxen in Natal rose, on occasion, to over £10 a head.⁴

The overland cattle trade was initially in the hands of itinerant European traders, sent and supplied by Natal merchants. But an increasing number found it necessary to establish permanent stations in Pondoland.

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1. Algar, Handbook, 23-24; Witwatersrand University, Church of the Province Library, A55, Reminiscences of Mr. R.T.A. James ('The Diary of Trader James').
 2. 'The Diary of Trader James'.
 3. For quantities that could be carried by wagon, see Cape, BBNA, G.27 - 1875, 89; Kaffrarian Watchman, 15.4.1876; Albany Museum SM 5424 (11), Gladwin scrapbook, 1878.
 4. For example, Natal Archives, Shepstone papers, H.C. Shepstone, Diary, 20.7.1873.

Cattle and hides came in sporadically and the traders had to be on the spot if they were to compete successfully. They needed access to grazing until such time as they could collect sufficient animals to justify the 150 mile trip back to Pietermaritzburg; hides had to be stored under cover once they had been salted, and tobacco, which became a significant export from the coastal parts of Pondoland, also had to be kept dry. One reporter estimated that there were, by 1876, already fifty to sixty trading stations in all Pondoland.¹ More than half of these were probably in Eastern Pondoland. The stations were scattered throughout the country, located near the homesteads of leading chiefs, near the mission stations, near areas of dense population, or at important points on the wagon-routes. Traders were given building sites and arable land by the chiefs, as well as access to grazing, in much the same way as a newly established homestead. Some of the traders continued to run their own wagons, but many became dependent on specialist transport riders, European, Coloured or African though not usually Mpondo. Itinerant European, African and 'coolie' traders still hawked goods and bartered cattle in the late 1870s, but the flow of goods and produce increasingly passed through the hands of settled traders.

The burgeoning of trade between Natal and Eastern Pondoland in the 1860s has also to be explained from the Mpondo point of view, particularly as they had been so loath to part with their stock and accept imported goods in earlier decades. Cattle exports were clearly predicated on a surplus of stock within the chiefdom as a whole. It is difficult to define the nature of internal needs for cattle served as a store of wealth as well as a source of food, a medium of exchange

1. Kaffrarian Watchman, 15.4.1876. This report and contemporary missionary and colonial sources provide details on the location of stations.

and as bridewealth. But the larger stockowners, at least, must have accumulated sufficient numbers to justify the exchange of stock for goods. Some shift in the patterns of circulation of stock within Pondoland, such as a general deflation of bridewealth payments or tributary dues, may have contributed to making more cattle available for export, but there is no specific evidence on this point. Further, Faku had been able to keep lung sickness at bay for some years. Guards were placed on the major wagon routes into Pondoland and colonial cattle were forbidden to pass.¹ Only in about 1863, some eight years after the disease appeared in Natal, did lung sickness break out in Mpondo herds.² Although losses were experienced and the disease remained endemic, it did not hamper the cattle trade in the longer term. Mqikela, Faku's successor, and the western Mpondo chief, took similar safeguards against redwater and the disease, which broke out in Pietermaritzburg in 1872, only entered Pondoland in the early 1880s.³

Given a constant death rate in the Mpondo herds, the number of hides available for export must have increased in proportion to the growth of the cattle population. The cattle and hide trades were complementary: when drought and diseases led to a decrease in cattle exports, the number of hides exported increased. It is interesting to note that the export of hides in any quantity started in the early

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1. WMMS, SA Box 24, Impey to Secretaries, 7.6.1858; WMMS, SA Box 19, Mason to Secretaries, 30.3.1860; WMMS, Jenkins papers, item 90, T. Shepstone to Jenkins, 18.7.1855; PRO C.O. 48/380, MacLean to Liddle, 15.6.1856 in Grey to Laboucher, 11.2.1857.
 2. WMMS, SA Box 19, Mason to Secretaries, 30.3.1863; WMMS, SA Box 20, Allsopp to Secretaries, 23.8.1865.
 3. WMMS, SA Box 21, T. Kirkby to Secretaries, 12.3.1873; WMMS, SA Box 22, J. Cameron to Boyce, 19.3.1875; Diary of H.C. Shepstone, 5.12.1871, 5.3.1872; Cape of Good Hope, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Disease among Cattle, known as Redwater, G.85 - 1883, 214, 215 and 218.

1860s, years in which both lungsickness and a serious drought were visited on Pondoland.¹

If the export of pastoral produce was made possible by a surplus of cattle and hides in the chiefdom, it was necessitated by the urgent and general desire for certain colonial trade goods. The Mpondo were selective about the goods they accepted from traders. Aside from beads, copper wire and trinkets, which were valued for decorative purposes, it was largely blankets, firearms, horses and metal products, such as agricultural implements, which they sought. Each of these filled an important gap in the Mpondo economy or provided advantages as against internally produced products, and the only way in which they could be acquired, at the time, was through the bartering of cattle.

While some imported textiles had come into Pondoland in the 1850s, it was only in the next decade that 'woollen or cotton blankets [were] to be found in every hut'.² Cotton blankets were relatively cheap, they could be exchanged for a hide which was worth about three shillings on Natal markets.³ Woollens, at from three to five times the price, were at first luxury goods, worn by the chiefs and wealthier men as an index of their status. In the years immediately after the Mfecane, the Mpondo had largely worn skins from wild animals and goats, but as cattle numbers increased, they probably reverted to hides for their clothing - these were worn in all the surrounding chiefdoms. It was a difficult and time-consuming task to dry and prepare hides, especially in the damp coastal areas. As an unprepared hide could be exchanged for a ready-to-wear blanket, the rapid adoption of imported textiles is

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1. For drought see WMMS, SA Box 19, Mason to Secretaries, 21.6.1861, 30.9.1861, 18.1.1862, 30.3.1863.
 2. Taylor, Christian Adventures, 446.
 3. Calculated from figures in PRO C.O. 179/68, Table of Exports and Imports in Scott to Newcastle, 21.11.1863.

understandable. Once blankets became the accepted article of dress, the internal demand for hides seems to have declined, making more available for export.

During the 1850s, and in some areas even before this time, the chiefdoms around Pondoland began to use horses and firearms for military purposes. It became essential for the Mpondo to arm themselves if they were to maintain their military pre-eminence. Jenkins reported, in 1856, that guns and horses had been captured in a raid, but raiding was an uncertain source of supply and the chiefs soon turned to the traders.¹ As the latter could make a large profit from the firearms trade - 'for a gun which costs the trader £5 to £6', a Cape official mentioned in 1861, 'he gets six large oxen at the very least worth £40' - they began to bring in weapons from the Cape and Natal.² The price soon dropped; European armies were shedding their old muzzle-loading rifles in favour of the more effective breech-loaders, and redundant guns flooded into the colonies. In the next few years, firearms therefore became general. A missionary watching a muster of the fighting forces at the Great Place in 1869 counted 478 men mounted and armed and 784 on foot with assegais and shields.³ This group was only a small part of the Mpondo forces, variously estimated at between ten and fifteen thousand at this time, and it cannot necessarily be assumed that 40 per cent of the fighting men in the chiefdom were armed. But a couple of years later, an official visiting from Natal saw a much larger group of 3,000 men of whom he

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1. WMMS, Jenkins papers, item 124, Jenkins to Maclean, 8.12.1856.
 2. PRO C.O. 48/407, Currie to Grey, 18.3.1861 in Grey to Newcastle, 13.4.1861.
 3. WMMS, SA Box 21, Allsopp to Secretaries, 9.2.1869.

estimated about half were on horseback, many of them with rifles.¹

In the 1870s, the Mpondo themselves started to switch from muzzle-loaders to breech-loaders. Again they were under pressure from surrounding chiefdoms who had begun to do so, and, more especially, from the colonial powers which were rapidly expanding their military and political presence in neighbouring areas. The tempo of the firearms trade increased in the late 1870s and by 1878, the Mpondo had 'guns much superior to any that they had previously possessed.'² As the surrounding chiefdoms were annexed, conquered, and threatened with disarmament under the terms of the Cape's Peace Preservation Act of 1878, a new source of supply became available. In the early 1880s, 'almost the whole of the breech-loading rifles formerly possessed by the Gcalekas, Tembus and Pondomise ... passed by exchange or barter into the hands of the Pondos'.³ However, the traders and gun-runners, who by this time were working illegally, still provided the most reliable source of supply and there are many reports of gun-running from Natal into Eastern Pondoland, 'where there was always a ready sale for arms and ammunition', at the time.⁴ Some suppliers went so far as to organise robberies of colonial magazines in order to satisfy demand.⁵ By the 1880s, Pondoland was the last independent chiefdom between the Cape and Natal and it became the area on which gun-runners concentrated their efforts. The traders also continued to bring in

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1. Diary of H.C. Shepstone, 26.3.1872.
 2. WMMS, Jenkins papers, item 169, Frere's memorandum, 1878.
 3. Cape, BBNA, G.33 - 1882, 69.
 4. Killie Campbell Library, MS.14,629, W. Clarke, 'How Natal Lost Pondoland' Nongqai, October 1924; Kokstad Advertiser, 25.8.1883, 3.11.1883, 14.4.1883.
 5. Cape, BBNA, G.8 - 1883, 205; Killie Campbell Library, MS.14,629, W.J. Clarke, 'How Natal Lost Pondoland'.

horses, as although they were locally bred after their initial introduction in the 1850s, they were susceptible to disease especially in the damper coastal parts of Pondoland and replacements had constantly to be imported. Horses were often more expensive than oxen and were used largely for military activities, and as riding animals for the men, but not for draught.

Imported agricultural implements became widespread in the 1860s, soon after the beginnings of the cattle trade.

The wooden spade was formerly the only instrument used in tilling the ground; but now, within a very recent period, a single house in Natal sold 20,000 hoes and picks to the Pondos, besides many ploughs and a few wagons.¹

Hoes and picks, at a couple of shillings apiece, were relatively inexpensive and quickly replaced the indigenous agricultural implements. Ploughs, at about £3 each - the usual exchange was a beast for a plough - were a more substantial investment and were adopted more gradually. In 1874, perhaps one in twenty homesteads had a plough and the Mpondo were still largely dependent on picks.² Yet five years later, the recently appointed British resident in Pondoland remarked on the rapid advance being made in cultivation.

A very noticeable change is taking place in the Pondo system of agriculture. The pick, which some twenty years ago superseded the old wooden spade, is now rapidly being displaced by the plough. Upwards of 500 new ploughs were brought into use by the Pondos for this season's planting.³

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1. W. Taylor, Christian Adventures, 446.
 2. Cape, BBNA, G.21 - 1875, 87, R.C. Smith to Orpen, 28.12.1874; Cape, BBNA, G.16 - 1876, 29.
 3. Cape, BBNA, G.13 - 1880, 167; Agnes M. Hutton, 'Pondoland: Her Cape and Natal Neighbours, 1878-1894', M.A. University of the Witwatersrand, 1935, 56.

There were, he thought, over 1,000 ploughs in Pondoland by 1879. Though many homesteads were unable or unwilling to make the transition immediately, the investment of surplus generated in the pastoral economy into cultivation became significant.

Ploughs were of little use before a further innovation had been made: the use of oxen as draught animals. Both Xhosa and Khoi had used individual oxen as pack and riding animals prior to the nineteenth century, but the technique does not seem to have spread to Pondoland.¹ The Mpondo certainly did not know how to break in and harness teams of oxen prior to the middle of the nineteenth century.² In 1856, some of Faku's sons specifically requested that a team of trained oxen accompany a gift of a wagon that was being made by the Cape government.³ While wagon teams had no doubt been seen in the possession of traders, missionaries and military expeditions prior to this time, these were probably among the first owned by African people in the area. Some oxen were available in the 1860s to replace colonial teams stopped at the border, but it was only in the next couple of decades that the techniques of training became more general, and lack of draught oxen may have initially hampered the use of ploughs.

Draught was not only essential for ploughing, it also opened the way for radical changes in the system of internal transport. Wagons were not generally adopted in Pondoland: they had to be made by specialist craftsmen, they were restricted to a limited number of routes in a broken environment and were too large for work around the homesteads

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1. M. Wilson, 'The Nguni People', 108-9.
 2. See, for example, interview, Ned Xinwa, Gomolo AA, Port St. Johns, 27.2.1977, in which he claims that the people in Western Pondoland were first taught how to use draught by Billy 'Somakwabe' or W. Strachan, a trader who arrived in the area in the 1850s.
 3. PRO C.O. 48/380, Maclean to Liddle, 16.6.1856 in Grey to Laboucher, 11.2.1857.

and fields. They also cost over £50; only transport riders, traders and a few of the wealthier chiefs and cultivators could afford such expenditure.¹ In fact, the expense of wagons helps to explain why large-scale trading remained in the hands of Europeans and specialist African transport riders. It was the sledge that, by and large, relieved women of their former role as porters carrying produce in pots and baskets on their heads. Sledges could be manufactured locally from forked tree trunks into which holes were drilled and wooden uprights inserted. They needed only two or four oxen to pull them, while a team of at least twelve was needed for a loaded wagon, and they could be taken into areas which were unsuitable for wagons. They were suitable for transporting small loads around the homesteads and the fields, for fetching timber, bringing in the harvest and even for longer journeys to the trading stations.

The adoption of new agricultural implements demands some explanation. Imported hoes and ploughs had been used by Africans in the Eastern Cape, Lesotho and Natal, as well as on mission stations in Pondoland, in earlier decades and it is unlikely that the Mpondo were unaware of their advantages. It can only be assumed that the natural environment in Pondoland was sufficiently favourable to render innovation unnecessary or that the lack of any produce with which to barter for implements prior to the 1860s had delayed their adoption. Conversely, the investment into implements took place when cattle became available for trade and at two specific points in time, the mid-1860s and late 1870s, when severe problems were encountered by producers in Pondoland.

Imported metal hoes and picks only marginally increased the area of land that could be cultivated by one homestead, but they enabled a

1. Diary of H.C. Shepstone, 12.11.1870, 28.4.1874 for wagon prices in early 1870s.

greater range of soils to be worked. As the Mpondo moved away from the fertile and damp coastal valleys to upland areas with a lower rainfall of between 25 and 35 inches a year, and as they found their pattern of settlement increasingly dictated by the imperatives of pastoralism, they probably became receptive to implements which had greater versatility than the old wooden spades.¹ The drought in the early 1860s probably hardened the ground and exacerbated the difficulties faced in breaking it up. Cattle losses suffered after the outbreak of lung-sickness may, at the same time, have necessitated increased crop production for subsistence. These factors alone were probably sufficient to stimulate innovation for there were certainly no colonial markets for grain grown in Pondoland at the time. Jenkins specifically mentioned in 1865 that 'there is no sale for it [maize] save in our own family and it will not pay traders as land carriage is too far and expensive!'.² Indeed, the value of a wagon load of maize on Natal markets was roughly £15, very much less than the value of a load of hides.

Investment into ploughs was in part a response to similar imperatives. The Transkeian area was subject to a regular cycle of drought every seven or eight years, though the seriousness of drought varied in each cycle. The Mpondo experienced severe drought in 1862 and 1863 and, two cycles later, in 1877, they again suffered badly.³ New technology was a means by which cultivation could be extended so that grain stores could be replenished. Loss of cattle during the redwater epidemic in the early

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1. In the twentieth century, average rainfall figures in the inland magisterial town of Flagstaff was around 35 inches, in Bizana, a little over 30 inches, and in Tabankulu, furthest from the coast, less than 30 inches. District Record Books, Flagstaff, Bizana and Tabankulu.
 2. WMMS, SA Box 20, Jenkins to Secretaries, 26.7.1865; Cape, BBNA, G.16 - 1876, 29.
 3. WMMS, SA Box 23, J. Cameron to Secretaries, 13.4.1877; Kaffrarian Watchman, 10.10.1877, 7.11.1877; PRO C.O. 48/485, Mrs. M. Jenkins to ?, 1.12.1877 in Frere to Hicks Beach, 22.5.1878.

1880s probably reinforced the transition, though at this stage it was still a minority of homesteads that used ploughs. Yet while the incidence of natural disasters may give some clue to the exact timing of innovation, a drought cannot explain the adoption of ploughs. The Mpondo had, after all, hesitated to import such implements in the early 1860s when, according to Jenkins, they were certainly available, as were the cattle with which to purchase them. A variety of structural, rather than cyclical, changes seem to have heralded the second phase of innovation in cultivation.

It has been suggested that hunting had diminished in importance as a source of food, especially in the upland areas, after the middle of the nineteenth century. The uplands were also poorer in the natural vegetation that provided the basis for gathering than the sub-tropical coastal belt, and inland settlements had no access to seafood which supplemented the diet of those settled near the coast. While there is little information on the precise areas in which innovation took place, it seems that people in the areas which offered greater possibilities for hunting and gathering were slower to change. As the growing season became shorter roughly in proportion to the distance from the coast, there must have been some pressure for inland communities to plant a greater area of land at one time. Yet the inlands were not unsuited to pastoral activities; the timing of innovation seems to relate directly to pressure on the pasturages.

Despite the export of cattle and the impact of new cattle diseases, cattle numbers appear to have increased in the decades following the dispersion of settlement; by 1876, at least fifteen years after regular exports began, the country was still 'swarming with cattle'.¹ The cattle trade did not necessitate any basic change in the organisation of

1. Kaffrarian Watchman, 15.4.1876.

production in Pondoland, but it is possible that the availability of markets for stock encouraged the Mpondo to breed animals more rapidly. At the same time, the borders around Pondoland had been fixed by the colonial powers and no further expansion of settlement was possible. During the 1870s and early 1880s, missionaries and officials felt that the aggression of some Mpondo border chiefs was a direct result of land shortage.¹ In 1883, Mqikela, the paramount, explicitly argued that the Mpondo economy was under pressure.

The population of Pondoland has during the last 20 years nearly doubled itself ... The sole subsistence [sic] of my people is the milk they get from their cattle and the corn they grow, it is therefore necessary that they should have sufficient land for their cattle to graze upon and [to] grow corn! Already the cattle (which have increased in proportion to the people) are dying from sickness, poverty, etc., owing to want of sufficient ground to graze on.²

His statement must be treated with caution for it was made during a dispute over land with the Cape Colony and worded by his secretaries. But he may have been expressing a very real concern about the future of the pastoral economy.

The evidence then, does indicate that pasture land was under pressure. An increase in cultivation would have allowed more intensive use of land. The late 1870s and early 1880s was also the period in which woolled sheep were first introduced into Pondoland.³ Africans in surrounding areas, particularly those nearer the Cape Colony, had already invested heavily in sheep and produced a considerable quantity

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1. Cragg 'Amampondo', 316-7; Cape, BBNA, G.21 - 1875, C. Brownlee, 'Brief History of the Natives'; Cape of Good Hope, Memorandum on the Pondo Settlement of 1886, G. 10 - 1887, 10.
 2. Rhodes House Library, Oxford, Aborigines Protection Society papers (APS), C. 149-103, Umquikela (sic) to Secretary, APS, 1.8.1883.
 3. Cape, BBNA, G.21 - 1875, 29; Cape, BBNA, G.8 - 1883, 167; Cape, BBNA, G.3 - 1884, 149.

of the wool which was exported through the Eastern Cape ports. But the introduction of sheep into Pondoland may have reflected not only an adaption to a system of production oriented towards colonial markets, but also an adaption necessitated by the nature of pasturage available. For sheep could be kept on land which was too steep, too bushy, or too thinly covered by grass for cattle. It was largely in the upland areas, parts of which were mountainous, that woolled sheep were adopted.

An increase in the human population during a period of pressure on pastoral resources may have hastened investment into agriculture. Population estimates in the nineteenth century are highly suspect, but if observations over a long period of time are put together they do suggest a build up of population in Pondoland in the decades following the Mfecane, which were, after all, characterised by a relatively low level of conflict. (Table 3.) Lastly, it is important to note that colonial markets for grain first became available to the Mpondo in the late 1870s. Settlements and military camps around the borders of Pondoland had sprung up following the extension of colonial rule over the surrounding chiefdoms by 1878. In 1880 the British resident in Pondoland could report that 'maize was usually exported in large quantities'.¹ Patterns of production and exchange in Pondoland were clearly undergoing significant changes and these trends were accelerated in the next couple of decades.

1. Cape, BBNA, G.13 - 1880, 162.

4: Trade, Production and the Making of Dependence, 1880-1894

Aside from the White family, and perhaps one or two others, most of the traders in Pondoland had, in the 1860s and 1870s, small establishments and carried not more than a couple of hundred pounds in goods at the outside. They were financed by credit from merchant houses and as they received little cash for their goods, they were dependent on collecting sufficient produce to clear their debts. It was difficult for such men, often in remote areas with no regular wagon traffic and posts, to keep in touch with their suppliers in Natal. It was also difficult for them to send on the relatively small quantities of produce they collected with any regularity, or to time deliveries to coincide with upswings in colonial produce prices. Their dilemma was partially eased by the appearance, around 1880, of middlemen who acted as bulk buyers of produce and wholesalers of goods in Pondoland itself.¹

None of the first wave of traders that had moved down to Pondoland in 1860s appear to have had the capital, connections or credit to make this transition. Indeed, the firm which emerged, in the early 1880s, as the leading wholesale merchants in Eastern Pondoland was started by two English brothers who had come to the southern border of Natal only a couple of years before. William and Josiah Pleydell Bouverie were attracted to the area, along with a number of other new traders, by a local boom which accompanied the establishment of an administrative presence in East Griqualand after 1878. White settlers flowed into the newly annexed territory and military forces were collected there to quell rebellions by the African population, patrol the Mpondo border, and

1. This and the following paragraphs are based on Cape Archives, O'Donnell papers (CA O'D), Accession 1403, especially volume 27, Letters Dispatched, May 1881 to January 1883 and 29, Letters Dispatched 1887-1892. Correspondence from intervening years is missing.

fight in the Sotho Gun war of 1881. While most traders moved to towns such as Kokstad in East Griqualand or Harding in southern Natal, the brothers quickly concentrated their efforts specifically on the expanding Pondoland trade. W.P. Bouverie established, or took over, a station at Umtamvuna Drift, where the major wagon route from Natal crossed into Pondoland. Directly financed by a London businessman, and liberally supplied by a Natal merchant house, the Bouveries were able to supply a number of stations in Eastern Pondoland. As early as 1881, they ordered at least £6,500 worth of goods which they distributed to traders especially on inland stations. They collected large quantities of cattle and hides from these traders for forwarding to Natal.

In about 1884, J.P. Bouverie joined forces with an Irish trader, M.H. O'Donnell, who had moved to Pondoland from Basutoland a couple of years before with a troop of horses to sell.¹ O'Donnell took over Emagusheni station at the fork of the major wagon route out of Pondoland to Kokstad on the one hand, and Natal, via Umtamvuna Drift, on the other. They acquired interests in surrounding stores but continued to act largely as wholesalers. By this time, the trade in Pondoland was sufficient to support other firms with a similar structure. Sidney Turner, who worked from Port St. Johns, owned a number of coastal stations and the Rethmans, whose interests straddled the coastal road from Natal into Pondoland, both began to rival, if not displace, O'Donnell and Bouverie. But as late as 1894, the year in which Pondoland was annexed to the Cape, the latter continued to hold an important, if not central position in the wholesale business of Eastern Pondoland.

1. Interview, B. Gallagher, Durban, 7.7.1976 (not on tape); District Record Book Flagstaff, 141, note signed F.W.W., June 1913.

While passing [wrote a visiting journalist] I looked in at the store kept at Emagusheni by Mr. M.H. O'Donnell and I was surprised to see such a very large establishment in Pondoland. It is stocked from top to bottom with goods for the Native trade ... The place on the whole is an emporium as extensive as any in the whole of the Transkeian Territories. I expressed my surprise to Mr. O'Donnell that he could not possibly require such large stocks, when he informed me that other traders bought from him, so the place may be regarded as a head centre establishment for nearly the whole of Pondoland.¹

It is important to establish the nature and extent of O'Donnell and Bouverie's business as records of the firm's operations have survived and these provide a basis for an analysis of trade in Pondoland during the next couple of decades.

The advent of wholesalers, it might be supposed, resulted in a decline in the price paid to African producers as these middlemen took a cut in the profits made on imports and exports. But there were other factors at play which offset this tendency. The wholesalers were situated at convenient points on the transport routes, they handled goods and produce in bulk and could usually make up a full load for transport riders. They were able to reduce the costs of transport, an important element in prices because of Pondoland's isolation. Further, they usually had a substantial quantity of produce on hand and could time their deliveries to Natal markets far more effectively, though even O'Donnell occasionally complained that he lacked information about prices. If O'Donnell and Bouverie had been able to secure a monopoly of the wholesale trade, as they came near to doing in the early 1880s, such advantages may not have been reflected in the prices paid to smaller traders and through them to the producers.² However, the arrival of other wholesalers in the 1880s resulted in aggressive competition, nowhere more marked than

1. Kokstad Advertiser, 25.4.1894.

2. See Chapter 2, section 1.

in the field of blankets. Blankets were, in terms of value, the most important single import. In 1890, the only year for which figures are available, O'Donnell alone imported over 25,000, at a cost of perhaps £4,000, which probably represented close on half, or even more, of his total import bill.¹ But during these years, he often complained to his Natal suppliers that other wholesalers were undercutting him.²

Competition within Pondoland was a reflection both of the difficulties facing Natal merchants from the mid-1880s and of competition between Cape and Natal merchants for markets.³ During the boom years of the late 1870s and early 1880s, a number of new merchant houses had been started in Natal. But by late 1882, international depression was beginning to make itself felt in the colony. Further, Natal merchants found they had been shut out of markets in the interior because of the Cape's success in establishing rail links to Kimberley and the increasing dependence of the Transvaal on trade routes through Delagoa Bay. Some Natal business houses were struggling for their survival and competition between them was deflected into areas such as Pondoland, where different houses backed the several wholesalers. At the same time, Cape merchants were attempting not only to monopolise trade with the interior but also capture the far less important East Griqualand and Pondoland markets from Natal. In 1885, the Cape made some impact on the East Griqualand market by building a customs house between Kokstad and Natal.⁴ Merchants also began to send substantial quantities of blankets, apparently cheaper than those forwarded through Natal, and of a quality preferred by the Mpondo, to wholesalers such as Turner.

1. CA O'D 6, no.2. Calculated from list of deliveries.

2. CA O'D, 29, O'Donnell to Randle Brothers and Hudson, 6.1.1889, 11.1.1890.

3. See especially, Colony of Natal, Report of the Trade Commission 1885-1886 (Pietermaritzburg, 1886).

4. See chapter 2, section 2.

Cattle and hides were still the key exports from Pondoland between 1880 and 1894. In general, cattle from Eastern Pondoland continued to be marketed in Natal, while those from Western Pondoland were exported through the newly established administrative and trading centre at Umtata to the Cape. Only in the early 1880s, years of depression in the colonies, did the trade temporarily fall off.¹ The Cape, anxious to prevent the spread of redwater, proclaimed a cordon around its borders in 1882 across which no cattle were allowed to pass. Western Pondoland traders found their outlets closed and Natal, still open to cattle from Pondoland, could absorb no more. Supply in Pondoland also seems to have diminished in these years, when redwater found its way into the country. Although the price of cattle on Natal markets seems to have fallen from the mid 1880s - cows and heifers fetched well below £5 although draught oxen could still sell for between £6 and £8 - the trade did recover.² O'Donnell's diaries give some indication of the quantity that was exported. Between 1886 and 1893, the only years for which figures can be calculated, he usually exported from five hundred to one thousand head annually. (Table 4.) He was, no doubt, the largest exporter, but other wholesalers, as well as smaller traders and itinerants, also participated in the trade. The total export from Eastern Pondoland was probably in the region of a couple of thousand a year, with a value, on colonial markets, of something over £10,000. The trade from Western Pondoland, though smaller, was not insignificant; during the first three months of redwater restrictions in 1883, traders in the area applied for permits to move between two and three hundred head to the Cape.³ In terms of

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1. Cape, BBNA, G.3 - 1884, 149; Cape, Redwater Enquiry, G.85 - 1883; Cape of Good Hope, Report of the Select Committee on the Redwater Disease, A.20 - 1889.
 2. Prices based on CA O'D 2 and 29.
 3. Cape, Redwater Enquiry, G.85 - 1883, 218.

value, hides were the next most important exports; prices remained fairly stable at between 4d. and 6d. a pound throughout the later nineteenth century. Judging from sporadic figures in O'Donnell's books, he alone exported over 5,000 annually and about double that amount in years of severe cattle losses in Pondoland, such as 1882. In ordinary years, roughly three quarters of the value of pastoral exports came from cattle, one quarter from hides.

From the early 1880s, there were regular exports of grain from Pondoland, although the trade in crops was insignificant compared to that in pastoral products.¹ At this stage, local traders still preferred to deal in cattle, which gave larger profits than grain.² Because of the expense of transport, the market for grain was initially restricted to the military bases, colonial towns and small magisterial seats around Pondoland. As early as 1883, however, maize was being taken out of Port St. Johns for sale in the major colonial ports.³ In 1885, a Natal merchant mentioned that grain grown in the midland and coastal parts of Pondoland reached markets in Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban through St. Johns and by the late 1880s and early 1890s, O'Donnell was exporting maize by this route as well as overland.⁴ Although the quantity exported probably increased gradually through these decades, as improved technology diffused through Pondoland, even the largest traders, such as O'Donnell, seldom handled more than about 500 bags - worth at most £250 - a year. In 1893, after a good year, O'Donnell stored only about 400 bags.⁵

1. CA O'D 27, passim; Cape, Blue Books 1880-1884.

2. CA O'D 27, W.P. Bouverie to R. Gladstone, 3.5.1882.

3. Cape, BBNA, G.3 - 1884, 149; CA O'D 27, Jenkins and Bouverie to Adler Bros., 27.6.1881.

4. Natal, Report of the Trade Commission, 74; CA O'D 29, passim.

5. CA O'D 7, list of grain in store.

In addition to grain, Mpondo tobacco was regularly marketed both in nearby towns such as Kokstad, where merchants and tobacconists frequently advertised the product along with imported brands and 'Boer tobacco', as well as further afield.¹ The evidence from O'Donnell's books suggests that he collected batches of about one thousand pounds weight, perhaps a couple of times a year, and then tried to market them in bulk to traders at something over a shilling a pound. As tobacco was light in relation to its value, trade was not restricted to wagon-owners. Producers and itinerant African traders could organise much of the trade themselves. During the 1880s, some wool began to flow out of Western Pondoland. (Wool exports from Eastern Pondoland were very small at the time.) O'Donnell and other traders also bought pigs, poultry, eggs and skins. The total value of non-pastoral produce sold to the traders probably increased significantly after 1880, but even in the early 1890s was a still very much smaller element in the Pondoland trade than cattle and hides.

Although the price of cattle and hides seems to have fallen in the late nineteenth century, and the Mpondo perhaps received slightly less for their animals and hides than in the 1860s and 1870s, there does not seem to have been a radical shift in the terms of trade. Competition between wholesalers kept the price of imported commodities relatively stable. But traders certainly imported a wider range of goods. The nature of these imports, coupled with the changes taking place in production in Pondoland, placed the African population in a position of increasing dependence. Once blankets had become socially acceptable as clothing, there was no reversion to hides and skins. Yet the Mpondo had never produced their own woven textiles, nor was the technique of weaving spread to the area. As imported blankets were relatively cheap,

1. CA O'D 27 and 29; Kokstad Advertiser, Advertisements, 1882-1893.

there was no stimulus for the growth of an indigenous craft industry; all clothing had to be bartered or bought from the trading stores. The same applied to agricultural implements which had become an integral part of the system of cultivation in many homesteads. It was essential to have access to iron hoes if cultivation in dryer areas was to be maintained, and ploughs were necessary if the area of land cultivated was to be extended. But there is no evidence to suggest that Mpondo smiths were able to fashion the metal parts of ploughs, to get adequate supplies of raw iron, or to compete with imported goods. Imported spirits, which were sold in considerable quantities during these decades, began to supplant local brews, certainly at the homesteads of the leading chiefs.¹ They also created a physical dependence.

Neither guns nor ammunition could be produced locally in any quantity. Even when muzzle-loaders predominated and bullets could be fashioned roughly from scrap-metal, gun-powder had to be imported. Breech-loaders, on the other hand, required cartridges of the correct dimensions if they were to be effective. The chiefs did make some attempts to reduce their dependence on outside sources for fire-power in the 1880s when gun-running became more dangerous and the threat of colonial intervention more immediate. Specialist European and Coloured gunsmiths who found their way to Pondoland were given sites on which to settle and soon found their skills in demand. One such family, the Dorkins, were settled near the Great Place as early as 1871; they not only repaired rifles but were able to make butts from local timber and even cast a few barrels from imported iron.² Colonial officials reported

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1. Gallagher papers, 1882-1884; WMS SA Box 20, Eva to Secretaries, 26.5.1864; Cape BBNA, G.33 - 1883, 65,214,219; G.6 - 1886, 61; T.R. Beattie, A Ride Through the Transkei (Kingwilliamstown, 1891).
 2. H.C. Shepstone, Diary, 22.1.1871; Interview, Girlie Carter, Mateko Trading Store, 11.2.1977.

that there were five centres in Pondoland at which gun power was mixed in substantial quantities and spent cartridges, taken from colonial rifle ranges, were brought into Pondoland for recycling.¹ But guns still had to be imported in large quantities, as did the actions to fit on locally made butts and barrels, and the raw material for powder.

In Pondoland, as in many other parts of the colonial world, the acceptance of cheap goods, mass produced in industrial society, tended to undermine local craft production and entrench dependence. In particular, smelting of iron and copper appears to have ceased by the middle of the nineteenth century and local pottery, though it declined more slowly, was gradually displaced by imported metal pots. These crafts were the province of specialists, but even activities generally performed by individual households, such as those connected with the preparation of hides and skins for shields, mats and clothing, lost ground. The argument must, however, be qualified. Even a brief consideration of the economy as a whole suggests that there was by no means an overall decline in craft production; while some crafts fell away, others replaced them. Though smelting ceased, and the demand for metal goods such as indigenous hoes and assegais declined, there were new demands on the smiths for bullets. Sledges were made locally, often by specialists, and the towing ropes for all ox-drawn implements were produced by stretching thongs cut from hides. When old trade beads were replaced by small decorative beads, the art of beadwork was developed by the women. On missions stations, construction work and especially thatching provided a new area for specialist activity for the old techniques of building and thatching were inadequate for the new square houses. It is therefore difficult to prove that the labour time expended in craft

1. CA NA 162, Oxland to SNA, 30.12.1881; CA NA 164, Scott to Under SNA, 12.3.1889; Cape, BBNA, G.13 - 1880, 164.

activity declined markedly. But new crafts were less central to the maintenance of independence from the colonial economy and often involved servicing or using commodities which could not be produced from scratch in Pondoland.

Not only did the new goods induce dependence and necessitate the continued production of an agricultural and pastoral surplus, they also intensified the process of economic change and economic decentralisation. While the chiefs, as the largest stockowners, were best able to participate in trade, there is no evidence to suggest that they could monopolise it. Traders had to obtain permission from the chief to settle, and from the 1870s every trader in the country had to pay an annual licence of £5 to the paramount and also make gifts to local chiefs in order to cement a friendly relationship.¹ But once the traders had become established, they appear to have been free to trade with individual homesteads. As has been suggested, the reversion to cattle-keeping in the middle of the nineteenth century led to a gradual decrease in control of economic activities from the centre and many homesteads had accumulated sufficient stock to engage in barter with the traders, independently of the chiefs.

Firearms came too late to regenerate hunting, though they did hasten the extinction of game, except in densest forests. They also came too late to be effective in raiding. Mqikela suffered a bad defeat at the hands of the Bhaca in 1867, probably as a result of the latter's superior firepower and defensive strategy.² Shortly before, in 1866, Natal had fixed its southern boundary at Mtamvuna and in 1872, the Cape

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1. Cape, BBNA, G.13 - 1880, 164; CA NA 161, Oxland to SNA, 18.12.1879. See Chapter 2, section 1.
 2. Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 16; W. Taylor, Christian Adventures, 385; A.D. Mdontswa, 'The Bhaca People', Unpublished typescript.

Colony demarcated the remaining boundaries of Pondoland at the line of effective occupation.¹ These boundaries were substantially confirmed when the Cape began to administer the chiefdoms around Pondoland in 1878. The Mpondo chiefs were extremely wary of provoking colonial intervention by violating them. Although some raids were made into colonial territories during times of political tension, and border sub-chiefs made occasional sorties without authority from the paramount, raiding ceased to be a means of winning stock. The paramount may still have organised hunts, and he certainly retained some, though not total, control over mobilisation. However, neither hunting nor raiding provided a significant source of revenue for the chieftaincy.

Declining control of productive activities from the centre was especially apparent in cultivation. The new agricultural technology, available to an increasing number of homesteads, enabled commoner families to produce sufficient independent of chiefs. The adoption of ploughs contributed to free homesteads from demands for tribute by the chiefs for the latter were not able to levy dues in grain as they did cattle. As more labour time was invested into cultivation, it seems that the chiefs' hold over the surplus produced in each homestead was weakened. Major chiefs could still call on surrounding homesteads to provide labour in their fields; they were probably among the first to purchase ploughs and had, in general, greater access to family labour. But their control over labour in cultivation was limited. As crops became a more important item for subsistence and trade, production in Pondoland was increasingly atomised to the level of the homestead. The plough, as much as control over human labour power, was now the key to

1. Cragg 'Amampondo' Chapter XI; C.C. Saunders, 'The Annexation of the Transkeian Territories (1872-1895) with Special Reference to British and Cape Policy', D. Phil., Oxford, 1972; Brownlee, Historical Records.

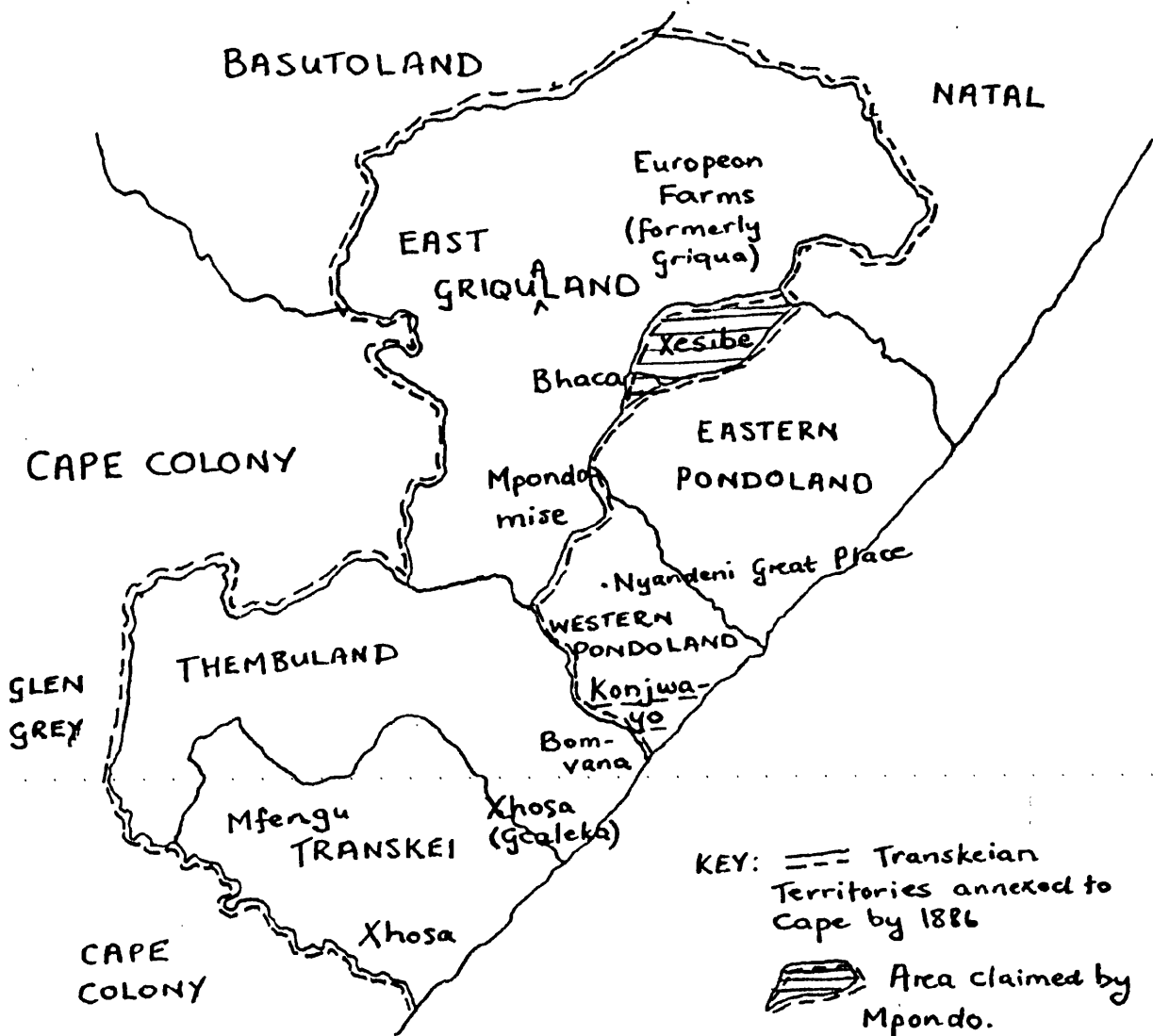
increased output.

Chiefs were still able to claim tribute in cattle in the late nineteenth century; they still received fines from court cases and bridewealth for their daughters. Yet most homesteads now traded a part of their pastoral produce and the chiefs could no longer command all the surplus generated in pastoral activities. It is possible that by arming their indunas, chiefs were able to increase their powers of coercion. But as firearms were widely available, their usefulness in putting pressure on the homesteads must have been limited. There are also suggestions in colonial sources that the incidence of witchcraft accusations in Pondoland increased in the years immediately prior to annexation.¹ While these rumours may have had some basis, for Pondoland was in crisis, their propagators were clearly trying to whip up colonial feeling against the chiefs in preparation for annexation and these reports cannot be taken at face value. The evidence suggests that the surplus from each homestead was increasingly oriented through the traders to the colonial economy rather than to the chiefs. At the same time, the chiefs themselves engaged in trade and had less to distribute to commoner households. The economic and social bonds which underwrote appropriation and redistribution of cattle in the society were loosened. Yet the chiefs were still the dominant political authority in the area and they did not respond to the changing economic position passively.

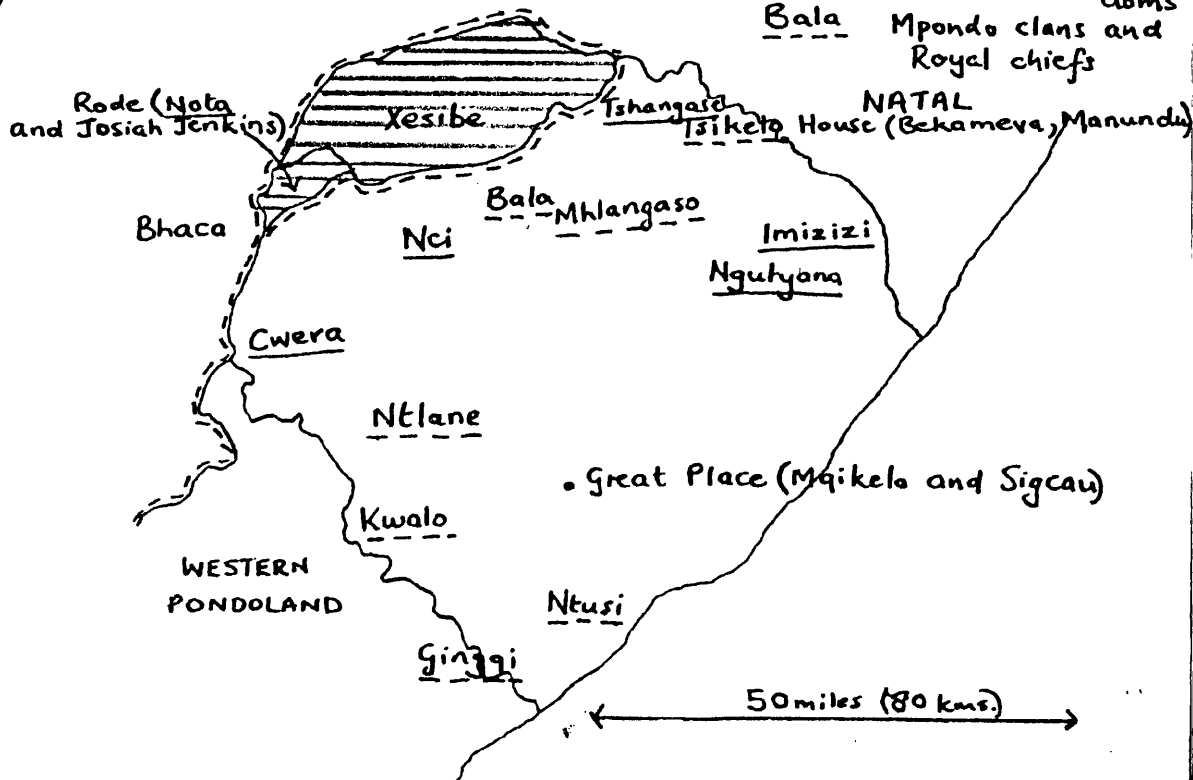
1. Kokstad Advertiser, 1892-1893, passim, especially 23.11.1892, 30.11.1892.

MAP 3: PONDOLAND in the 1880s ; LOCATION of CHIEFTAINCIES

(i) TRANSKEIAN TERRITORIES



(ii) EASTERN PONDOLAND



Cwera Immigrant Chiefdoms
Bala Mpondo clans and Royal chiefs

Chapter 2

THE POLITICS OF TRADE AND THE DEMISE OF THE MPONDO PARAMOUNTCY, 1878-1905

1: Chiefs and Traders, 1878-1883.

It has been suggested that when Mqikela acceded to the Mpondo paramountcy in 1867, the power of the paramount relative to the subchiefs was decreasing.¹ The population had dispersed, cattle had been reaccumulated, and the subchiefs were able to exact many of the same dues and fines as the paramount from their respective followers. In Western Pondoland, Ndamase acted with increasing independence as did his son, Nqwiliso, who succeeded in 1876. The latter became, in most respects, a paramount chief in his own right, and failed to consult Mqikela on issues of great importance when dealing with the colonial authorities.² Within Eastern Pondoland itself, Mqikela was unable to extend his personal control by placing out his sons as chiefs in strategic areas in the way Faku had done. This decline in political power at the centre did not escape the notice of colonial observers. The view of Mqikela which is diffused through their writings on Pondoland during his reign (1867-1887) is one of a weak, self-indulgent though amiable ruler, whose susceptibility to alcohol impaired his ability to control political affairs. They related his weakness to his personal incapacity rather than the structural changes taking place in Pondoland, and some had reason to exaggerate his ineptitude. But it is clear that Mqikela was never able to achieve the position of dominance held by Faku.

By the 1870s, there were perhaps twenty subchiefs of note in

1. See Chapter 1, Section 2.

2. See below in this Section.

Eastern Pondoland alone, some the brothers and sons of Faku or their descendents, some hereditary leaders of Mpondo subchiefdoms which claimed links with the paramount lineage well before Faku's time, and some at the head of the large immigrant groups which had come into Pondoland during Faku's reign. A rough idea of the relative size of these subchiefdoms can be gained from an assessment of Mpondo military strength, prepared for the British Colonial Office in 1878.¹ Out of an estimated 17,000 fighting men, something less than a third were immediate followers of chiefs of the royal (Nyawuza) lineage. The remaining two thirds of the army was made up of followers of other Mpondo chiefs, and immigrant chiefs, in roughly equal proportions. Mqikela himself was credited with 1,500 men, barely more than the number under each of the leading immigrant chiefs - those of the imizizi, Nci, and Cwera - and less than that under one of the Mpondo subchiefs. But this numerical breakdown, while it may help in forming a picture of the polity in the 1870s and 1880s, cannot in itself provide the basis for an assessment of the relative political power of the chiefs. The paramount's authority, although declining, was still recognised by most of the subchiefs. It was in his councils, composed both of members of the royal lineage and of other chiefs, that the most important decisions affecting the chiefdom as a whole were taken. And as will become clear, royal chiefs, if not Mqikela himself, still dominated the councils of the Great Place.

During Mqikela's reign, two other chiefs of the royal lineage, Bekameva and Mhlangaso, rose to prominence in Eastern Pondoland. Bekameva, head of Faku's Isikelo house, moved towards the Natal border, probably in the early 1870s, with a substantial following.² By this time, if not before, the Mpondo political system allowed for the emergence

1. PRO C.O. 48/485, enclosure 1 in Frere to Hicks Beach, 22.5.1878.

2. CA NA 161, Oxland to SNA, 8.12.1879; McLoughlin papers, Resident Magistrate, Lusikisiki to Chief Magistrate, 23.7.1925.

of a counterweight to the paramount in the shape of an isizinda (backbone) division, headed by one of the former paramount's eldest sons.¹ The isizinda was not only a military division, but its chief was accorded an important role in civil affairs; it was probably to him that many of the former paramount's councillors were attached. Bekameva appears to have been accepted as head of the isizinda in Mqikela's time and was recognised as the most senior chief after the paramount.

Mhlangaso did not have the same advantages of rank, although his father, Sitata, was one of Faku's sons by a minor house, and left his heir a considerable chiefdom, situated inland, near the Emfundisweni mission station. Jenkins, the missionary, had moved his headquarters from Palmerton to this station in 1862 and it remained the centre of Methodist activity after his death in 1868. For reasons which are not made clear in the sources, Mhlangaso had come under the missionary's influence and converted to Christianity in 1866.² The chief married by Christian rites in 1868 and refused to have his followers doctored during an army mobilisation in the next year. Mhlangaso's younger brother was given to Mary Jenkins, wife of the missionary, who brought the youth up at Emfundisweni and named him Josiah Jenkins. Between 1872 and 1874, Mhlangaso and Josiah attended the leading Eastern Cape mission school at Lovedale. They returned as the first literate Mpondo chiefs. Within a few years, Mhlangaso had become one of the most influential men at the Great Place, not least because of his ability to handle correspondence and interpret events outside Pondoland.

The absence of a focus of power at the centre of the Mpondo polity,

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1. Pote, Ama-Mpondo 53-54; Interview, J. Mgoduka, Ngobozana AA, Lusikisiki (not on tape). The translation of isizinda was provided by this informant.
 2. W. Taylor, Christian Adventures, 462; WMMS, SA Box 21, Eva to Boyce, 8.8.1868 and 10.2.1869; W.C. [William Coster] to Boyce, 13.2.1868; Allsopp to Boyce, 9.2.1869; WMMS, SA Box 19, J. Pilcher to Secretaries, 27.8.1862; J.W. MacQuarrie, The Reminiscences of Sir Walter Stanford, vol. II (Cape Town, 1962), 43.

coupled with colonial expansion into the areas around Pondoland, forced some of the lesser border chiefs into an ambivalent position.¹ Those whose relations with the paramount were strained, and those who were subject to raids from both sides of the colonial border, began to make overtures to the Cape for protection. Jojo, chief of the Xesibe, had never recognised the authority of the paramount, nor Mpondo claims to the land on which he was settled. In the 1870s, he constantly called on the colony for a magistrate. William Nota, a Hlubi petty chief, settled in the Rode valley on the upper Mzimvubu, followed his lead, and in 1877, Siyoyo, chief of the Cwera, switched his allegiance. There was open fighting between the imizizi on the Natal border and the paramount in the same year.²

While colonial expansion highlighted the divisions between the paramountcy and some of the border chiefs, it also provided a focus of unity for the majority of chiefs who had not burnt their boats with the paramount. Natal and, particularly, the Cape began to step up their demands on Mqikela once they had established their authority over the chiefdoms around Pondoland.³ They took a closer interest in disputes which arose on their new borders, placed pressure on the paramount to control those of his subchiefs who made sorties into colonial territory, and demanded the return of fugitives who escaped to Pondoland, sometimes with allegedly stolen property. The colonial governments also sought the right to survey the coast, lay telegraph lines through Mpondo territory, and purchase Port St Johns. Some officials talked of annexation. These demands were construed by the Mpondo chiefs, who had witnessed the process of colonial expansion, as a

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1. Cragg, 'Amampondo', Chapters XI and XII, especially, 359-362; F. Brownlee, Historical Records, 99-108; Cape of Good Hope, Return of Papers on Pondo Affairs, A.105-1880, passim.
 2. PRO C.O. 48/485, Blyth to Secretary of Native Affairs (SNA), 31.7.1877 and 10.12.1877 in Frere to Hicks Beach, 22.5.1878.
 3. Cragg, 'Amampondo', Chapters XI and XII.

challenge to their independence, and their response was hostile. A colonial takeover threatened the chiefs' continued political power and their very survival as chiefs. A loss of political power would, as a correspondent to a colonial newspaper implied, deprive Mqikela of his independent revenue both from his followers and from European traders.

From Europeans alone, it is said, the Pondo chief draws five hundred pounds yearly, and those that know average the number of cattle that go into the Great Kraal daily at five head - no mean revenue, lots would acknowledge, and therefore [it] would require a tempting bait to induce him to become a British subject.¹

The paramount, who alone could claim licence fees from all over the country, had the most to lose, but all the leading chiefs had similar interests at stake. Bekameva was thought by colonial officials to be particularly ill-disposed to the colonial powers and probably had a personal interest in harbouring fugitives from Natal, for they swelled his following.² Mhlangaso, although educated at a mission institution, had, by the late 1870s, lost any sympathy he may have had for the missionaries in Pondoland, who, after Jenkin's death, became increasingly identified with the colonies. He pinned his hopes for the future on building up his personal following and defending the chiefdom against colonial encroachments.

Despite their suspicions about colonial intentions, the Mpondo chiefs maintained a studied neutrality throughout the wars and revolts that broke out against colonial rule in the areas around them in 1877 and 1878. They were thought to be implicated with the Zulu, Griqua and Gcaleka when these chiefdoms prepared to fight against the colonial powers, and there is little doubt that they did maintain

1. Kaffrarian Watchman, 7.11.1877.

2. H.C. Shepstone, Diary, 10.1.1871, 31.1.1871, and 14.8.1871; PRO C.O. 48/485, Blyth to SNA, 2.6.1877 in Frere to Hicks Beach, 22.5.1878.

diplomatic contact with them.¹ Gcaleka cattle were, in fact, brought to Pondoland for safe-keeping and Sarili, the Gcaleka chief, escaped there for a short period. Some Griqua leaders sought refuge in Eastern Pondoland and Josiah Jenkins accompanied them back across the border with a mounted Mpondo commando. However, Mqikela denied that Jenkins had aggressive intentions. He was reluctant to reverse Faku's well established policy of avoiding direct conflict with the colonies. The Mpondo chiefs were well aware of the likely consequences of such conflict.

The new thrust of colonial expansion in the late 1870s, of which these revolts and the deterioration in relations between the Mpondo and the Cape were in part the result, must be rooted in the transformation of the colonies after the development of diamond mining, and the boom in commerce and railway building that accompanied it.² The imperial government responded to these changes by seeking to create a confederation in southern Africa under British hegemony which would absorb the independent South African Republic as well as a number of African states. Bartle Frere, who became Governor and High Commissioner at Cape Town in 1878 was an aggressive proponent of imperial expansion; in the same year, Gordon Sprigg, a representative of those Cape interests which favoured a similar policy, became

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1. F. Brownlee, Historical Records, 74; Cape of Good Hope, Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the East Griqualand Rebellion, G.58-1879; CA CMT 1/59, Diary of Operations of Transkei Column of 1878 in Pondoland; Kaffrarian Watchman, 7.11.1877.
 2. C.W. de Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor; Bundy, 'African Peasants and Economic Change'; C.C. Saunders, 'The Annexation of the Transkeian Territories (1872-1895) with special reference to British and Cape Policy', D. Phil., Oxford, 1972; A. Purkis, 'The Politics, Capital and Labour of Railway Building in the Cape Colony, 1870-1885', D. Phil., Oxford, 1978; A. Atmore and S. Marks, 'The Imperial Factor in South Africa in the Nineteenth Century; Towards a Reassessment' Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, III, 1974, 123-6.

Prime Minister of the Colony. For these men, whose attention was focussed on southern Africa as a whole, Pondoland was a peripheral issue. There was no great incentive for them to annex the area, and they were aware that any such step might provoke another costly war. However, they were intent on blocking access to the subcontinent by other external powers and on developing control over the ports along the southern African coastline. It was over such questions that they came into conflict with the Mpondo paramountcy. The chiefs could not control production in Pondoland, but they became increasingly aware of the revenue that could be raised from trade. Not only did Mqikela demand licence fees from the traders, he also took a levy, which had been imposed since Faku's time, of £15 on each ship calling at Port St. Johns. The paramountcy, as has been suggested, received a substantial cash income from such sources by the late 1870s, and was becoming increasingly dependent on its cash revenue. The changing nature both of the colonial states and the Mpondo paramountcy was to produce a conflict focussed primarily on the control of trade and tariffs.

Frere and Sprigg soon accepted the overtures of Jojo and Nota, although when a dispute arose over the latter's defection, he was induced to resubmit himself to Mqikela.¹ They also took decisive action over Port St Johns. Natal, whose merchants dominated the small coastal trade, had long ^{had} and its eye on the port. But Cape officials were concerned about their lack of control over the kind of goods being landed at St. Johns, a known point of entry for firearms which found their way both to the Mpondo and surrounding chiefdoms. Officials knew that the trade through the port was small, but because of the rebellions in the Transkeian area, Frere felt that colonial control should be imposed at once.

1. Cragg, 'Amampondo', Chapters X, XI, and XII; Le Cordeur, 'Relations between the Cape and Natal', 210 ff., Cape, Papers on Pondo Affairs, A.105-1880.

The customs duties, that could be levied by the Cape at the port provided an additional incentive. When Mqikela, not for the first time, refused to sell in 1878, Frere 'deposed' him and proceeded to purchase the critical area of land around the Mzimvubu mouth from Nqwiliso, chief of Western Pondoland, who was bent on a policy of co-operation with the colony. The paramount did not recognise the sale, but stopped short of interfering with the troops sent to occupy the port.

These colonial encroachments had serious repercussions for the paramountcy. The Cape's withdrawal of recognition made little immediate difference to the realities of political power in Pondoland, but it did hit the paramount's pocket for the colony stopped its annual payment of £100, made under the terms of the treaty of 1844. Further, in losing the port, the paramount forfeited the £15 levy on every ship calling, and also the licence fees of the traders settled there.¹ Only thirty-six ships had called in the ten years before 1877, but it was not merely the immediate loss of income that roused Mqikela's opposition (Table 2). For St Johns was thought to have a bright future and he had already refused £200 annually, with increments if shipping increased, offered by the Cape, in 1874.² Full control of the port was in any case necessary if the Mpondo were to be free to import guns and ammunition or to negotiate with foreign powers. While overland trade routes were far more important by the late 1870s, these all had to pass through colonial territory to colonial ports.

Xesibe territory, which had also been lost to the Cape, was

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1. PRO C.O. 48/485, Blyth to Littleton, 10.12.1877 in Frere to Hicks Beach, 22.5.1878; British Parliamentary Papers (BPP), Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Pondoland, C. 5022, 68. Mhlangaso claimed that Faku had received £20 from each ship, but most sources mention £15.
 2. Cragg, 'Amampondo', 331-333.

valued not only because it was considered part of Pondoland but because it was thought to have substantial deposits of copper. These had attracted the attention of Natal prospectors in the 1860s and in the next decade, Mqikela granted a concession on them to a firm from which he received an annual payment.¹ The minerals and payments were now lost; in one year the paramount had seen his cash income from tariffs, licences and concessions reduced by at least half. This must have come as a severe blow to Mqikela, particularly as his ability to extract tribute within the chiefdom was probably declining and his cash expenditure was increasing. He was trying to stock up on guns and ammunition. He needed a constant supply of liquor for his own consumption and to distribute to his councillors and followers. Manufactured commodities of all kinds were in use at the Great Place and the paramount was also having to finance for the first time, a salaried secretary.

The nature of diplomatic negotiations in the latter part of the nineteenth century made it necessary for the Mpondo to enter into an ever-increasing correspondence with the colonial governments and other interested groups. After the death of Jenkins some of his successors acted as scribes, but none stayed long enough to win the paramount's confidence. Cragg has suggested that the Methodist Missionary Society was to some extent responsible for the deterioration in relations between the Cape and the Mpondo, as they refused to keep a senior missionary in Pondoland who could take over Jenkins's role.² The failure of the missionaries to influence Mpondo policy along lines more congenial to the colonial powers was probably as much the result of new tensions

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1. A. Hattersley, Later Annals of Natal (London, 1938), 23ff.; Cragg, 'Amampondo', 388; C.H. Tredgold and W.P. Buchanan, Decisions of the Supreme Court, Cape of Good Hope, XII (1895), Cook Brothers vs. the Colonial Government.
 2. Cragg, 'Amampondo', Chapter XI.

as the cause, but the eclipse of the missionary/secretary in Pondoland did leave a vacuum at the Great Place which had to be filled. In about 1877, Mqikela chose to employ an independent secretary named Johnson, a literate Coloured man, who had already made his home in Pondoland and had become a polygamist.¹

Whereas Jenkins had sufficient standing in both colonial and Mpondo eyes to act as a go-between, there was no longer, in a polarised situation, anyone who could fulfil this role. Frere therefore appointed a British Resident in Pondoland in 1878, the first since a disastrous attempt in the 1850s, so that he could be kept in direct touch with political developments.² The man chosen was J. Oxley Oxland, who had replaced Bishop Callaway at the new, but unsuccessful, Anglican mission established near the Great Place in 1876.³ Oxland's close relationship with the Cape Colony and his belief in annexationist policies made his position difficult from the start, and Mqikela accepted his presence reluctantly. But feeling against Oxland and the Cape government was also fuelled by other European interests in Pondoland. Though the new Methodist missionaries had lost influence, Mary Jenkins remained in close touch with the paramount and played an important role as

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1. PRO C.O. 48/485, Blyth to Littleton, 10.12.1877 in Frere to Hicks Beach, 22.5.1878; Albany Museum, SM 5424(11), Gladwin Scrapbook, cutting from Kaffrarian Watchman, 1878; Kokstad Advertiser, 12.7.1884.
 2. For attempts to maintain a resident in Pondoland in the 1850s, see Cragg, 'Amampondo', Chapter VII.
 3. For the founding of the Anglican Mission see G. Callaway, Pioneers in Pondoland (Lovedale, 1939); M.S. Benham, Henry Callaway, First Bishop of Kaffraria; his Life-History and Work (London, 1896); United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Archives, D44 and Annual Reports, 194, 195, 208, 209.

hostess at meetings between the Mpondo and visiting colonial officials.¹ She was in favour of peaceful relations but had become an ardent supporter of Mpondo independence and made her views on Port St Johns and Xesibeland known to Frere in forceful terms. She and the group around her had been sufficiently annoyed when Callaway, with colonial backing, had attempted to breach the Methodist domination of the mission field in Pondoland. They were even less happy about the appointment of Oxland and did their best to isolate him. He, in turn, sought to discredit local Europeans in colonial eyes.

There was an added strand of interest underlying the conflict. Mary Jenkins was daughter of A.S. White, one of the early traders and shippers of St Johns. Although White's family had withdrawn from shipping, they retained stores in the vicinity of the port and Palmerton mission.² They were now faced with the prospect of having to pay Cape duties on the goods which they imported. These were very much higher than the paramount's levy of £15 on each ship; in 1881, for example, Cape duties on cargo boats calling at St Johns averaged about £97 a load.³ White Bros. was also the firm which had, no doubt through their political influence, secured the concession on the copper in Xesibe territory.⁴ They had paid their concession money, yet they had no guarantee that the Cape would recognise their claim. It suited the Whites better for Port St Johns and Xesibe territory to remain under Mpondo control and, by implication, for the Mpondo to remain independent. Another trader, named Boshoff, who held the station at Fort William, Nthlenzi, near to Mhlangaso's homestead, had apparently

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1. Cragg, 'Amampondo', 302ff; CA NA 161, Oxland to Ayliff, 25.10.1879.
 2. Cragg, 'Amampondo', 355; Gladwin scrapbook, cutting from Kaffrarian Watchman, 1878.
 3. Calculated from figures in Cape, BBNA, G.33-1882.
 4. Tredgold and Buchanan, Decisions, XII (1895), Cook Brothers vs. the Colonial Government.

obtained a concession on a large area of land in Xesibe territory.¹ The paramount and some local traders had important interests in common.

The strategy which emerged out of this alliance was an attempt by the paramount to bypass both the British resident and the Cape government and to appeal directly to the imperial authorities in the hope that they would overrule Frere and the Cape ministry. In 1880, a collection of cattle was started to raise funds for a Mpondo deputation.² The Mpondo also mobilised their army on the Xesibe border when raiding escalated in the same year. But these initiatives soon collapsed. The Cape did not take fright at the Mpondo armies and although many cattle were collected, the deputation did not leave Pondoland. Mary Jenkins died in 1880 and the Whites seem to have lost their access to the paramountcy. They continued their battle alone in the Cape Supreme court where they contested the Cape's right to levy duties and later, sued for recognition of their concession. Their worst fears were well founded, for they lost both cases. Frere's dismissal in 1880 for his excesses in Zululand and elsewhere seems to have been greeted by a more conciliatory policy on the part of the Mpondo. However, Frere's period of office served to activate an alliance between the paramount and local traders in the struggle for Mpondo independence.

The alliance between chiefs and traders was underpinned by the fire-arms trade. While the chiefs knew that they could not win a war against the colony, especially after the events of 1877-8, they also knew that if the Mpondo armed themselves fully, there would at least be some deterrent against Cape intervention. Firearms were an essential prerequisite if they were to have the chance of pursuing diplomatic initiatives; they also

1. C.P. Brownlee, Reminiscences of Kafir Life and History (Lovedale, 1916), 118-119.

2. Cape, BBNA, G.13-1882, 69.

enabled the Mpondo to prevent raids from chiefdoms within the colonial boundaries. Traders were needed to organise supplies and those that did participate in the trade were welcomed in Pondoland.

The Pondo naturally looks upon the man who brings him a gun as a friend, [admitted an official in 1883] and it is evident that anyone, whether criminal or not, who can mend a gun or make ammunition is safe in Pondoland....

The firearms trade could bring large profits for those who were prepared to take the risks, but Pondoland had to remain independent under chiefs if demand was to be sustained.

By the early 1880s, Mhlangaso had taken over the position as leading councillor at the Great Place and directed diplomatic strategy. In 1881, he recruited H. Wellesley Welborne, who had been introduced to him by the trader Boshoff, as diplomatic agent.² Welborne did get to London in lieu of a deputation but not before he had become embroiled in a complex series of disputes with both chiefs and traders which left him discredited.³ He was replaced by Hamilton MacNicholas, formerly his assistant, who came into the service of the paramountcy in 1882, again through the agency of Mhlangaso. MacNicholas had served in the Cape or Natal Mounted Rifles before he settled in Pondoland to try his hand at trading. He leased the station at Nthlenzi, still owned by Boshoff, and, as it was close to Mhlangaso's homestead, he was soon in contact with the chief.⁴ His business was a failure and by 1882 he had run up a debt with his suppliers, none other than the Bouveries of Mtamvuna Drift.

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1. Cape, BBNA; G.8-1883, 23.
 2. Cragg, 'Amampondo', 377; J.W. MacQuarrie, The Reminiscences of Sir Walter Stanford, vol I (Cape Town, 1958), 198 vol II, 24.
 3. Kokstad Advertiser, 22.7.1882, 26.5.1883, November and December, 1885.
 4. CA O'D 27, J.P. Bouverie to MacNicholas 11.5.1882, and passim; CA NA 163, Oxland to SNA, 16.11.1883; Gallagher papers, 1882 and 1883.

The Bouveries themselves had not neglected to establish friendly relations with the chiefs around their stations. The store at Mtamvuna Drift was close to Bekameva's main homestead and a number of the stations supplied by them were in the area of Mhlangaso's chiefdom. In fact when they first arrived in Pondoland, they had started a trading partnership with a certain J. Jenkins who was possibly Josiah Jenkins, brother to Mhlangaso. If Josiah did go into trading, he was the only Mpondo chief to have done so. But in 1882, the partnership was dissolved, for reasons that are unclear.¹ It need hardly be added that O'Donnell, the man who took Jenkins's place as partner to J.P. Bouverie, also cut his teeth in the Pondoland trade at Nthlenzi before he bought Emagusheni Store in about 1884.² As Mhlangaso rose to political pre-eminence in Pondoland, the Bouveries and their friends were in a good position to seek influence at the Great Place and it is possible that they were partly responsible for Welborne's dismissal and MacNicholas's placement.

The Bouveries had good reason to become involved in politics at the Great Place. Though they had no immediate interest in Xesibeland, nor Port St Johns - they were largely engaged in overland trade - they were threatened by the controls and tariffs that would have accompanied colonial rule. Further, in 1882 they were faced with a crisis, brought on both by the impending depression in colonial trading, by the collapse in the local East Griqualand boom and by the difficulties facing the Mpondo cattle trade in that year. They found that they had ordered far too many goods and with the recession biting, their suppliers in Durban demanded payment in produce.³ The Bouveries, in turn, tried to tighten the

1. CA O'D 27, W.P. Bouverie to R.S. Gladstone, 4.8.1882.

2. Gallagher papers, 1882-3.

3. CA O'D 27, Bouverie to Adler, 13.3.1882, Jenkins and Bouverie to Gladstone, 15.3.1882, 12.4.1882 and passim; Kokstad Advertiser, 10.3.1883.

screws on the smaller traders in Pondoland to whom they had forwarded goods, but the latter were in similar difficulties. Their agent in London advised them to withdraw from Pondoland as their debts were beginning to build up. They stayed, partly because the situation seemed as bad in other parts of southern Africa and partly because they hoped matters would improve.

If war breaks out with the Pondos [so W.P. Bouverie wrote to London] which I am sure it will do before two years are over, this would be the spot to make money, as naturally troops, volunteers etc. would be stationed here, and of course, lots of money is to be spent at this place.¹

There is no evidence to suggest that the Bouveries actually sought to precipitate a war between the Mpondo and the colony. However, they certainly took up Mpondo grievances wholeheartedly and advocated an aggressive line towards the Cape. Bad relations, it should be noted, did wonders for the firearms trade, and if they themselves were not involved O'Donnell almost certainly was. In 1883, he came before a court in Pietermaritzburg charged with complicity in a robbery of the Pietermaritzburg magazine.² He was eventually acquitted, but it seems that the guns had been taken to feed the Pondoland trade and some found their way across the border. Oxland, the British resident, was of the opinion that 'O'Donnell's house in Pondoland is the headquarters of a gang of Europeans engaged in gunrunning, fomenting strife between us and the Pondos and in supplying liquor to the natives'.³ Although he disliked this group of traders even more than Mrs. Jenkins and can hardly be considered a neutral source, his assessment does appear to have been correct on this occasion. The Bouveries, O'Donnell and MacNicholas kept in close touch over the next couple of years.

1. CA O'D 27, W.P. Bouverie to Gladstone, 28.8.1882.

2. Kokstad Advertiser, 18.8.1883 and following months, passim.

3. CA NA 163, Oxland to SNA, 30.10.1883.

It was not purely the hope of conflict and the firearms trade that led the group to intervene in Mpondo politics. Much of their trade was in more orthodox lines and they sought to increase their share of the market at the expense of other traders. One report suggests that the paramount had experimented with granting a monopoly to a single trading firm in the 1870s, but there is little information on this episode and in any case this policy had been jettisoned by the 1880s.¹ But if influence at the Great Place could not win a monopoly, it could at least give direct access to the leading chiefs who were the largest cattle owners and the largest spenders on guns, liquor and a whole range of imports. The paramount still had, aside from enormous herds, a substantial cash income, despite colonial encroachments. Revenue from licences issued to traders, woodcutters and hawkers amounted to over £400 in 1884, the only year for which a figure is available.² MacNicholas was not only in receipt of a salary, but handled a good deal of the cash at the Great Place personally. Chiefly largesse, in the shape of land for trading stations, cattle and orders could all come the way of men who were well liked at the Great Place.

1. Cape, BBNA, G.13-1880, 164.

2. Gallagher papers, MacNicholas to Bouverie, 12.1.1884. For details on Pondoland licence rates see CA NA 163, Whindus to Undersecretary of Native Affairs, 24.12.1885 and enclosure.

It was also important for traders in Pondoland to have protection from the chiefs. The paramount controlled the issue of licences and could make life difficult for unpopular traders. If subchiefs raided stores or hampered activities of particular traders, it was only from the paramount that redress could be sought. His response would depend both on his ability and his desire to discipline the chief. In October 1883, the Kokstad Advertiser, which was launched in the previous year and carried regular reports on Pondoland, received information from a correspondent about a meeting planned by European traders in Pondoland with a view to forming a 'Mutual Traders Protection Society'.¹ The paramount, according to this report, was unsympathetic.

He informed the traders that they were Pondos and no longer Englishmen when they resided in his territory, and that they would have to obey his authority and obtain his permission for the framing of any regulations which they wished to put in force for their own welfare.²

In the correspondence which followed, some traders denied that the chief had interfered and asserted that the 'affair fell through simply on account of the bad feeling that exists among traders in Pondoland who, to use a common saying, are cutting one anothers' throats'.³ But, whatever the reason for the original report, it seems to have had some foundation, for within a couple of weeks Mhlangaso and MacNicholas authored a proclamation, published in the Kokstad Advertiser, which confirmed that traders only had the right to occupy sites with the permission of the paramount.⁴ They stipulated that the property of any European who left Pondoland, except on business, would be confiscated.

1. Kokstad Advertiser, 6.10.1883, 20.10.1883, 3.11.1883.

2. Kokstad Advertiser, 6.10.1883.

3. Kokstad Advertiser, 20.10.1883.

4. Kokstad Advertiser, 3.11.1883 and 10.11.1883.

The implications of this proclamation were clear to those firms which did not have a secure footing at the Gréat Place.

We respectfully beg to draw your attention to this [a worried Port St Johns trader wrote to Oxland] for should the present intrigues which are carried on in Pondoland lead to a 'war scare' our servants trading for us in the country would no doubt immediately abandon our property and leave the country, and then we, according to this proclamation, would lose all our property, although there might not be war. We think this extremely unfair on the part of the chief.....

The Bouveries and their friends, on the other hand, were protected in war and peace and could only gain by the difficulties being made for other members of the trading community. While their tactics did not bring radical results, for there was no immediate war, the Bouveries were in any case able to secure a good deal of the trade in Pondoland, and pull themselves through the trading depression.

2: The Mpondo Diplomatic Offensive and the Colonial Response, 1883-1886.

Colonial officials such as Oxland viewed the whole of Mpondo diplomacy as an intrigue cooked up by Mhlangaso and his villainous white advisers.² The chiefs were, however, still the dominant party in the alliance and their strategy, while shaped and aided by the Bouverie group, was in no sense limited by the interests of one faction of traders. The advantage of having European supporters independent of the Colony was that, aside from their trading and secretarial activities, they could assist, where missionaries and others more sympathetic to colonial interests would not, in further appeals to the imperial authorities and more direct action against the Cape. In 1881, a less expansionist

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1. CA NA 163, Anderton Bros. to Oxland, 15.11.1883 in Oxland to SNA, 22.11.1883.
 2. Cragg, 'Amampondo', 347; Aborigines Protection Society archives (APS), G.10, Chesson to Derby, 26.4.1884; CA NA 163, Oxland to SNA, 16.11.1883; BPP, Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Pondoland, C. 4590 (1885), 4.

ministry had come to power in the Cape in alliance with the Afrikaner Bond.¹ By 1883, Thomas Scanlen, the Prime Minister, took steps to disannex Basutoland and, because of the expense of 'native wars and administration' during a time of 'depression, was disposed to hand over the Transkeian Territories to Britain as well. Although Scanlen refused to negotiate over Port St Johns and Xesibeland, Mhlangaso felt that the time was ripe for a further diplomatic offensive. In June 1883, after a large meeting at the Great Place, a new collection of cattle was launched to fund a Mpondo deputation to London.² According to the Kokstad Advertiser, £300 of the £1,500 collected in 1880 had gone with Welborne to London and the rest had been spent on guns and liquor.³

W.P. Bouverie and MacNicholas were conspicuously in attendance at the meeting which authorised the collection and soon afterwards participated in a new initiative; they attempted to convert the Aborigines Protection Society (APS) to the Mpondo cause. MacNicholas had already written to F.W. Chesson, Secretary of the Society, in 1882 seeking aid without success for the education of Mhlangaso's sons in England.⁴ Bouverie, however, unlike some of the other Pondoland traders, came from elevated stock in England and had connections sufficiently respectable to be taken seriously by Chesson. Bouverie persuaded his father, an admiral, to join the South African Committee of the Society so that the Mpondo case, as outlined by the son, could be

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1. Davenport, Afrikaner Bond, 75-94.
 2. APS G.10, Chesson to Derby, 26.4.1884; C.149/106, Mqikela to High Commissioner, 12.7.1884; C.126/66, Bouverie to Chesson, 12.9.1883.
 3. Kokstad Advertiser, 5.5.1883.
 4. APS C.141/297, MacNicholas to Chesson, 23.6.1882.

put direct,¹ He also corresponded with Chesson and sought financial aid for the Mpondo deputation. Chesson was initially impressed with his arguments and forwarded the correspondence to the Colonial Office. They in turn referred it back to the Cape Ministry from whom they received in reply a vitriolic attack on Mhlangaso and his allies. The response was framed by Oxland, who by this time had been thoroughly isolated and forced to retire to the colonial enclave of Port St Johns as magistrate. Chesson sent the reply to the Great Place and Bouverie and MacNicholas entered into a spirited debate on behalf of the paramountcy.

The debate made little difference to the imperial response.² The Colonial Office was reluctant to take on any added responsibilities in the Cape and, at the beginning of 1884, refused to receive a Mpondo deputation or to interfere with the Cape's handling of Mpondo affairs. Chesson cooled towards the Mpondo cause and Bouverie senior extracted himself from his embarrassing position. Mhlangaso did not immediately dispense with his strategy of appealing to the imperial authorities and MacNicholas continued to write to Chesson in increasingly strident tones. (Oxland accused him of trying to make the Mpondo believe that the Society could change the imperial mind even when it was clear that the last word had been said, and it is possible that MacNicholas and Bouverie sought to encourage the continued collection of stock as one means of tying up a large number of animals for export.) However, it was clear to Mhlangaso that a new approach was necessary and he began to leave behind the specific group of allies who had been so important in his diplomacy, although MacNicholas remained as secretary until 1886.

1. APS C.126/68, F.W.P. Bouverie to Chesson, 20.12.1883.

2. BPP, C.4590, passim.; APS C126/66 and following correspondence.

In 1884, Thomas Upington had come to power in the Cape on an expansionist platform.¹ When he formally annexed Port St Johns in that year, all hope of negotiation with the Cape seemed to have passed. Mhlangaso retaliated forcefully. He proclaimed a stiff levy of £50 on each wagon-load of goods brought from St Johns into Pondoland, thereby cutting the port off from its hinterland.² Lesser tariffs of up to £2/10/- were placed on goods coming into Pondoland from Natal and a toll was levied on loads passing through the Rode valley, the only point at which the main wagon-route from the Cape to Natal traversed Mpondo territory. Guards were stationed on all the drifts to collect the levies, and those who failed to pay were to be subject to a fine of £100. Mhlangaso had placed Josiah Jenkins as chief in the Rode over the head of the dissident William Nota in order to entrench paramount control over the area and Jenkins proceeded to harass colonial traffic.³

Plans were set in motion to establish an independent port on the Pondoland coastline with the assistance of another local trader, Sydney Turner.⁴ Turner had opened the first trading station at the mouth of the Mzimkulu river (later Port Shepstone) in the 1860s, but later moved into the coastal shipping business and transferred his interests to St Johns. He had an intimate knowledge of the coastline and soon after St Johns was taken over, he asked Mqikela for permission to start a new port so that Cape duties could be avoided. In 1881, a boat had actually been offered for sale to the paramount. Mqikela took no action at the time as he had no wish to precipitate a

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1. Davenport, Afrikaner Bond, 85, 90.
 2. APS C.141/304, 305, 305a, Mhlangaso to High Commissioner, 9.10.1884 and enclosures; Kokstad Advertiser, 18.10.1884; Cape, Memo on the Pondo Settlement, G. 10-1887.
 3. Cape, Memo on the Pondo Settlement, 3; Kokstad Advertiser, 5.5.1883, 19.5.1883.
 4. Turner papers passim; Mrs S. Taylor, Scrapbook, Turner to C. Hitchin, 18.2.1894; CA NA 162, Oxland to SNA, 31.5.1881.

crisis with the Cape. Now Mhlangaso was going out of his way to do so. Negotiations were also under way with the agent of a German commercial firm for a large shipment of Snider rifles which was to be landed at a point on the independent coastline.¹ Nothing had come of the deal, in which Oxland thought O'Donnell was involved, by the end of 1884, apparently because Mhlangaso could not raise the required amount of £1,000 as an advance. However, the colonial and imperial governments took these initiatives seriously. Commissioners were sent to Pondoland to demand that the annexation of St John and Xesibeland be recognised, that all roads to Pondoland be opened and that no ship be allowed to land goods on the coast without a clearance certificate from a colonial port.² They were rebuffed and the imperial government responded by declaring a protectorate over the whole of the Mpondo coastline with effect from the beginning of 1885.

Mhlangaso ignored the decree and countered with his own proclamation denying Britain's right to control the coast and inviting foreign powers to open negotiations with a view to trade.³ Turner started operations through the new Port Grosvenor; even the merchants at St Johns were forced to rely on him for supplies as ships ceased to call on them.⁴ In June 1885, a rather doubtful land concession was made to Emil Nagel, agent of the German Land and Colonisation Company, apparently in return for help with the education of Mhlangaso's sons in Germany, firearms and possibly promises that the German authorities

1. BPP, C.4590, Oxland to SNA 29.3.1884.

2. Cape, Memo on the Pondo Settlement, 5-8; MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol. II, 2; Kokstad Advertiser, 13.12.1884, 27.12.1884.

3. Kokstad Advertiser, 4.7.1885, 11.7.1885, 18.7.1885.

4. Turner papers, 2.3.1885; Mrs S. Taylor, Scrapbook, Turner to Hitchins, 18.7.1894; Kokstad Advertiser, 11.7.1885, 17.12.1885; B. Holt, They Came Our Way (London, 1974), 139; BPP, C.5022, 37; CA NA 163, Anderton Bros. to RM Port St Johns, 5.1.1885.

would support the Mpondo against the Cape.¹ Mhlangaso seems to have been driven into making this concession, which was not clearly approved by the other chiefs, as he could not raise the cash to pay for armaments. These moves were the climax of the Mpondo offensive and, having played his strongest cards, Mhlangaso led a deputation to Cape Town in November 1885. All that was offered to him was cash compensation for the loss of land and revenue in exchange for acceptance of all colonial demands.

A variety of colonial interests had been affected by the Mpondo challenge. The threat of German intervention and the contravention of the imperial proclamation could not be countenanced, nor would the Cape allow the emergence of an authority which levied customs and tariffs within its sphere of influence. Though the charge levied on traffic using the main wagon road was small, it was an annoyance to merchants and served as a reminder that an independent Pondoland could harass the movement of goods along this important route. Further, the opening of Port Grosvenor coincided with an attempt by the Cape to block the gaps in the tariff wall around the Colony. In August 1885, a customs house had been erected on the border between Natal and East Griqualand in order to prevent the flooding of Cape markets with cheap goods from Natal. Eastern Cape merchants now had a chance to breach Natal's monopoly of the East Griqualand trade.

There were also more local interests at stake. The East Griqualand settlers and traders were strongly opposed to the customs house which, they calculated, would add 20 per cent onto all imported goods.² If

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1. MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol. II, 43-45; BPP, C.5022, 67ff; BPP, South Africa, Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Pondoland C. 5410 (1888), Memo by P. de Smidt, 21.9.1887 in Sprigg to Governor, 7.10.1887.
 2. Kokstad Advertiser, 24.6.1885, 22.8.1885 and October 1885 to January, 1886, passim; MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol. II, 23.

imports were transported through Natal, which was closer, a double tariff would have to be paid, while if they came from the Cape the costs of overland carriage would be much increased. East Griqualand interests were not powerful enough to secure a reversal of policy. Instead, they calculated that the cheapest route would be through Port St Johns, and began to agitate for a removal of the Mpondo tariffs. St Johns merchants themselves joined the clamour and both argued that the roads from the coast to Kokstad should be improved as well as opened. While Pondoland traders were not seriously affected by the small Mpondo levies on overland routes and they could still import direct from Natal if they used the coastal road which dodged the Cape customs house, there was no section of opinion in the Cape itself that supported Mpondo actions.

The colonial authorities were not slow to retaliate. The Cape refused to allow ships from its harbours to offload goods at Port Grosvenor, and pressed Natal to take similar action. Natal opinion was, however, more divided. Charles Hitchins, a merchant and later member of the Legislative Council, was involved in the African Boating Company which had backed Turner's enterprise.¹ T. McCubbin, another Durban merchant, backed Fred Rethman, of the Pondoland trading firm, in his efforts to get a share of the Port Grosvenor trade. Natal merchants also resented Cape efforts to interfere in the East Griqualand trade, and there was substantial support for the view that Pondoland should be annexed to Natal rather than the Cape. By October 1885, however, Natal had come into line, and Port Grosvenor was soon forced to shut down. The deal with Nagel also fell through although two of Mhlangaso's sons did go to Germany for schooling. Whether Nagel ever intended to deliver the guns is unclear; his strategy, like that of other German agents at the time, may have

1. Turner papers, 1885; Kokstad Advertiser, 4.4.1885; BPP, C.4590, Whindus to Undersecretary of Native Affairs, 13.4.1885.

been to secure a concession and to bring in the German government to protect it. But the imperial government succeeded in obtaining an assurance from the German authorities that they would not intervene on this part of the southern African coastline.

A good deal more pressure had to be applied before Mhlangaso reversed his policy. The task of reaching a settlement with the Mpondo fell to Walter Stanford, who had recently been appointed as Chief Magistrate of East Griqualand. Stanford, already an experienced administrator, had begun his career in the Native Affairs Department in 1863, at the age of thirteen, and risen slowly up the official hierarchy.¹ He was fully conversant with the intricacies of internal politics in the Transkeian chiefdoms and though he knew, as did the Mpondo, that in the last resort the Cape had superior force at its disposal, he felt he could win concessions without going to war. He was also fortunate in having an ally in Pondoland who shared his views. Peter Hargreaves, a missionary who had long been in the Transkeian area, was sent to Emfundisweni by the Methodists in 1882.² For the first couple of years of his stay, he was effectively isolated by Mhlangaso; according to one source, the chief even tried to take over all the mission stations in Pondoland and appoint his own minister. But Hargreaves survived and by the end of 1885, he had the ear of some of the leading chiefs, including Mqikela himself. The missionary consistently advocated that the Mpondo should meet all colonial demands. He acted as an informal resident in Pondoland, relaying information to Stanford and assisting in the latter's diplomatic manouevres.

1. MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol. I, Introduction and passim.

2. Cragg, 'Amampondo', Chapters XII and XIV; MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol. II, 45; Cory Library, MS. 15,470, P. Hargreaves, letters to the President of the Conference; Cory Library, MS. 15,799, H. Rock, 'Reminiscences'; University of Cape Town, Stanford papers, Ca 1-4.

At the same time, MacNicholas lost ground at the Great Place. The collection of licence fees was taken out of his hands in January 1886 after he and Mhlangaso had fallen out over financial questions.

Hargreaves's increasing influence was a measure of the weakness of the Mpondo position and of division amongst the chiefs over policy. Colonial observers had always believed that Mhlangaso and his European allies were the major proponents of an aggressive policy. But while they were responsible for Mpondo strategy, this group did not, at least until 1885, act in isolation. Manundu, who succeeded Bekameva in the Isikelo house in 1883, was 'very warlike and extremely popular among the Pondos' and took his father's position with regard to colonial encroachments for the first couple of years of his rule.¹ If he, Mqikela and the minor chiefs did not know about everything that Mhlangaso did, they certainly approved of a good many of the latter's actions. The decision to send deputations to London and to levy tariffs were taken at large meetings. When one trader contravened the tariff regulations, the councillors are reported to have imposed a £100 fine themselves.² Leading chiefs and councillors accompanied Mhlangaso to all the meetings with the colonial authorities and though he tended to dominate discussions, they identified with his opinions. Mhlangaso did have some force at his disposal to bring dissident chiefs into line. One petty chief who failed to contribute to the collection for the deputation was 'eaten up'.³ But Mhlangaso was in no position to threaten any of the important subchiefs, nor any of the petty chiefs with strong allies.

1. Kokstad Advertiser, 17.11.1883; 15.12.1883 and 22.12.1883.

2. Kokstad Advertiser, 2.5.1885.

3. Kokstad Advertiser, 10.1.1885.

Although Oxland reported that some chiefs were suspicious of the paramountcy as early as 1884, most seem to have been prepared to allow Mhlangaso a good deal of power because they favoured his diplomatic strategy.¹ It was only towards the end of 1885, when it had become clear that Mhlangaso's initiatives had failed, that support for his actions dwindled. Mqikela and the minor chiefs were no less keen on independence than Mhlangaso, but they were not prepared to risk war and now sought to back down with honour. Further, there were increasing suspicions, fuelled by Hargreaves, that Mhlangaso was using his position to aggrandise himself at the cost of other chiefs.² He had undoubtedly taken on a role at the Great Place which was unusual for a subchief or councillor. The secretarial staff was largely under his personal control and, because he was literate, he was in a position to conduct diplomacy with some degree of secrecy. His negotiations with the Germans appear to have been private, and colonial sources later claimed that Mqikela's mark in the treaty with Nagel had been forged.³ The concession gave away the usufruct on 160 square miles of valuable coastal land, much of it afforested, and the chiefs in the area were unlikely to have approved of its terms if these had been known. Mhlangaso was also reported to be negotiating other concessions, such as the leasing of grazing land on the coast to Boer farmers from Barkly East.⁴ All concessions gave rights to outsiders over resources which the lesser chiefs and people may have considered inalienable and the proceeds from concessions and tariffs went direct to the Great Place.

1. BPP C.4590, Oxland to SNA, 4.2.1884 in Smyth to Derby, 26.2.1884; APS G.10, Chesson to Derby, 26.4.1884.

2. H. Rock, 'Reminiscences'.

3. BPP, C.5410, Memo. by P. de Smidt, 21.9.1887 in Sprigg to Governor, 7.10.1887.

4. Kokstad Advertiser, 1.8.1885.

Mhlangaso's policies also resulted in a good deal of pressure being placed on the subchiefs for cattle. Two collections were made for deputations and one for the bulk purchase of firearms during the same few years and they were asked to contribute to the bridewealth of Mqikela's great wife, Masarili, whom he married in 1883. The fact that these collections were not always a great success was in part the consequence of losses suffered from redwater but also suggests ambivalence on the part of the minor chiefs.¹ Mhlangaso's strategies were certainly hampered by the lack of funds. Once income and cattle had found its way to the Great Place, minor chiefs had little control over its expenditure. How far Mhlangaso was able to siphon off funds to build up his personal following, rather than use them in pursuit of agreed policies, is unclear. In the years of his pre-eminence, his following does seem to have increased and he attempted to expand the area under his authority by, for example, placing Josiah Jenkins in the Rode and bringing large parties of immigrants, including the dispossessed Griqua, into border areas which he was trying to control.² These actions were taken in the name of the paramountcy, and approved by Mqikela, but they provided fuel for conflict with other chiefs who were concerned about the threat to their position not only from Mhlangaso in his personal capacity but also from the paramountcy as an institution. Mhlangaso or one of his sympathisers accused Hargreaves of insinuating that Mhlangaso was selling the country for his own benefit, and though such rumours may have been colonial ploys that did not entirely reflect the realities of the Mhlangaso's methods, they

1. For sources relevant to this question see APS correspondence quoted above.

2. Kokstad Advertiser, 8.11.1884, 12.12.1885; CA NA 570/1214.

clearly gave rise to concern among the chiefs.¹

The situation on the Mpondo borders with the Cape provided Stanford with a further lever with which to shift Mpondo policies. Hostilities between the Bhaca and Xesibe on the one hand, and the Mpondo on the other, continued sporadically throughout the first half of the 1880s. Thefts and minor raids could not be fully controlled by either the colony or the paramountcy. But any marked escalation of conflict needed the approval, or at least the connivance, of these respective authorities. Stanford allowed the Bhaca and Xesibe a remarkably free hand, and the timing of their major raids into Mpondo territory in 1885 and 1886 suggests that he may even have played a part in instigating them. In December 1885, the Bhaca invaded the Rode, attacked Josiah Jenkins's homestead and robbed him of £50 that he had collected from tolls on the main road.² It was early in January 1886, soon after this raid and the blocking of Port Grosvenor, that Stanford chose to visit Pondoland, almost certainly on the advice of Hargreaves.³ He came away without a settlement, but noted that his reception was less hostile than it had been in the past. Border conflict, focussed on the Rode, boiled up again in February and March 1886 and, on this occasion, Stanford armed the Bhaca, Xesibe and some border headmen. The Mpondo army crossed the colonial border but were repulsed and a joint colonial force invaded the Rode. It is not entirely clear where most fighting took place, for both sides had their own version of the conflict. However, it is clear that Pondoland was invaded and Mhlangaso later claimed that 129 Mpondo had been killed within Pondoland between November 1885 and August 1886.⁴ Stanford also renewed attempts to split off ambivalent Mpondo subchiefs

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1. See letter attributed to Mhlangaso in H. Rock, 'Reminiscences'.
 2. Kokstad Advertiser, 26.12.1885; MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol. II, 47ff.
 3. Stanford papers, Ca.1, Hargreaves to Stanford, 4.1.1886.
 4. Kokstad Advertiser, 28.8.1886; Cory MS. 15,470, Hargreaves to President Natal Conference, 2.4.1886; Hargreaves to Mason, 20.8.1886.

settled near the borders and had some success. In May 1886, the Mpondo decided to remove the tariffs on the road from Port St Johns to Kokstad.

A number of local traders, as well as McCubbin, the Durban merchant, advised Mhlangaso to hold out against the Cape.¹ While the former still favoured an independent Pondoland, the latter could only offer annexation to Natal as an alternative, a prospect which the Mpondo apparently relished less than submission to the Cape.² In August 1886 the editor of the Kokstad Advertiser visited Pondoland with another delegate of the Kokstad Political Association, which favoured disaffiliation from the Cape Colony largely because of the customs house issue.³ They proposed that Pondoland, Basutoland and the Transkeian Territories unite as a Crown Colony under the Imperial Government and so escape dominance by the Cape and Natal. Mhlangaso was highly suspicious of the proposals and one of the councillors told the delegation: 'you are all whitemen alike to us; when we discover the difference between you then we can give you our answer'.⁴ As no further alternatives were available, the Mpondo sacked MacNicholas and lifted all tariffs on the border soon after this visit.⁵ Josiah Jenkins acted as secretary for a short period.

Mhlangaso had one further card to play. In October 1886 a full mobilisation was ordered and 15,000 men massed on the border, a confirmation that he still had considerable support from the chiefs and councillors for certain decisions.⁶ A lightning strike was made into

1. BPP, C.5022, McCubbin to Havelock, 29.4.1886.

2. Cragg, 'Amampondo', 419.

3. Kokstad Advertiser, 28.8.1886.

4. ibid.

5. Kokstad Advertiser, 28.8.1886; 4.9.1886; 18.9.1886.

6. MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol. II, Chapter XXXI; Kokstad Advertiser, October 1886; BPP, C.5022, 124-143; Cory MS, 14,470, Hargreaves to President, 15.11.1886; Cape, Memo on the Pondo Settlement, G.10-1887.

Colonial territory as a show of strength. Stanford mobilised the border chiefs again, called out the Cape Mounted Riflemen and raised 'native levies'. Faced with this force, the Mpondo army dispersed. A month of stalemate ensued, during which an episode of pig-killing took place in Pondoland, perhaps a sign of stress. In November, the chiefs conceded all colonial demands, accepted £1,000 for Xesibeland, £600 for the Rode, which was taken over by the Colony, and £200 a year for Port St Johns. They promised that the roads in Pondoland would remain open free of charge to all colonial traffic and that the coast would be closed to all ships save those cleared at colonial ports. Permission was given for the construction of a new road from St Johns to Kokstad.

The revenue of the paramountcy had, in the short term, been bolstered. However, the Mpondo had been forced to give up assets which, in the long term, could have been much more valuable. The paramount could no longer negotiate freely with foreign powers and had signed away his rights to levy tariffs and customs. These were rights which, though not always exploited fully in the past, were becoming critical to the survival and expansion of the paramountcy as the nature of production and exchange changed in the later part of the nineteenth century. Mhlangaso, in particular, had tried to transform the Mpondo paramountcy into an institution with powers very different from those exercised by Faku. The process of transformation had been shaped by the alliance with local traders. It had also been speeded up by the conflict with the Cape Colony. But after 1886, the possibility of further development of the Mpondo state was severely limited by the Cape's victory.

3: Civil War and Annexation, 1887-1894.

Mhlangaso regarded the settlement of 1886 as a temporary setback. Pondoland had not been annexed and he retained a good deal of power at the Great Place. He soon set about reconstructing an alliance against the Colony, again calling on German help. Although Nagel had disappeared - possibly with some Mpondo money - and one of Mhlangaso's sons had died in Germany, Mhlangaso still had sufficient belief in the necessity of calling on non-British help to engage in negotiations with a new agent, Augustus Einwald, who had visited Pondoland on and off since 1883.¹ In 1887, Einwald achieved a position similar to that which had been held by MacNicholas, and, in return for the concession which had been given to Nagel, he offered arms, military aid from the promised German settlers and half the customs duties on goods imported by them. By September 1887, Mhlangaso again went onto the offensive. He tried to draw the Mpondo chiefs back into his camp and met Manundu, leader of the Isikelo house, on a number of occasions, sometimes at O'Donnell's station, to discuss 'important matters of state'.² He sounded out Bokleni, heir to Nqwiliso, who was less well disposed to the Colony than his father, and even contacted the Gcaleka, Thembu and southern Natal chiefs. How far Mhlangaso intended to pursue his plans is unclear; he seems to have been seeking a chink in the colonial armour. But if he still dreamt of victory, his hand was stayed by Mqikela's long expected death in October 1887.

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1. A. Einwald, Zwanzig Jahre in Süd-Afrika; Reisen, Erlebnisse und Beobachtungen (Hanover, 1901); F. Bachmann, Reisen, Erlebnisse und Beobachtungen während eines sechsjährigen Aufenthaltes in der Kapkolonie, Natal und Pondoland (Berlin, 1901); BPP, C. 5410, Chief Magistrate to SNA 23.9.1887 and passim.; MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol. II, 103ff.
 2. CA O'D 2, Diary, 11.7.1887 and passim.

Mqikela's Great Wife, Masarili, daughter of the Gcaleka paramount, had not given birth to a son.¹ Mdibaniso and Hamu, both of whom were sons of the senior qadi (support) houses of the Great House had the best claim on the grounds of legitimacy, but neither of them received significant support. Sigcau, son of a woman who was either a low-ranking wife, or, according to some traditions, an unmarried concubine, soon emerged as the major contender, and he was appointed in February 1888 without a serious fight over the succession. Stanford thought that Mhlangaso was secretly opposed to Sigcau and that he tried to intrigue on behalf of Mdibaniso whom he would be able to control. Whether or not this was so, it is clear that Sigcau was chosen as a strong man, a representative of the minor chiefs, to resist Mhlangaso. He alone of Mqikela's many sons had played a leading role at meetings with the colonial authorities during the preceding few years. He had the full support of Manundu and Stanford felt that Masarili, who was in favour of a conciliatory policy towards the Cape, had been influential in securing him the chieftainship. One tradition certainly stresses her role in legitimising his accession. The Mpondo met at the Great Place to make their choice.

[Masarili asked] "Where is Sigcau"?

It was said that Sigcau was herding cattle, he was driving horses.

Sigcau was called. Masarili said to him "Do you know me?"

Sigcau said "I know you, you are my mother".

"Who told you this?"

"My father told me".

Masarili stood up. She went to him and caught hold of him here.

[Indicating under the chin.] She took her breast and put it in Sigcau's mouth.

She said "I am giving birth to you, you are my son. I don't want to take these men who have mothers. I am taking you because your father made an unmarried girl pregnant".

All the Mpondo rose, they took off their hats, their sticks pointing upwards. They shouted "Jongilanga", praising Sigcau. As soon as they had done that we started to fear Sigcau.

Masarili said; "I am giving birth to you although you are old. If anything stands in your way, come to me".²

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1. CA NA 161, Oxland to SNA, 8.12.1879; MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol.II. Chapter XXIV; Cory MS. 15,211, Samuel Clark, Biography of Peter Hargreaves; Kokstad Advertiser, 14.2.1894.
 2. Interview, Vulizibhaya, 18.1.1977; Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 44.

Mhlangaso's influence declined rapidly. Einwald left the Great Place in February 1888, his concessions unrecognised.¹ Two groups of German settlers did arrive in Pondoland but by 1889 their position had become untenable and, after fighting between themselves, they were forced to leave. Mhlangaso's scheme to settle a group of Griquas in the Mnceba area near the Rode also went sour. Sigcau objected, no doubt because these immigrants were potential allies for Mhlangaso, and when the settlement was raided by a minor chief, Sigcau gave the latter support.² Mdibaniso, the unsuccessful claimant, assisted the Griqua, apparently with Mhlangaso's support, and was forced to remove his homestead to the upland area of Tabankulu as his relations with the paramount were strained.

By 1889, Sigcau was the dominant voice at the Great Place. He pursued a policy of conciliation with the Cape and allowed Mhlangaso little freedom of action. The latter refused to recognise either his subordinate status or the new policy. After two years of mounting tension, a dispute between the followers of Mhlangaso and Manundu triggered a major civil war. It is possible that the conflict could have been contained, as was the disagreement over the Griqua settlement, but Sigcau clearly felt that his position would not be secure till Mhlangaso had been brought under control. A full scale offensive was launched by the paramount in April 1891 which culminated in a battle at Ntlavukazi forest near Mhlangaso's homestead.³ Mhlangaso was forced to retreat into colonial territory; Stanford, into whose hands he fell, gave him little choice but to return to Pondoland. Stanford later argued that Mhlangaso's return was to the

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1. BPP, C.5410, Acting Chief Magistrate, East Griqualand to SNA, 8.2.1888; CA CMT 1/57, Resident Magistrate (RM), Port St Johns, report 4.1.1890; CA NA 164, Scott to UnderSNA, 10.9.1889, 16.12.1889, 5.7.1889.
 2. Kokstad Advertiser, 14.2.1894.
 3. CA O'D 6 records the early battles of the civil war; Kokstad Advertiser, April, 1891; Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 44-46 and many of the oral traditions collected mention this battle.

advantage of the Colony, 'for the longer and more successfully he maintained his struggle with Sigcau the easier became Colonial intervention into Pondoland'.¹

Mhlangaso was able to maintain the loyalty of his brothers and immediate followers and he won the support of Patekile, powerful chief of the imizizi, whose relations with the paramountcy had long been strained.² Greatly outnumbered by Sigcau's forces, Mhlangaso retreated into a stronghold in the Isisele valley in Patekile's country on the Natal border which he defended over the next couple of years. Mhlangaso's followers were well armed, no doubt because of his good relations with the traders. He tried to bring Natal into the conflict on his side and even retreated into that colony when Sigcau closed in on him again in 1892. He tried, for a brief period, to come to terms with the paramount, but he would not surrender unconditionally. In war as in diplomacy, he did not know how to give up. Fighting continued through 1893 and into early 1894, when the Cape eventually annexed Pondoland after a major battle between the two chiefs.

The war between Mhlangaso and Sigcau was a struggle for power between a new chief and the dominant councillor of the old, a struggle over the policy towards the colonial powers and the missions. An anonymous supporter of Mhlangaso, probably a European trader, felt that economic policy was also at the crux of the dispute.

Those who have lived in his country can testify how he invariably endeavoured to give free enterprise on the part of the white man an opening....Mhlangaso, thinking he saw a hope for the regeneration of his country listened with an attentive ear to the glib singers³ and earnestly threw his influence into the balance in their favour.

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1. Cape Archives, Prime Minister's Office (CA PMO), Undated Memo by W. Stanford in Stanford to Secretary to Prime Minister, 15.6.1895.
 2. Kokstad Advertiser, 6.2.1892, 27.2.1892, 7.9.1892, 17.2.1893, 26.7.1893, 13.9.1892, 26.9.1893, 17.1.1894.
 3. Kokstad Advertiser, 14.2.1894, letter signed 'Skeesicks'.

He was against 'hidebound' mission stations and 'sought other mediums for the civilisation of his people'. He was defeated, according to this view, by an alliance between Sigcau, the minor chiefs, the missions and the government. The minor chiefs felt that he was selling the country, the missions wanted a monopoly of the process of civilisation and the government wanted a co-operative paramountcy.

This analysis is perhaps one of the best informed of contemporary views. It does, however, contrast the policies of Mhlangaso and Sigcau too starkly. It is true that Sigcau's less aggressive attitude towards the Cape was the basis for the reunification of the chiefdom. His style of government allayed suspicion: he was illiterate, and could not monopolise information; he consulted the chiefs and councillors more carefully; European secretaries were replaced by African. Sigcau was also more sensitive to the demands of the lesser chiefs and he managed to mobilise the great majority of them against Mhlangaso. Yet with these exceptions, his policies bore a remarkable resemblance to Mhlangaso's. He would not allow a British resident into Pondoland, and he did not chase the concessionaries away. He merely replaced Mhlangaso's contacts with his own, for he wanted to control the negotiations and cash personally. If anything, he conceded more and he certainly got better terms.

In November 1888, the mineral concession sought originally by Einwald was given to another bidder on condition that £500 was paid within a year.¹ Soon afterwards Sigcau repudiated the agreement in favour of a firm named Cook Bros., with connections in London and Johannesburg, who were a more substantial concern and agreed to pay £2,100 down and £600 annually for the same rights. (In addition to copper, it was thought that coal would be found.) Cook Brothers also sought a concession to build a railway

1. CA NA 164, Scott to UnderSNA, 11.6.1889; Tredgold and Buchanan, Decisions, XII (1895), Cook Bros. vs. The Colonial Government; Kokstad Advertiser, 15.2.1893, 22.2.1893.

through Eastern Pondoland from Port St Johns. The port had not, contrary to expectations, grown substantially after the removal of the Mpondo tariff and the building of metalled roads to Umtata and Kokstad. (Table 2) Despite the Cape tariffs, it still proved cheaper to import goods into East Griqualand overland, and Pondoland traders could still avoid Cape tariffs by using the coastal road.¹ But it was felt that railway lines to the interior would swing the balance in favour of St Johns and there was great optimism about its future.² The major line planned was to go to Umtata through Western Pondoland and thence through Barkly East to Bloemfontein and Kimberley. Ngwiliso benefitted from the concession hunters involved in developing this route. However, Cooks felt that the Eastern Pondoland line would tie up the East Griqualand market and gave £1,720 and £900 annually for the rights.³ They also rented a sizeable portion of land and in 1893, Sigcau is reputed to have conceded an area very similar to that in the Nagel concession for £2,200 down and £400 a year.

How far Sigcau intended to honour these concessions is unclear. However, the paramountcy was now dependent on such sources of revenue, particularly once its ability to levy tariffs and benefit from the expansion of trade had been removed. Concessions were the only immediately available method by which the revenues could be maintained and expanded. Concessionaries such as Cook Bros. represented a new sector of capital. They were neither traders nor agents for settlers such as the Germans, but industrial capitalists who planned very extensive investment in mining and railway works which would have transformed the Mpondo state and economy more radically than the trade in pastoral products had

1. CA O'D 29, passim.

2. A. Groser, South African Experiences in the Cape Colony, Natal and Pondoland (London, 1891), 24, 34; T.R. Beattie, A Ride through the Transkei (Kingwilliamstown, 1891), 21ff.

3. Tredgold and Buchanan, Decisions, XII, Cook Bros. vs. The Colonial Government.

done. Mhlangaso, at least, if not Sigcau, seems to have envisaged a situation in which Mpondo workers would be working in mines in Pondoland with the paramountcy as the political authority in the area.¹ However, annexation removed all hopes of such developments - no significant mineral deposits were actually located - and Sigcau had to be content with a few years of concession money.

In the face of such competition, the local traders could no longer achieve so central a position at the Great Place. They could neither promise foreign intervention, as had the Germans, nor raise the capital for large concession payments. Sigcau himself had no undue respect for traders' property; in 1886, he had participated personally in the looting of stations, a common occurrence in Pondoland during the period of acute tension which preceded the settlement.² He was also, initially, highly suspicious of Mhlangaso's old allies. In 1889, O'Donnell had an argument with Hamu, a brother to Sigcau, who confiscated some of the trader's cattle.³ O'Donnell appealed to Mhlangaso who took it upon himself to arrange compensation, but Sigcau was unhappy with the outcome of the case and when J.P. Bouverie came to pay his licence fees at the Great Place for the year 1890, the paramount threatened to confiscate his wagons.

Yet the paramount's consumption of manufactured goods increased in relation to his income - about £6,000 in down payments and at least £2,600 annually from concessions, licences and the sale of St Johns - and Sigcau was just as dependent on the traders for arms and ammunition to fight not the Colony, but Mhlangaso. A settlement was eventually reached with

1. H. Rock, 'Reminiscences'.

2. Kokstad Advertiser, 17.4.1886.

3. CA O'D 29, O'Donnell to RM Harding, 11.3.1889; O'Donnell to RM Alfred, 8.1.1889; J. P. Bouverie to Canham, 10.1.1889; Bouverie to Scott, 22.1.1890; Bouverie to Barnabas, 24.1.1890.

O'Donnell, who at one stage offered a cash bribe, and Sigcau kept a personal account with the firm. He purchased not only blankets and clothes but also saddles and bridles from them in 1893.¹ Sigcau also granted a number of new trading sites and is remembered by some of the trading families as being generous to them. His largesse went to traders in the coastal areas nearer the Great Place rather than to those further inland around Mhlangaso's homestead. In fact, the focus of trading moved towards the coast during his reign, partly because power and wealth had to some extent shifted back to the Great Place itself from the inland subchiefdoms, and partly because of the greater importance of the coastal road from Natal which dodged the Cape customs house on the border with East Griqualand.

A number of the earlier traders had taken African wives or fathered children by African women.² Some of their offspring, perhaps those from regular unions; followed their fathers into trading or took up activities such as transport riding. By the 1890s, there was already an identifiable 'Coloured' community in Pondoland, differentiated from the mass of the Mpondo population by their origins and professions, but with few roots outside Pondoland. Sigcau had a close relationship with some of this group and accorded them a special role. One, Punch Canham, was on occasion responsible for collecting the paramount's subsidies from the colonial government.³ They also acted as a personal bodyguard to Sigcau. One of them recalled their position at a meeting with representatives of the paramountcy many years later.

1. CA O'D, unnumbered Daily Balance Book, 1892/3.

2. Interviews, J. MacGowan, Mzinthlavana, Lusikisiki, 20.1.1977; Daisy Ball, Lusikisiki, 12.2.1977; Girlie Carter, Mateko Trading Store, Lusikisiki, 11.2.1977; Frank and Stanley Allison, Ludonga Trading Store, Lusikisiki, 16.2.1977.

3. Kokstad Advertiser, 17.2.1893.

"When we were at Mhlangaso's war, where did the chief sleep? There were seven or eight thousand Pondo troops there, there were only thirty of us. Where did the chief sleep? Which crowd?" There was an old [Mpondo] man there [at the meeting]. He says: "Hayi, no the chief says he feels safer if he sleeps among you fellows. Although you are small in number you will die around him. We'll panic and clear if the enemy attack". The old trader said: "The chief knew us. We were his right hand men. If he died, we would die, not one of us would retreat....."¹

The relationship has no doubt been romanticised in the traditions of Coloured families, but the Kokstad Advertiser reported at the time that a group of 'half castes' fought with Sigcau and played an important role in the civil war.²

While Sigcau did have largesse to dispense, and a considerable cash income, the trading community as a whole was becoming less dependent on the chiefs for their custom. The vast majority of homesteads in Pondoland were being integrated into an exchange relationship with the colonial economy; demand was increasing and becoming more diversified, and crops, produced at the level of the homestead, were beginning to take their place alongside pastoral products as important exports. By the early 1890s, it was well-known in colonial and trading circles that Pondoland would eventually be annexed, and at least a substantial portion of the trading community no longer had any interest in defending an independent paramountcy. Sigcau became the object of a campaign of vilification by the Kokstad Advertiser during the last couple of years before annexation - he was labelled a despot, tyrant and incompetent 'kitchen kaffir' - inspired in part by local commercial interests which had either lost out with his accession or felt that their future would better served by the collapse of the paramountcy.³

1. J. MacGowan, Interview, 20.1.1977.

2. Kokstad Advertiser, 17.1.1894.

3. Kokstad Advertiser, 26.9.1893, 21.2.1894 and 1893, passim

Indeed, by 1893, Sigcau's relationship with a significant number of the older traders was deteriorating rapidly. Stoffels, whose family had kept stores around Palmerton since Faku's time, had his wagons seized by the paramount.¹ Joe Goodwin, who had been taking cattle out of Pondoland for twenty years, was fined £20 for trading without a licence. Rethman was threatened with expulsion for selling arms to Mhlangaso - he claimed he had only sold barbed wire - and MacGowan who had also got his site from Faku wrote to colonial officials expressing his disgust at the way traders were being treated by Sigcau. Such men now wrote to the Colonial authorities for redress and it is clear that they were trying to dissociate themselves from the paramountcy and set their books straight in preparation for the colonial takeover, for they wanted it to be known on whose side they were when the Cape Mounted Riflemen crossed the border.

By 1894, all shades of colonial opinion were in favour of annexation.² Only a few local traders and the Eastern Cape African newspaper, Imvo Zabantsundu, raised an objection. When Cecil Rhodes, then Cape Prime Minister, diverted his eyes from their northward gaze and began to busy himself with 'native affairs' in the Cape, he decided to iron out the anomaly of an independent chiefdom between the Cape and Natal. Chronic civil conflict in Pondoland and renewed interest in the area on the part of Natal gave some urgency to the issue. While sections of colonial opinion felt that preparations should be made for conquest, Stanford and other local officials advocated peaceful annexation in the

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1. Cape Archives, Chief Magistrate of East Griqualand (CA CMK), papers of the Pondoland Commissioner, vol.3, Stoffels to Scott, 19.5.1893; CA CMK, Pondoland Commissioner, vol.3, Rethman to Scott, 29.1.1894; CA NA 439, MacGowan to Scott, 26.8.1893; Kokstad Advertiser, 22.2.1893.
 2. See MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol.II, 147-167; Kokstad Advertiser, January-April, 1894; CA CMT 3/952/746.

belief that the paramounts would hesitate to fight unless they were forced to. Indeed, both Sigcau and Nqwiliso, knowing that they had little hope of countering the colonial military forces, were induced to accept the colonial takeover.

The justification for this 'peaceful transfer from a barbarous to a civilised government' as Rhodes called it, was made clear by a colonial official.¹

Murder, rapine and spoliation are practiced by the chiefs and their immediate followers. The system of "smelling out", which is usually attended with tortures of the most revolting character is as freely practiced at the present day as it has ever been, if not more frequently. It is a most unusual thing for Natives to revolt against their chief, no matter how cruel, oppressive or unjust he may be, but I am assured that the Pondos are so heartily tired of the treatment to which they have been subjected by the present ruling chiefs that the majority of them would hail any change of government...²

Colonial ideology gave particular prominence to the necessity of destroying chiefly power. Annexation would not only end the misrule of chiefs and save the people from the chiefs, but also remove a focus of opposition to colonial control in the area. It reflected a view of the future in which the Mpondo would have just government and would provide taxes, produce and labour for the colony rather than for the chiefs. Such a transition had, as has been illustrated, already begun. The processes of penetration by and incorporation into the capitalist economy were to accelerate in the years after annexation.

4: The Imposition of Colonial Rule, 1895-1905.

In 1886 the Mpondo chiefs had finally lost their port and their power to impose tariffs. On taking over Pondoland in 1894, the Cape administration further extended its control over trade and traders. The latter had now

1. CA CMT 3/952/746, Rhodes to Elliot, 18.2.1894.

2. CA CMT 3/952/764, Elliot to Rhodes, 16.2.1894.

to apply to officials for their licences - the fee was raised to £10 a year - and Sigcau lost all income from this source. Sale of liquor was prohibited except to Europeans and a small number of Africans with the requisite permits. Although the Mpondo were not deprived of their arms, ammunition could no longer be imported legally. Control over important natural resources in Pondoland was also removed from the hands of the paramountcy. In 1896, Colonial Forest and Pound proclamations were extended to the area.¹ The Mpondo were denied access to the major forests; only smaller patches were left for local use. Sigcau, who had specifically asked that the forests be left in his hands, lost his revenue from sawyers' licences. The right to grant permission for exploitation of mineral resources was vested in the colonial state.

In 1895, Cook Bros. took their concessions to the Cape Supreme Court in a bid for recognition.² Despite the fact that Sigcau and some of his leading councillors gave evidence in their favour, their claims were disallowed on the grounds that they could not have been upheld in any court of law prior to annexation. Rhodes had in any case determined not to allow concessions in the Cape 'Native territories', for reasons which will become apparent. Both Sigcau in Eastern Pondoland, and Nqwiliso and Bokleni in the West are reported to have granted further concessions or received payments after annexation, but the chiefs were no longer in any position to fulfil their side of the contract.³ Income from this source soon dwindled. In compensation, the administration undertook to make annual cash payments to the paramounts:

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1. CA NA 440, Commission of Enquiry into Sigcau's Behaviour, 1895, 97; CA CMT 3/50, Assistant (Asst.) RM Flagstaff to Asst. Chief Magistrate (CMT), 15.2.1897, CA CMT 3/51, Asst. CMT to CMT, 15.5.1899.
 2. Tredgold and Buchanan, Decisions, XII, 1895, Cook Brothers vs. the Colonial Government.
 3. CA NA 582/1383, W.H. Clarke and Co. to SNA, 10.3.1904; CA NA 685/2602, CMT to SNA, 27.4.1904.

Sigcau received £1,000 a year after 1897 which included the sum owed by the colony for Port St Johns; Nqwiliso received £700.¹ Though these payments were significantly larger than those granted to other Transkeian chiefs, and underlined the importance attached by the colonial authorities to the Mpondo paramounts, the amount given could not make up for lost revenue, nor would it increase in the future. The threat of withdrawal also placed an effective means of control in the administration's hands.

The administrative system in force in other parts of the Transkeian Territories by 1894 was one of direct rule through magistrates and government appointed headman. It was expressly designed to limit the power of the chiefs who were still seen as a dangerous focus of opposition to colonial rule. Magistrates, who served as both judicial and administrative officers, were in charge of districts of which about twenty had been demarcated in the Territories before the annexation of Pondoland. These officers were responsible to one of the two Chief Magistrates stationed in Umtata and Kokstad. (In 1902, their posts were amalgamated and the seat of the Chief Magistracy for the whole of the Transkeian Territories was located at Umtata.) Each district was divided into about twenty to forty locations, depending on its size, and salaried African headmen were placed in charge of these small units. The magistrates relied largely on the headmen and the small detachments of police stationed at each magistracy to keep control, but the Cape Mounted Riflemen were on hand in the event of more serious disturbances. Colonial rule was financed partly by a 10/- hut tax. Married men paid this sum annually for each of their wives, who were considered to have separate huts.

1. CA NA 685/2608, SNA memorandum, 29.5.1899; CA CMT 3/851/596(1), CMT to SNA, 28.5.1910.

At the time Pondoland was annexed, however, Cape 'native policy' was in flux. The opening of the Witwatersrand goldfields in the mid-1880s and further development of a capitalist mining sector in the subcontinent had, as Bundy and Trapido have suggested, important repercussions for the African peasantry of the Cape.¹ Demand for labour in the mines increased rapidly. Large new markets in the interior quickened the pulse of commerce in the colonial ports and pulled the Cape out of the economic depression of the early 1880s. Labour was also required in the coastal towns and on the developing European-owned farms of the colony. The influence of those colonial interests which favoured the retention of an African peasantry began to wane; that of those who saw the future of the African population as labourers in capitalist enterprises waxed.

Cecil Rhodes, Prime Minister of the Colony from 1890 to 1896, was himself a mining magnate with interests in both Kimberley and on the Rand and a proponent of large scale, capitalist agriculture. He brought the issues facing the administration in the Territories into sharp focus in a speech delivered at Kokstad, shortly after he had visited Pondoland to finalise the terms of annexation.

We have now on this side of the Kei 600,000 Natives, and we must leave the land for them. The Natives [will] no longer be destroyed by tribal wars and their increase [will] become a very serious matter. We can only hope that we shall be able to deal with them and show them that there is dignity in labour and that we pay the highest price for labour of any country in which the manual work is performed by natives.²

His priority, the mobilisation of a labour supply, was manifest. At the same time he was adamant that no more land should be taken from the African population in the Territories, that they should live separately in 'native

1. Bundy, 'African Peasants and Economic Change'; Trapido, 'Liberalism'.

2. Kokstad Advertiser, 18.4.1894.

reserves' and 'not be mixed with the white man at all'.¹ He felt that the dangers of militant working class consciousness, so apparent in England at the time, could be averted if tight control was kept over the African population in South Africa. The elements of an entrenched system of migrant labour from the reserves were already in his mind.

Rhodes's thinking was crystallised in the Glen Grey Act, passed in 1894, which both drew on existing developments in policy and presaged the new future for the African areas.² The Act, a compromise between various factions in the Cape legislature, had three major provisions: a change in the nature of land tenure, local district councils in the African areas and a labour tax. Communal tenure was to be replaced by a system of individual tenure under which title would be given to plots of land which could neither be alienated nor accumulated. The small size of plot envisaged - about four acres - would make it difficult for independent producers to survive. Control of land distribution would be taken out of the hands of the chiefs. The labour tax, to be levied on those who could not show that they had been out to work, would 'give some gentle stimulus to these people to make them go on working'.³ A Government Native Labour Agency was to be established to supervise the large new labour force which the Act sought to mobilise. The councils were the first step on the road to separate political institutions for the African population. Mindful of the threat that voters from the Transkeian Territories could swamp the established electorate of the

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1. Vindex, Cecil Rhodes, His Political Life and Speeches, 1881-1900 (London, 1900), 371-389, speech on moving the second reading of the Glen Grey Act.
 2. Bundy, 'African Peasants and Economic Change', 188-9; Vindex, Cecil Rhodes, 371-389; Davenport, Afrikaner Bond, 152-155; South African Native Affairs Commission 1903-1905 (Cape Town, 1905), vol.III, evidence of H.G. Elliot, especially 191ff.
 3. Vindex, Cecil Rhodes, 381.

Colony, the Cape legislature had already increased its franchise qualifications in 1887 and 1892. The district councils, to be funded by an additional tax of 10/- on each married man, would, under the guidance of the magistrates, take charge of local development and thus remove this expense from the central government.

The Act was initially implemented only in the Glen Grey district itself and in the four Fingoland districts of the southern Transkei, but officials envisaged that it would soon be extended throughout the Territories. Its measures, however, stimulated widespread opposition from a broad cross-section of the African population.¹ Partly because of this opposition and partly because of administrative difficulties, the labour tax was dropped and individual tenure became optional - each district could decide for or against the scheme. The effects of natural disasters, land shortage and the operation of the market proved sufficient to mobilise labour in the next decade and direct state intervention became less urgent. By contrast, strenuous efforts were made to implement the council system after the South African War (1899-1902). Despite continued protests, district councils were imposed in most parts of the Territories by 1906, and representatives from the districts were incorporated into a Transkeian Territories General Council. The Mpondo chiefs, however, remained doubtful of the advantages of the council system and Walter Stanford, who was Chief Magistrate of the Territories for a brief period from 1902, accepted that 'the Pondos were not yet ripe for it'.² Western Pondoland joined in 1911; Eastern Pondoland held out till 1927. The Glen Grey Act,

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1. Trapido, 'Non-White Participation', 317-323; CA NA 526/509; C. Bundy and W. Beinart, 'State Intervention and Rural Resistance. The Transkei, 1900-1965', to be published in a collection edited by M. Klein.
 2. MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol. II, 239; CA NA, 526/509, especially Assistant Chief of Magistrate East Griqualand to SNA, 22.11.1906 and CMT to SNA, 11.12.1906.

and the new directions in policy which it heralded, therefore had little effect on Pondoland; it was the older system of administration that was initially imposed.

Sigcau did not accept the limitations placed on his power without a fight. At the time of annexation, the civil war in Pondoland had not been fully settled. Although Mhlangaso appears to have got the worst of the final battle early in 1894, the Colony took over before terms could be arranged. The administration recognised Sigcau's victory and agreed to have Mhlangaso and four of his chiefly supporters exiled.¹ Patekile, chief of the rebel imizizi, was allowed to remain in Pondoland, but had to pay a fine of two hundred head of cattle. It was understood by Sigcau that Mhlangaso's followers, who were crowded into the Isisele valley, would be dispersed amongst other chiefs so that they would no longer be able to maintain their cohesion; each was to submit and pay a fine to the paramount.

Patekile paid some of his fine, but Sigcau would only accept the whole payment, which was not forthcoming. Many of the rebels chose to stay in the Isisele valley; some who moved refused to submit. The administration was not prepared to use force on behalf of the paramountcy nor to allow Sigcau to employ his own methods of coercion. When the first attempt to register huts for taxation was made in 1895, a large number of Mpondo came armed to a meeting with one of the newly appointed magistrates.² Sigcau, accused of instigating the 'disturbance', claimed that he had accepted the principle of the hut tax but refused to authorise its collection until the terms of peace had been honoured. He was concerned that the registration of Mhlangaso's followers in a block at

1. CA PMO 144, W.E. Stanford to Secretary, Prime Minister, 15.6.1895.

2. Kokstad Advertiser, February to June 1895; MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol.II, chapter XL; CA NA 440, Enquiry into Sigcau's Behaviour.

Isisele would constitute formal acceptance, on the part of the administration, of their right to remain there. As the disagreement could not be resolved by negotiation, Rhodes, who handled the crisis personally, eventually ordered the arrest of Sigcau. While officials would not coerce the rebels on behalf of the paramountcy - they felt the paramountcy's unfriendly attitude absolved them from keeping the promises made at annexation - Rhodes was quite prepared to use force against the paramount in the style that had won him success north of the Limpopo.

In case he [Sigcau] escapes into the bush [Rhodes telegraphed Stanford] my idea is that the patrol should occupy the Great Place. I did the same at Bulawayo and have built my house on the spot where Lobengula's kraal stood.¹

In order to legalise the arrest - for Sigcau had not been tried in a court of law - Rhodes rapidly passed an enabling proclamation. Sigcau's councillors, in turn, organised a collection of cattle in the chiefdom to pay the legal expenses of challenging the Prime Minister.² They succeeded in having the proclamation invalidated in a much publicised Supreme Court case. Sigcau was released and again became the hub of rumours that an armed uprising was planned.³ Both he and the administration appear to have been aware that the people were unlikely to support violent resistance, and some of the paramount's old Coloured and trader allies, whom he tried to mobilise in his support, kept the magistrates informed of his plans. Sigcau did manage to hamper the implementation of colonial rule for almost a year, but his tactics brought no concessions.

1. CA PMO 405; PM to CM East Griqualand, 12.6.1895.

2. Tredgold and Buchanan, Decisions, XII, 1895, Sigcau v. The Queen, 30.7.1895 and The Queen v. Sigcau, 8.8.1895; the case features in many traditions: Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 46; Interview, Vulizhibhaya, 18.1.1977.

3. CA PMO 146, passim

By July 1896, the Special Commissioner appointed by Rhodes to weather the crisis could report that 'Pondoland has never been quieter than at the present moment'.¹ When Rhodes visited the area again in that year, he made it clear that the government would confiscate land from the Mpondo if they rebelled.²

The task of demarcating districts and locations fell to R.W. Stanford, brother to Walter, who was appointed Boundary Commissioner. Five districts were defined immediately after annexation, but some were found to be too large and the number was increased to seven: Lusikisiki, Flagstaff, Bizana and Tabankulu to the east of the Mzimvubu; Libode, Nggeleni and Port St. Johns to the west. Work on the locations, delayed first by Sigcau's resistance and then by the coming of Rinderpest, resumed in 1897.³ It was the first step in relocating power in Pondoland at the level of the headmen. The chiefs were not entirely ignored in the colonial system of administration. Many of them were appointed as headmen and those whose authority had extended over the area of more than one location prior to annexation were allowed to choose the other headmen in their former chiefdoms. But most of the leading chiefs found the area under their immediate control very much reduced and their right to appoint a few other headmen was, as Langasiki, chief of the Ngutyana in Bizana district, remarked to the Commissioner, of dubious value.

You see if I nominate my own relatives, they will begin by thinking they are as big as I am, and if I nominate common men, all their time will be occupied in endeavours to making [sic] themselves equal to me, therefore I do not like my country to be cut up.⁴

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1. CA PMO 146, Special Commissioner to Secretary, Prime Minister, 31.7.1896.
 2. PRO C.O. Confidential Print, 879/51/547, 3.
 3. CA CMT 3/50, Asst. CMT and President Boundary Commission to CMT, 18.2.1898 and 21.7.1898.
 4. CA CMT 3/50, Asst. CMT to CMT, 18.2.1898.

Sigcau, arguing that he was the chief of the whole of Pondoland, had refused to accept the large personal location offered to him.¹ The Commissioner proceeded to divide this area into seven, each under a separate headman, although he did give the paramount permission to appoint these men.

In some locations, there were a number of petty chiefs or commoner leaders of varying status and influence. R.W. Stanford had not only to break down the authority of the leading chiefs, but build up that of those who had not controlled the area of a whole location prior to annexation. He chose the most powerful of these men, or those most sympathetic to colonial rule, as government headmen. The others would be allowed to supervise hut tax collections among their followers, but, he predicted, 'the paid man supported by the Authorities' would soon 'get things into his own hands' and the others 'would gradually lose the little power they....possessed'.² Commoner headmen, or those from lesser chiefly families, whose position depended to a far greater degree on authority granted by the state, could be used against the more powerful chiefs. In fact, some petty chiefs, threatened prior to annexation by their more powerful neighbours, welcomed the freezing of territorial positions. The salaries paid to headmen by the state, which could be withdrawn at the administration's discretion, ranged from £6 in the case of a recently appointed commoner to £40 for Manundu, of the Isikelo house in Bizana, the highest ranking chief in Eastern Pondoland after Sigcau.³

Though, as Langasiki had pessimistically predicted, the chiefs could not be sure of controlling their own appointees to headmanships, they had

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1. MacLoughlin papers, Gladwin to CMT, 21.2.1923.
 2. CA CMT 3/50, Asst. CMT to CMT, 21.7.1898.
 3. CA CMT 3/50, RM Bizana to Asst. CMT, 9.9.1896, in Asst. CMT to CMT, 2.10.1896.

more chance of retaining the support of such men than of the magistrate's nominees. Sigcau soon realised that if he was to protect his position in Pondoland, he would have to play by the administration's rules. His efforts to appoint his own nominees in disputed locations, coupled with festering grievances arising out of the civil war settlement, gave rise in 1899, to a dispute which R.W. Stanford, who had become Assistant Chief Magistrate in Lusikisiki, considered 'the most serious that we have had to deal with since the country was annexed'.¹

Sigcau had attempted, after annexation, to secure his claim to the whole of Mhlangaso's former chiefdom which now fell in the Flagstaff district. His intention was to place the house of Marelane, the eldest son of his Great Wife and the likely successor, in the area to cement paramount control over it. Although the administration gave permission for the placement of the Great House in the heart of Mhlangaso's chiefdom, in what became the Nthlenzi location, they would not recognise Sigcau's larger claims and proceeded to divide up the rest of the area into separate locations. Sigcau now tried to have a regent headman appointed over Nthlenzi as a caretaker for his heir. But officials initially hesitated to grant even this request for among those who had moved into the area after Mhlangaso's flight was Masipula, half brother to the paramount. As Masipula was the most senior chief in Nthlenzi location when the Boundary Commissioner arrived, he stood in line for appointment as headman.

By 1899, Nthlenzi was also beginning to fill up with rebels, returning to their old homesteads from the Isisele valley. Some settled close to the site chosen for the Great House. When the administration finally refused to move either Masipula or the rebels, Sigcau took matters into his own hands. Indunas were sent to bully the rebels out, witchcraft accusations

1. This and two following paragraphs based on CA NA 686/2610, Asst. CMT to CMT, 16.5.1900, and passim; CA NA 685/2608; CA CMT 3/51.

were initiated and Sigcau personally assaulted one of the men in the location. The magistrate of Flagstaff, anxious to protect commoners against the wrath of the paramount, convicted Sigcau of the crime, thus completing his humiliation over the Nthlenzi affair. The administration had chosen to assert its authority on issues which were of vital concern to Sigcau: his claim to victory and control over the rebels, his claim to appoint headmen in more than the seven locations allotted to him and his attempt to secure the future of the paramountcy. A couple of years later, Masipula himself fell foul of the magistrates, who were already concerned that the simmering dispute between the two royal chiefs would become violent. Masipula was persuaded to move as headman to a neighbouring location and Marelane's guardian was appointed in Nthlenzi. But the administration had made its point and Sigcau won only a small part of his original demands. Sigcau was sometimes consulted before new headmen were appointed, for he still had the power to make the position of magisterial appointees difficult. But some officials felt that Sigcau's nominees should never be accepted as 'experience had shown that men recommended by him for Government work did more work for him than for the authorities'.¹

As Sigcau and other leading chiefs realised, headmen who were not directly under their control could compete for power with the protection of the administration. They would also be able to undermine the ability of the chiefs to claim customary dues, either by protecting the people against the chiefs or diverting some of these payments into their own coffers. Once the administration had removed so much of the paramount's independent income, these payments - death duties, immigration fees, court fines and property 'eaten up' after witchcraft accusations - became all

1. MacLoughlin papers, RM Lusikisiki to CMT, 23.7.1925, quoting Asst. CMT, 1904.

the more important an element in chiefly revenues. While Sigcau's income from such sources may have been declining immediately prior to annexation, he probably still received hundreds of head of cattle a year from his people. In cash terms, at the turn of the century, even 100 animals were worth over £1,000 and the payment of dues was also important as a symbolic recognition of the chieftaincy.¹ Officials had adopted the policy that customs which were not directly inimical to civilised government should be allowed. Witchcraft accusations were not sanctioned but dues were regarded as customary payments which the chiefs could collect as long as they did not use force.² Officials believed that 'our system of administration in its broad effects gradually destroys adherence to native customs'.³ The people had, in any case, a prior creditor in the shape of the administration itself, to which they had to pay taxes.

Where evidence is available on the collection of tribute payments, it suggests that the chiefs lost ground rapidly. By 1901, Langasiki, the Ngutyana chief, claimed that he was owed over thirty isizi (death duty) beasts by his people. Without them, he claimed, he 'would have no food to eat' or, as the magistrate of Bizana clarified, 'no revenue to support him in his proper state and dignity as chief'.⁴ When Langasiki ignored the magistrate's warnings and took dues by force, he was immediately cautioned and the stock and cash seized were returned to their previous owners. Sigcau was similarly warned when complaints were received about the activities of his indunas.⁵ The magistrates were well aware that

1. For cattle prices see Chapter 3, section 1.

2. CA CMT 3/952/752, Notes on Pondoland matters, by Mr. Stanford; CA CMT 3/593/45(1); CA NA 685/2608, SNA to Asst. CMK, 26.11.1904.

3. CA NA 685/2608, SNA to Asst. CMK, 26.11.1904.

4. CA NA 510/268, RM Bizana to Asst. CMT, 23.12.1901 and enclosures.

5. CA NA 685/2608, RM Flagstaff to CMT, 10.12.1903 and enclosures.

they did not always hear of such disputes and that 'the dues are frequently collected by force, though there is usually no proof of this, as the people are afraid to report their chiefs'.¹ However, there is little doubt that isizi became more difficult to collect.

Sigcau was promised, at annexation, that Pondoland would not be flooded with aliens and that he would be consulted before immigrants were admitted.² But neither officials or the paramountcy seem to have been able to control the flow of immigrants into Pondoland from the overcrowded locations of the Ciskei, southern Transkei and southern Natal. There was no adequate administrative machinery through which population movement within the African areas could be monitored. When magistrates did find that strangers had moved into their districts without permission, they usually found it less trouble to allow them to stay, especially if the headman into whose location the immigrant had moved was sympathetic to the government. Immigrants had, of course, to go to the local headmen in order to obtain land and kraal sites and it seems that the local chiefs and headmen, rather than the paramount, were able to take the lion's share of the fees for themselves.

Local headmen were also in a good position to extend their control over the administration of justice. No chiefly courts were officially recognised after annexation and all criminal cases were supposed to be tried in the magistrates' courts, for crimes were now against the colonial state rather than the chief. However, the magistrates had only small police contingents at their disposal, and except where their

1. CA NA 510/268, Asst. CMT to CMT, 30.12.1901.

2. CA NA 561/1017, SNA to Asst. CMT, 5.7.1902 and following correspondence; CA CMT 3/52, Asst. CMT to CMT, 27.4.1901; CA CMT 3/593/45(1); CA NA 550/879, CMT to SNA, 25.8.1902 and following correspondence.

detectives deliberately sought out criminals, they relied on the headmen to report breaches of the colonial law. Officials reported on a number of occasions that headmen did their best 'to keep their followers away from the office' and that 'crime was hushed up and settled privately in Native style'.¹ It may be for this reason that one magistrate found crime to be 'conspicuous by its absence' in post-annexation Pondoland.² As headmen were given an increasingly pivotal role in the administrative system, they were probably able to draw away custom from the courts of the leading chiefs. Fines remained with the authority that imposed them.

The administration was less keen to take on all civil cases and accepted that these should be settled by chiefs and headmen acting in unrecognised courts of arbitration rather than courts of law. Dissatisfied plaintiffs could always appeal to the magistrates. Even if commoners had wished to take their case to the magistrates, however, they were inhibited by the cost.³ Not only did they have to pay court fees, messenger's fees and summons charges, but they also had to employ interpreters so that they could make themselves understood, and attorneys, for they were unfamiliar with procedures in the magistrates' courts. Litigants did have to pay charges to open the chiefs' courts, but they needed no interpreter and could act for themselves. Further, they did not always receive a different type of justice in colonial courts as magistrates usually applied 'native law and custom' to civil disputes between non-Christian Africans. Although the number of cases heard by the magistrates increased in the first decade of the century - from 299 in 1902 to 600 in 1910 in Lusikisiki, for example - many of the civil cases

1. Cape, BBNA, G.25 - 1902, 57; Cape, BBNA, G.46 - 1906, 54.

2. Cape, BBNA, G.12 - 1904, 69.

3. CA CMT 3/50, RM Bizana to Asst. CMT, 11.9.1896; CA CMT 3/52, Asst. CMT to CMT, 29/9/1901.

they heard involved Christian Africans or Europeans, and criminal prosecutions were often for breaches of regulations imposed by the colony rather than the crimes which were also common to pre-colonial society.¹

Sigcau's loyalty to the administration came into question on a number of occasions after the Nthlenzi episode although he did not again rouse such official anger. On some issues, however, particularly when it suited his interests, the paramount did not oppose colonial intervention. He smoothed the path for Rinderpest regulations, for the dipping of sheep, for labour recruiters, and the census enumerators in 1904. But he was always regarded as a potential threat and the officials' attitude to him made them all the more determined to break down his power.² His death, in 1905, was greeted by the administration with relief.

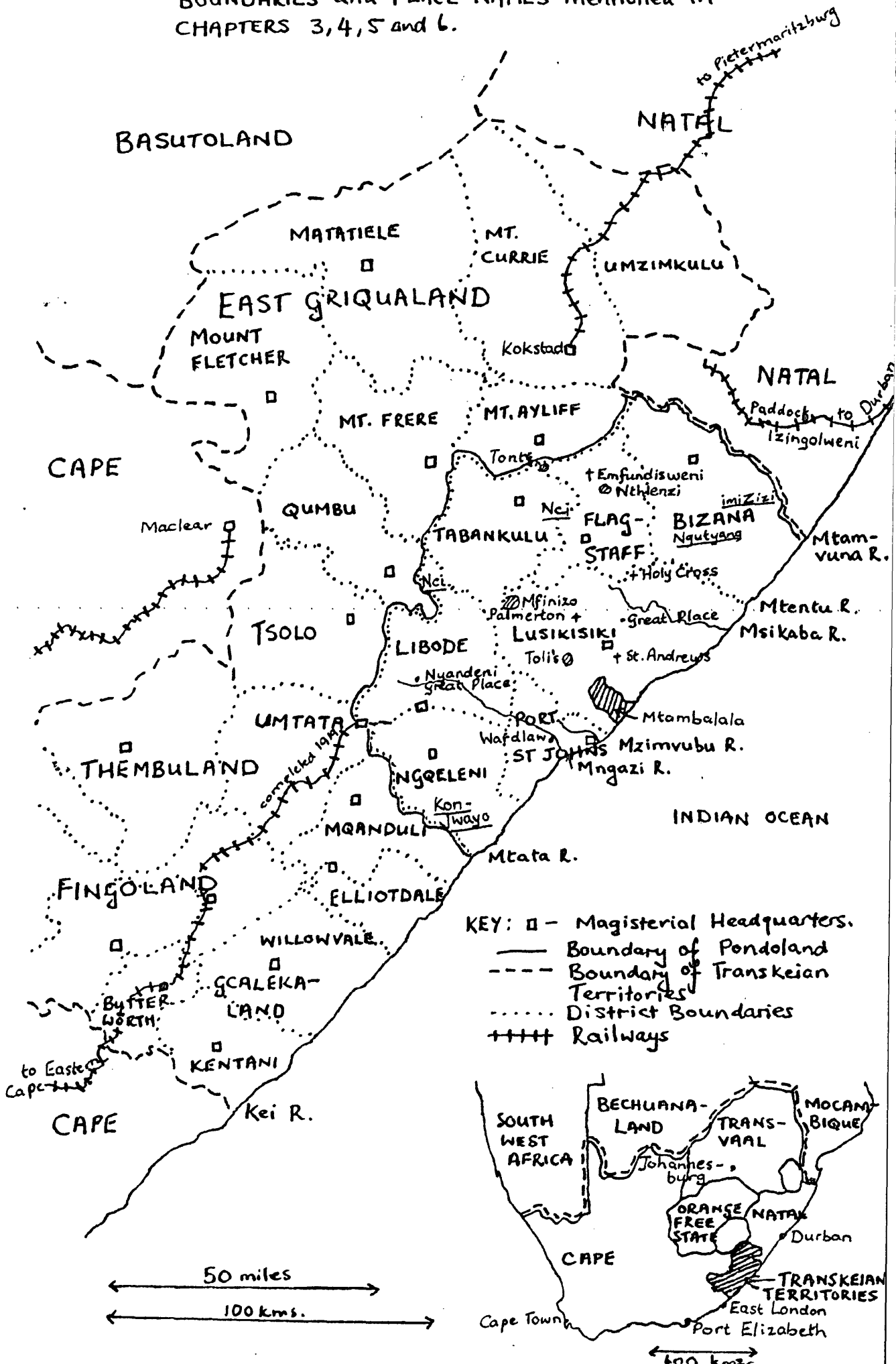
During the decade after annexation, then, the administration not only removed the paramount's independent income from traders and concessionaries but whittled away the dues received by the leading chiefs. Some of these payments, such as court fines and immigration fees were partly taken over by local chiefs and headmen, but the total amount of such dues drawn from the commoners was probably reduced substantially. The Colony attempted to locate power in the headmanships and to make the headmen directly responsible to magistrates rather than to the chiefs. But the administration recognised that chiefs in Pondoland were the most powerful in the Territories, that their authority could not be dissolved immediately. Officials had to rest content with teaching Sigcau and the other leading chiefs that co-operation was better for all concerned. Bokleni, who had succeeded Nqwiliso in Western Pondoland in 1898, had learnt this lesson and was held up by the administration as the model of a colonial chief.³

1. CA 1/LSK, Criminal and Civil Cases, Record Books.

2. Cape, BBNA, G.25 - 1902, 37; CA NA 685/2608, CMT to SNA, 5.6.1899.

3. See Cape, Blue Books, 1895-1909, especially reports by RM Libode.

MAP 4: PONDOLAND after 1910 ; COLONIAL ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES and PLACE NAMES mentioned in CHAPTERS 3,4,5 and 6.



Chapter 3

CROPS, CATTLE AND THE ORIGINS OF
LABOUR MIGRANCY, 1894-1911

1: Production, Exchange and the Entrenchment of Economic Dependence

In the decade after annexation, the colonial state made few direct attempts to undermine agricultural production in Pondoland. Except for small areas around the magisterial centres, land remained in African hands under communal tenure. If grazing land was still under pressure, there was no shortage of space for homesteads and arable plots.

As regards Pondoland [commented an official in 1897] the population is very sparse and with the exception of a few favoured localities where the soil is rich the country could easily sustain twice the number of persons it now carries. In fact when travelling one is struck by the small number of kraals in sight as compared with those in the other [African] Territories, and there will be no difficulty in locating the Pondos for another generation or two.¹

The hut tax had been imposed, though not the council tax nor the labour tax, and every family had now to find an annual cash income. But as the tax was levied as a flat rate on huts or wives rather than on the quantity of land cultivated, crops produced or size of herd, it did not seriously inhibit production. Additional wives, who provided much of the labour in the fields, did mean additional taxes, but it was through them, also, that homesteads were entitled to extend their land holdings. Magistrates accepted cash from any source in payment for the hut tax which was levied after the harvest. Commoner families probably found that the demands for tribute and dues by the chiefs had diminished. Though these had never been as regular as the demand for hut tax, they

1. CA CMT 3/50, Assistant CMT to CMT, 17.2.1897.

had not been insignificant. Officials soon began to encourage men to go out and work but there is no evidence to suggest that they used physical coercion. Before the turn of the century, magistrates often remarked on the reluctance of the Mpondo to appreciate the 'dignity of labour'.¹ Mpondo homesteads, still large, had not therefore been drained of their male labour as had so many in other parts of the Transkeian Territories by this time. (Tables 5 and 8.) Many homesteads had ploughs - the means by which they could extend cultivation. Furthermore, annexation had the effect of opening larger markets, especially for grain, to producers in Pondoland.

Magisterial headquarters were established on the transport routes at points where sufficient wood and water were available for the anticipated village settlements. Some, such as Libode and Flagstaff, grew around existing trading stations. Lusikisiki, on the other hand, was chosen because of its strategic location; it was near the Great Place and, as an official pointed out, 'between the Pondos and the forests'.² The headquarters were roughly equidistant from one another, about one day's ride on horseback apart, so that none was too isolated in case of trouble. Within a decade after annexation they had drawn a sizeable and mixed population. The magistrates soon started courts and their inevitable accompaniments, lock-ups. Court and prison officials were assigned to them, along with clerical staff, small police contingents and a few officers from other government departments. Detachments of between fifty and one hundred Cape Mounted Riflemen were maintained at some centres for a few years; with them arrived canteen keepers. Small hotels sprang up to cater for the more transient elements in the European population. Craftsmen were needed as permanent buildings began to be

1. Cape, Blue Books, 1894 -1899, reports by Pondoland magistrates.

2. CA PMO 146, Jenner to Milton, 11.7.1895.

erected; smiths were essential for colonial riders. (The Mpondo did not shoe their horses.) Traders, transport riders and butchers arrived to supply these communities. The villages also catered for the surrounding African population. A few specialist labour recruiters set up business. Eating houses provided sustenance for those coming into town to pay taxes, attend on the magistrate, purchase goods or contract for work outside Pondoland. European and Coloured families, at least, employed servants.

Only Port St. Johns was classified as an urban community when census counts were taken in 1904 and 1911; its population amounted to 778 in the latter year.¹ Port St Johns was almost certainly the largest settlement, but Lusikisiki, the most important administrative centre, and Flagstaff and Bizana, the most important recruiting and trading centres, probably grew to at least half the size. The village populations were perhaps one quarter European, something less than a quarter Coloured and over half African. (Indians were excluded from the Territories.) Senior officials, traders, recruiters and troops were usually European; some transport riders, artisans and recruiters were Coloured, including descendants of the old trading families; Africans, often immigrants, were involved in all the latter occupations and filled junior positions in the police, prison and administrative hierarchy. Most of the servants were probably drawn from surrounding locations. Although some of the settled village inhabitants had access to garden plots, and to the commonage which was reserved around the magisterial headquarters, few could produce sufficient for their subsistence. The villages did, therefore, provide important new markets for produce from the districts.

1. Union of South Africa, First Census of the Population of the Union, 1911, U.G.32 - 1912, 34.

The network of dispersed trading stations remained intact. Traders organised themselves into local associations and were able to win significant concessions from the administration. By 1904, officials, who now controlled trading sites and licences, began to enforce a rule that each station should be at least five miles from the next, thus providing established traders with a local monopoly.¹ While not all the rural sites were taken, those that remained tended to be in more isolated spots; new village stores largely accounted for the increase in trading establishments from something under one hundred prior to annexation to 119 in 1905.² It was under pressure from the traders that Indian businessmen were excluded; it was also partly due to their efforts that transport links between stations and between Pondoland and colonial markets were improved.³ The metalling of major roads was completed. Railways had reached termini in East Griqualand and southern Natal and a new road linking Bizana and the southern Natal railhead of Izingolweni was built; partly with newly available prison labour.⁴

Despite pressures from local business interests and officials, all the schemes involving railways from Port St Johns to the interior proved abortive. A large new harbour was considered a threat by the powerful commercial interests in the established colonial ports. But Port St. Johns did receive a new lease of life. Pondoland traders could no longer escape Cape duties and it now proved cheaper for many to use the harbour rather than the overland route through Natal. The settlement was moved down to the river mouth itself, a new jetty and new roads on

1. CA NA 617/1881, SNA to Prime Minister, 5.8.1903, SNA to Asst. CMT, 6.10.1904.

2. Cape, BBNA, G.46 - 1906, 109.

3. CA NA 519/410 has details on Traders' associations and their demands.

4. CA CMT 3/52, Asst. CMT to CMT, 22.5.1901.

either side of the river bank were built. A pontoon ferry, which could carry wagons, linked Eastern and Western Pondoland and routes over the drifts up-river, which were often impassable, became less important. The volume of shipping through the port increased dramatically. Even after the 1886 agreement, seldom more than twenty boats called annually; in 1898, the number had climbed to 164. (Table 2.) The value of goods forwarded by this route increased from a few thousand pounds annually to over £113,000 worth of imports and £45,000 of exports by the same year.¹ Pondoland had become more accessible both by land and sea routes; at the same time, markets outside Pondoland could be reached more easily.

In the first few years after annexation, such advantages were of little aid, for Pondoland was struck by a devastating series of natural disasters which were completely unrelated, at least in the official mind, to the new political order. In 1894 and 1895, 'drought unprecedented within memory' returned: there was a general shortage of food and grain had to be imported.² The situation was exacerbated, between 1894 and 1896, by a series of locust plagues. The magistrate of Ngqeleni, in one of his first annual reports, claimed that 'locusts in myriads' had invaded the district and 'crops which were a foot high were eaten off the ground'.³

These reverses, while they hampered cultivation and resulted in a small increase in labour migrancy, had no serious long term effects. By 1897, the magistrate in Flagstaff could report that a good harvest had

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1. Cape, BBNA, G.31 - 1899, 93. For details on transport routes and competition for trade between the Cape and Natal see, Cape of Good Hope, Department of the Treasury, Report on Trade with the Native Territories, G.22 - 1905.
 2. Cape, BBNA, G.5 - 1896, 124; Cape, BBNA, G.8 - 1895, 90,91,120-122.
 3. Cape, BBNA, G.5 - 1896, 117,124,152.

been reaped in 1896. In the next year there were more general reports of 'abundant crops' and exports.¹ However, as cultivation began to recover, a new disaster hit Pondoland. Rinderpest, a virulent cattle disease which had swept through much of subsaharan Africa in the previous few years, decimated the herds.

Neither the colonial government nor the Mpondo themselves were unmindful of the damage that the disease could cause; when it reached the borders of the Cape Colony early in 1897, preventative measures were taken. The Cape closed its borders to cattle movements, built fences to keep cattle from Natal and Basutoland outside the Territories, and cleared belts around these barriers. Cordons around Pondoland were 'almost entirely maintained by the voluntary guards of the Pondos' and 'at the special request of Sigcau, a cordon was also established along the Mzimvubu river to divide East and West Pondoland.'² Such measures had, it should be remembered, been used during previous epidemics of exotic diseases. A system of inoculation, based on 'culture kraals' in which animals were isolated and infected in order to produce serum, was introduced by the colonial veterinary service. Although there had been widespread resistance to this method in some parts of the Cape, 'Sigcau, the owner of several thousand head of cattle, [fell] in with the idea of inoculating'.³ He promised sixty head for the kraal erected in Lusikisiki. Nqwiliso, in Western Pondoland, was also co-operative.

The preventative measures were inadequate. Rinderpest 'jumped' into the centre of the Territories in June 1897 and proved uncontrollable. Pondoland was one of the last areas infected, probably because of the

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1. Cape, BBNA, G.19 - 1897, 119; G.42 - 1898, 76,112ff.
 2. CA PMO 249, Rinderpest in the Transkeian Territories, Memorandum for the Right Honourable the Premier, signed S. Cowper, 6.9.1897.
 3. Kokstad Advertiser, 30.7.1897, 12.11.1897; PMO 249, RM Kentani to CMT, 22.9.1897.

strenuous efforts made by the people to isolate their herds, but between August and December most of the cattle died. Inoculation had been limited, for culture kraals needed specialists to run them and Pondoland was by no means a priority area for the much overstretched veterinary services. In any case, those few who had inoculated were not much better off. O'Donnell, who had treated his cattle diligently both before the disease reached Pondoland and while it raged, lost all but nine of the forty one animals at one of his stations.¹ The Chief Magistrate estimated that about 80 per cent of the cattle in the Territories had succumbed; statistics of the cattle population before and after Rinderpest are not sufficiently accurate to confirm this figure, but O'Donnell's losses, which were clearly recorded, were of the same order.² (Table 10) The course of the disease was erratic: few homesteads escaped, but a number were left with at least the nucleus of a herd, while some lost all.

Whatever the exact losses, the disease was clearly a serious blow to the Mpondo economy. The cattle trade was killed at a stroke. Some traders bought up cattle for very low prices while the disease raged in the hope that they could immunise and resell them, but once Rinderpest had passed, those who still had animals hung on them.³ Although hides from diseased animals were supposed to be buried, along with the carcasses, in order to prevent further infection, many did find their way to the traders. Sixty thousand hides reached Port St Johns by December 1897, but the temporary boom in the hide trade was shortlived.⁴ The Mpondo had been deprived of two of their key exports. Moreover, Rinderpest

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1. CA O'D 11, calculated from figures in Diary, October and November, 1897.
 2. Cape, BBNA, G.42 - 1898, 76.
 3. CA O'D 44, J.P. Bouverie to J.F. Mackenzie, 18.1.1898.
 4. CA PMO 249, Report, RM Port St Johns, 15.12.1897 in CMT to SNA, 13.1.1898.

had even deeper implications for an economy so closely tied to cattle. Not only were milk and meat short, loans and ceremonies involving the passage of stock restricted, but cultivation, which was increasingly dependent on the use of draught, was severely hampered. Another starvation threatened for although many families had cash from hides, Rinderpest disrupted the system of transport and drove costs of wagon carriage upwards, thus restricting imports of grain.

Despite the devastation wrought by the disease, the Assistant Chief Magistrate felt that it was not an unmitigated disaster.

With the marvellous recuperative powers of Native cattle, which has been exemplified both after visitations of red-water and lungsickness, I am of the opinion that the herds will now (assuming that Rinderpest has really departed from us) rapidly increase in numbers. Prior to the advent of Rinderpest the country was vastly overstocked to the serious detriment of agricultural pursuits which encourage local industry; every additional acre of land that it was sought to bring under cultivation was begrudged and its use for that purpose strenuously resisted by stock-owners, who would have been glad to see the entire Territories kept as a cattle "ranch". A loss of fully one half the stock owned by the Native, could it have been evenly distributed over the herds, would have been a decided advantage to the country and its people. As it is, the desire to possess cattle, which have now greatly increased in value, is causing great numbers of Natives to go to the several industrial centres in order to obtain money wherewith to purchase them.¹

His observations were entirely accurate. Rinderpest did in fact disappear within a few years. Although the demand for cattle to restock the Territories drove the price of animals up to heights of over £15 a head, the Mpondo soon began to import.² While a few homesteads had sufficient cash or produce to exchange for stock, many had to go outside Pondoland, often for the first time, to work. As the grazing was, according to all reports,

1. CA PMO 249, Asst. CMT to Secretary, Prime Minister's Office, 22.7.1898.

2. Cattle prices from, for example, CA O'D 13-15, 44-51; CA NA 510/268, CMT to SNA, 9.1.1902; C.C. Henkel, The Native or Transkeian Territories (Hamburg, 1903), 46.

very lush, the animals remaining, and those purchased, increased rapidly. Within a few years, there were again sufficient oxen for ploughing.

In the nineteenth century, it has been noted, the Mpondo tended to respond to the loss of cattle by increasing the intensity of crop production. Rinderpest brought forth a similar response: more ploughs were purchased - by 1904, according to the census, there were over 8,000 in Pondoland - and the area of land cultivated was extended.¹ The loss of cattle also reinforced the processes of structural change that had accompanied the penetration of Pondoland by traders and the decline of military and hunting activities. Crops were now increasingly important both for subsistence and as a source of cash income with which to pay taxes and purchase commodities. From 1899, there are many reports of substantial crop exports. It is true that the magistrates from whom most of the information about production at this time comes, had an interest in emphasising the benefits of colonial rule of which, they considered, hard work in the fields was one. Yet they generally considered the Mpondo as abysmally 'backward', socially and economically, with 'no desire for advancement'.² Their reports about crop exports are made despite their general opinion of their charges.

Not only had transport facilities improved in the years after annexation, the demand for crops outside Pondoland also soared. Production on many European farms was severely disrupted during the South African War at a time when the colonial powers had to feed large contingents of troops. Africans in other parts of the Territories, who were already beginning to feel the pinch of land shortage, were not in so favourable a position to respond to this demand. In fact, parts of the Transkei

1. Cape of Good Hope, Census of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, 1904, G.19 - 1905, 518; Cape, BBNA, G.52 - 1901, 50, G.12 - 1904, 57 and Blue Books, 1899-1905, passim.

2. Cape, BBNA, G.36 - 1907, 42 and Blue Books, 1896-1909, passim.

were struck by a series of droughts between 1901 and 1904 which had a far less serious effect on Pondoland. Markets for Mpondo grain therefore opened within the Territories as well. The availability of large quantities of produce attracted considerable numbers of itinerant Europeans and African traders and speculators whose activities supplemented those of the established traders. Prices paid for grain rose in the first decade of the century, sometimes to over ten shillings a bag.

The quantity of crops exported from Pondoland during these years increased dramatically. In 1901, the magistrate of Lusikisiki recorded that 'thousands of bags of mealies and Kaffir-corn [sorghum] were harvested, most of which were exported to the Colony and other territories where grain is scarce and dear'.¹

I estimate [wrote the official at Flagstaff in 1902] that the Traders in this district bought up some nine thousand bags of mealies and Kafir corn from last years crops and they are now selling to outside buyers who have come into the district from Thembuland and Transkei.²

Two years later, the magistrate at Bizana could say with confidence that 'in an ordinary season, this district exports many thousand bags of grain'.³ According to the census of 1904, more sorghum was produced in Libode than in any other district not only in the Transkeian Territories, but in the Cape Colony as a whole, while Ngqeleni had the largest harvest of maize.⁴ Such figures are highly suspect for they are based on estimates. However, enumerators in the various Transkeian districts used similar methods of estimation, and many of the census officers, usually magistrates, had had experience of other districts. Their returns do

1. Cape, BBNA, G.52 - 1901, 54.

2. CA CMT 3/97, RM Flagstaff to CMT, 27.12.1902.

3. Cape, BBNA, G.12 - 1904, 55.

4. Cape, Census, 1904, G.19 - 1905, 499, 500.

suggest that Mpondo crops made a better impression on them than those elsewhere.

Neither the census nor the magistrates' reports give much idea about which families in Pondoland accounted for the large increases in exports. Rough calculations from the figures and observations made at the time suggest that traders were purchasing about a fifth, perhaps a quarter, of the total amount of grain produced in Pondoland. Average homestead production was perhaps between twelve and twenty bags; on average, each family probably sold between three and five bags to a value of fl - 3. There were substantial inequalities in the amount produced by different homesteads. However, all that was needed to produce this comparatively small surplus was a plough, and most families needed income from crops to compensate for their loss of income from pastoral products. The fact that ploughs were very widely adopted in these years suggests that many homesteads were able to sell a small quantity of grain. Although a minority of families clearly produced more, and a minority less than the average, the extension of crop production appears to have been a general phenomenon.¹

The sudden loss of cattle also increased Mpondo receptivity to small stock. Hargreaves, the missionary at Emfundisweni, remarked on this even while Rinderpest, its effects exacerbated by a local drought, raged.

The native people in many places are adapting themselves to the changed conditions of life. They are getting a few goats around them....I have been amongst them lately and have been surprised to see goats at nearly every kraal. Some are milking sheep.²

There was an especially noticeable increase in the number of woolled sheep in Pondoland. O'Donnell's diaries show that in the few years after 1897,

1. See Chapter 6, section 1.

2. Stanford papers Ca3, Hargreaves to Stanford, 30.11.1897.

he imported a considerable number for sale, but the traders were not the only source of supply.¹ During 1900 and 1901, 'great numbers of sheep and goats from Transkei and Thembuland were exchanged in Pondoland'.² The purchasers of Mpondo grain had little else with which to pay. Magistrates reported that the number of small stock were increasing in the coastal districts as well as upland areas into which woolled sheep had already been introduced.³ Small stock were no longer being used merely to exploit grazing unsuitable for cattle.

The officials specifically encouraged the adoption of small stock to compensate for cattle losses. The Scab Proclamation of 1893, which enforced dipping to combat the disease, was extended to Pondoland in 1903. While dipping excited some opposition, as it had in other colonial districts among both white and black stockowners, the chiefs in Pondoland were amenable and the construction of dipping tanks was not seriously hampered.⁴ Estimates, though again suspect, suggest that the number of woolled sheep in the area quadrupled from under 50,000 before Rinderpest to about 200,000 in 1909, while the number of goats doubled to around the same figure. (Table 13.) Small stock provided meat and even milk for consumption - they were usually milked only in times of great shortage - and were an alternative to cattle in bridewealth transactions and sacrifices. Sale of wool, though it was hampered by the prevalence of scab, supplemented cash incomes. Wool exports increased considerably though output in Pondoland did not rival that in the south-western parts of the Territories which still had a greater small stock population.

1. CA O'D 12, 13 and 15.

2. Cape, BBNA, G.52 - 1901, 35; Cape, BBNA, G.25 - 1902, 56,58,61.

3. Cape of Good Hope, Department of Agriculture, Report of the Chief Inspector of Sheep, G.35 - 1898, 14; CA NA 686/2609, CMT to RM Lusikisiki, 17.2.1903 and enclosures.

4. Davenport, Afrikaner Bond, 155-159; Cape, Report of the Chief Inspector of Sheep, G.37 - 1903, 52 and G.28 - 1904, 83.

Income from wool was particularly valuable for it carried producers over lean periods in the annual productive cycle; shearing times were in October and November, when the harvest had been exchanged, and in March and April, before the next harvest.

While Mpondo producers concentrated on staple grain crops, tobacco was still exported and new crops were introduced.¹ As early as the 1880s, one immigrant into Pondoland fenced off land for a coffee plantation; though this crop did not spread, experiments were made with cotton in the subtropical coastal belt.² In 1904, the magistrate at Port St Johns reported that 'many natives were ... planting bananas, oranges and lemons', while inland, peaches proved popular.³ Some winter crops were tried, especially oats, for fodder, and wheat. In the coastal districts, wheat was susceptible to disease but the cultivation of oats, always in demand at the magisterial centres, met with success. A few turned their hands to market gardening of new types of vegetables.

During the first decade of the century, the total value of produce sold in Pondoland probably did increase. While the expansion of crop production was in part a response to the loss of stock - it should be remembered that 10,000 bags of grain were worth less than 1,000 head of cattle on colonial markets - cattle numbers recovered quickly. By 1906 there were probably sufficient animals for most internal purposes, and by 1910 the number of cattle was probably approaching its pre-Rinderpest level. (Table 10) Although cattle sales were not as large as in the nineteenth century and movement of cattle to the Cape was impossible, pastoral products were again sold to traders. Further, wool was being sold in greater quantities than ever before and other subsidiary products provided additional

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1. CA O'D 47-50; Interview, J. Mhatu, Malengene AA, Lusikisiki, 13.1.1977.
 2. MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol.II, 108; see chapter 4, section 3.
 3. Cape, BBNA, G.12 - 1904, 85.

cash income. In 1909, the magistrate at St Johns thought that 'the natives as a whole are becoming richer in this district'.¹

However, the period was not one of unrelieved prosperity. It was probably some years before crop exports fully compensated for the loss of pastoral exports. The Mpondo remained dependent on migrant labour to restock throughout the decade although the figures for migrancy, after climbing to around 10,000 annually by 1904, remained fairly stable until the end of the decade, and the rate of migrancy from Pondoland was still very much lower than from other parts of the Territories. (Tables 5 and 8)

Extension of cultivation deepened the dependence on the colonial economy for implements - pastoral production had never had the same effect - and because few homesteads irrigated their plots, the Mpondo cultivators remained highly susceptible to drought. Whereas in good years they could produce sufficient for export, bad years had a more devastating effect on crop production than they had on the pastoral economy. Imports of grain proved necessary not only in the years immediately prior to Rinderpest, but again during the next cycle of drought in 1903 and, in specific districts, on other occasions.² Localised droughts could be experienced in small areas, even when rainfall in Pondoland as a whole was adequate.

Further, once European agriculture began to recover from the South African War, and indeed expand rapidly under stimulation from the reconstruction governments in the Transvaal and Orange Free State, markets for African grain became more limited and more volatile. The Mpondo still largely used their old maize seed, a mixed variety which, while it was suited to local conditions, produced grain of a variety of shape and colour. European farmers increasingly moved over to more developed white and yellow varieties, and these set the standard in the most important markets. The magistrate of Mount Frere, on the borders of Pondoland,

1. Cape, BBNA, G.19 - 1909, 51.

2. Cape, BBNA, G.12 - 1904, 55.

summed up the situation in 1909.

The vast strides which the Mealie Export Trade has made in the past two or three years, and the great quantity of superior mealies which are now produced in the Transvaal, Natal and other parts of South Africa, has practically ousted the Kaffir Mealie from the market which it formerly possessed, and, if the present condition continues, - in my opinion it is likely to become more acute - the Trader will decline to buy mealies from the native, or purchase only in very limited quantities.¹

'These pressures worked slowly through the Mpondo economy. In 1905, for example, the people in Bizana were having difficulty in selling a bumper crop while 'large quantities were shipped to East London' and sold in the rest of the Territories from Lusikisiki.² Good harvests and exports continued until 1908; on one occasion, at least, the danger of a glut was averted by direct export to England, but this seems to have been rare.³ As late as 1910, about 12,000 bags were being exported from St Johns, some grown by farmers in the small European enclave which had rich riverside lands.⁴ At the same time, however, magistrates were remarking on the difficulties being experienced in selling the crop.

Competition in external markets, coupled with the increased dependence of traders in Pondoland on finding buyers for grain within the Transkeian Territories, resulted in more violent price fluctuations.⁵ Although Pondoland was, in general, less susceptible to drought than many other parts of the Territories, the general cycle of rainfall tended to affect the whole of the area between the Drakensberg and the sea. A good year

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1. CA CMT 3/847/593 (1), RM Mount Frere to CMT, 24.9.1909.
 2. Cape, BBNA, G.46 - 1906, 32, 42.
 3. Cape, BBNA, G.19 - 1909, 37.
 4. Union of South Africa, Department of Native Affairs, Blue Book on Native Affairs, U.17 - 1911, 117, and reports by Pondoland magistrates.
 5. Prices are taken from Cape, Blue Books, 1900-1909.

in Pondoland was likely to be a good year in the region as a whole, and in an unregulated market, there was always the danger of a glut. Prices offered by the traders could drop to below 5/- a bag in comparison to the more usual price of between 6/- and 8/-, or even 10/-. Traders could be more selective about the type of grain they purchased and the way in which they paid producers. In the years immediately before annexation, they had begun to pay cash for produce. When markets outside Pondoland became more accessible after annexation, and producers demanded cash for their grain in order to pay taxes, cash payments became common. In fact, O'Donnell complained, in 1896, that his ability to purchase grain was limited by a general shortage of silver in Pondoland and at the banks in Kokstad.¹

Towards the end of the first decade of the century, however, and in subsequent decades, traders became more and more reluctant to offer cash, for they could not easily recuperate their expenditure on external markets. Instead, they gave 'good fors', usually metal tokens which allowed producers to purchase goods only at the store to which they had sold their grain. The system enabled traders to tie the local population to their stores. Grain was not the only crop affected by lack of markets. In 1907, the magistrate at St Johns reported that 'the large quantities of fruit that this fertile district yields rots on the ground year after year.'²

Producers could store more grain during times of glut in the hope that demand and prices would improve in the next season. However, grain stored in underground pits tended to become musty and discoloured, and was of little use for sale outside Pondoland.³ Traders were reluctant to purchase it at all. Gluts therefore tended to result in increased

1. CA O'D 37, O'Donnell to Randle Brothers and Hudson, 25.6.1896.

2. Cape, BBNA, G.24 - 1908, 28.

3. Union, Blue Book, U.17 - 1911, 115.

consumption - the quantity of grain consumed was to some extent elastic - marked by the frequent beer parties that so often aroused the ire of officials. The dangers of overproduction also seem to have inhibited further extension of cultivation by the end of the first decade of the century. 'In good seasons', the magistrate of Nggeleni remarked in 1910, 'the prices realised barely pay for the cost of production'.¹ It is not easy to calculate production costs in a Mpondo homestead. Land, once granted, was free, labour was generally provided by the family, seed was saved from a previous harvest and little fertiliser was used. Yet there were recurrent costs involved in paying taxes, in replacing implements, in providing beer and meat for the communal work parties that were called for hoeing and in arranging transport to the trading stations. The early ploughs, such as the 'seventy-five', had fragile cast iron shares which tended to shatter in more stony soils. Yet even if the financial costs of maintaining extended production cannot be calculated precisely, it is probable that the inability of producers to realise a return from added labour-time devoted to crops began to discourage cultivation. At the same time, the growth in stock numbers probably reduced dependence on grain for both consumption and sale.

When markets could not be found outside Pondoland, traders had little alternative but to store more of the grain they bought in anticipation of a bad season in Pondoland, or of the periods of shortage in the annual agricultural cycle, when they could sell grain back to the homesteads. Buying and reselling had begun in the later decades of the nineteenth century. After purchasing about four hundred bags of grain in the good season of 1893, O'Donnell sold most of it back within Pondoland during the drought of 1895.² During the early years of the twentieth century, the availability of markets for grain outside Pondoland, and the lack of

1. Union, Blue Book, U.17 - 1911, 140.

2. CA O'D 7, Calculated from figures and notes in diary.

demand within, had curtailed the development of this practice. But from the end of the first decade of the century, buying and selling became widespread. Traders could make large profits from storing and reselling grain as they had a monopoly of the market around their stations. Whereas they would pay up to ten shillings a bag for grain in bad years, and less than five shillings in good years, they charged up to £2 during times of starvation and often over fifteen shillings when demand was slow.¹

The necessity of repurchasing grain was, to a large extent, forced on the African population. During bad seasons, as has been suggested, production in some homesteads failed to meet subsistence requirements. Such families could no longer rely on gathering to tide them through lean periods; in any case, grain was available from the traders and it was better to pay high prices than to starve. Even after good seasons, however, some families had to sell more grain than they could afford. They needed a cash income to pay taxes, levied in August after the harvest, and as prices for grain dropped in good years, they would have to sell more than in bad years to realise the same income. They would then have to rely on cash from other produce, such as wool or tobacco, or wages, to provide cash with which to repurchase maize.

Storage problems complicated their problems. Pit storage, a technique which had been known for some centuries along the east coast of South Africa, safeguarded grain against infestation by weevils.² But if seepage was to be prevented, the pits had to be dug in special soils, and sealed carefully by a flat stone. Dung was used to line the pits and keep the stone in place. In areas where no suitable soils were available, and at times when dung was short, it served little purpose

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1. Prices from Cape, Blue Books, 1904-1909, passim; Union, Blue Book, U.17 - 1911, reports by Transkeian magistrates.
 2. E.M. Shaw and N.J. van Warmelo, 'The Material Culture of the Cape Nguni', Part I, Annals of the South African Museum, 58, 1, May 1972.

to dig pits; information from oral sources suggests that by no means all families used this system of storage.¹ Indeed, Hunter's map of a hillside in Pondoland in the early 1930s shows that all the pits were concentrated in one area and that only about a quarter of the homesteads in the settlement had pits.² Even when pits were used, there was always a chance that the grain would become waterlogged. A number of families probably preferred to transfer the risks involved in storage to the traders, for it was better to face the prospects of having to repurchase grain at high prices than to have neither cash from sales, nor stored grain. Traders initially stored grain underground themselves. In fact, the high prices they charged in resale probably resulted from their attempts to cover themselves against the risk of grain being spoilt. But from the turn of the century, the better capitalised traders began to invest in large overground storage tanks. A few producers did the same, but the expense involved was prohibitive for most.³ There is little doubt that the majority of families tried to put aside sufficient grain to meet their needs till the next harvest and, where possible, reserves. (Pit stored grain could, if kept dry, be used two or three years later.) Yet it was not always possible for them to do so.

The phenomenon of resale was also indicative of differential production. Those homesteads which had to purchase grain were not always those which had sold it after the harvest. Magistrates pointed to paupers, who could not find the cash to pay their hut tax, after Rinderpest.⁴ While many families were able to reaccumulate cattle in the next decade, some still remained short of draught and could not participate in the general extension

1. For example, interview, Kohlabantu, Zalu Heights AA, Lusikisiki, 9.2.1977.

2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, diagram facing p.61.

3. Union, Blue Book, U.17-1911, 117.

4. Cape, BBNA, G.50 - 1900, 45.

of cultivation. Such families could no longer rely on help from surrounding homesteads or from the chiefs; wealthier producers often sold rather than distributed their surplus. Poorer families were therefore likely to become indebted to traders, debt that would be compounded in each bad season.¹ The traders were not averse to extending credit, for it further entrenched their monopoly. In the longer run, they could recoup some of their loan by demanding that a member of the family migrated to work; as will be illustrated, it served their interest better to provide loans and goods in advance of a labour contract, rather than rely on receiving the custom of the family after the wage had been earned.² Traders also acted as money lenders, an activity that was only partly controlled by the Usury Act of 1908 which limited interest rates on cash loans. When reporting on the operation of this piece of legislation in 1911, magistrates revealed that they were not enforcing its provisions strictly.³ Though usurious rates of interest on cash loans became less common, traders steered around the provisions of the Act by disguising loans as cash payments for pledges of cattle that were not yet available. The cash advanced for the animals could be less than half their market value. Indebtedness was not as widespread in Pondoland, in the first decade of the century, as in other parts of the Territories. The disadvantages to producers of an uncontrolled market had only begun to be felt. But in the next few decades it became a more general feature of the relationship between traders and producers. Debt cemented the dependence of Mpondo homesteads on wage labour.

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1. For example, Cape, BBNA, G.25 - 1908, 23; Bundy, 'African Peasants and Economic Change', 179-184.
 2. See chapter 3, section 2.
 3. CA CMT 3/882/670, CMT to SNA, 12.9.1911 and enclosures.

2: Cattle Advances and the Origins of Labour Migrancy from Pondoland: Traders, the Mining Industry and the State.

Labour migrancy came late to Pondoland. During the 1870s and 1880s, when recruiters were 'opening up' surrounding Transkeian areas, missionaries and officials commented on the near impossibility of finding anyone in Pondoland who was prepared to leave the area for paid employment.¹ Few Mpondo went to the diamond mines in Kimberley, the major employers of African workers in this period, and although some members of the small mission communities crossed the Mtamvuna to work in Natal, there was no significant movement to the neighbouring colony until the late 1890s. The Natal sugar estates only started to employ Mpondo workers on a large scale in the second decade of the twentieth century. In the 1890s, the number of workers leaving annually began to creep upwards, reaching nearly 2,000 out of a population approaching 200,000 in 1896. (Tables 5 and 9) The simultaneous invasion of locusts and labour agents, and the serious drought of the preceding years, contributed to push this relatively small percentage of the population into a spell of wage labour. In 1898, after Rinderpest, the number leaving annually rose to over 4,000. Although some migrants, especially from Bizana, worked in Natal, most went to the Rand.² During the South African War, when the gold mines shut down, the rate of migrancy declined for a few years and the majority of workers switched to the sugar fields and coal mines of Natal. When the War was over, the numbers crept up again, reaching about 10,000 annually after the drought of 1903/1904. From this time, workers returned to the gold mines;

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1. WMMS, SA Box 22, J. Cameron to Secretaries, 19.5.1876; CA NA 162, Oxland to SNA, 13.2.1881; CA CMT 1/57, Whindus to CMT, 14.3.1891; R.F. Siebörger, 'The Recruitment and Organisation of African Labour for the Kimberley Diamond Mines 1871-1888', M.A. Rhodes University, 1975, makes no mention of Mpondo workers on the mines in his detailed tables of the origins of workers in Kimberley.
 2. Cape, Blue Books, 1896-1909. The annual tables of labour passes show the destination of workers.

for the rest of the decade, well over 80 per cent of Mpondo migrants worked underground on the Rand.

By the turn of the century, the inhabitants of some South African chiefdoms, which if anything were more remote from the labour centres than the Mpondo, had been involved in wage labour for over half a century.¹ Every other part of the Transkeian Territories was sending out a higher proportion of its male population. (Table 8) The crux of Mpondo economic independence, as has been illustrated, was their wealth in cattle. With these, they could purchase the commodities they needed; they had not found it necessary to go to Kimberley to purchase firearms. The Mpondo chiefs, who retained their political independence for so much longer than those in most other parts of the country, were, unlike the Pedi chiefs, either unable or unwilling to send their men to the labour centres. They had effectively kept recruiters out of the country until the 1890s. Though some families had become indebted to traders by the turn of the century, and were forced to send migrants out to square their debts and pay their taxes, it was primarily the necessity to re-accumulate cattle that drove most early migrants from Pondoland to the labour centres.

When migrancy from Pondoland began, it took a peculiar form. At the turn of the century, a worker leaving the Transkeian Territories had some degree of choice as to how he entered employment. On the one hand, he could leave 'voluntarily', arrange his own pass and transport, find suitable employment at the labour centre of his choice, pay his own expenses in doing so, and have his wage paid out to him as he worked. On the other, he could 'join' with a labour agent in the Territories, 'touch pen' to a contract which specified his employer before he left home, and everything

1. P. Delius, 'Migrant Labour and the Pedi before 1869', ICS, SA Seminar, vol.7 (London, 1977), 41-47; P. Harries, 'Labour Migration from the Delagoa Bay Hinterland to South Africa: 1852-1895', ibid, 61-76.

would be arranged for him, including an advance to cover travelling expenses and some or all of the wage. There were a variety of combinations of voluntary and contract migrancy, but whereas workers from most other parts of the Transkeian Territories preferred not to commit themselves to a contract before leaving home, most Mpondo workers were content to do so. In 1908, for example, over 80 per cent of migrants leaving Pondoland went through agents, but only 13 per cent of those leaving East Griqualand, 25 per cent leaving Thembuland and 42 per cent leaving Gcalekaland and Fingoland made this choice.¹ In some Eastern Pondoland districts the number leaving through agents exceeded 95 per cent.²

It was essential for a worker to go to an agent if he wanted any advance on his wages, and most migrants from Pondoland took a very specific kind of advance.

...The natives of Pondoland, like the natives in the adjacent districts of Natal, were accustomed to go out to work on the 'cattle system', i.e. a native contracted to work for an employer for a certain period for nominal wages on condition that he should receive one or more head of cattle, which was generally issued to his family in advance.³

The origins of the system, known locally as joyini inkomo (cattle contract), are obscure.⁴ Stock had often been paid to workers on farms, but an organised system of cattle advances for migrants on the mines was thought, at least by contemporary observers, to be unique to southern Natal and parts of the Transkeian Territories. The system appears to have come

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1. Cape, BBNA, G.19 - 1909, 77. Calculated from figures given.
 2. Cape, BBNA, G.19 - 1909, 42.
 3. Chamber of Mines Archive (C of M), Witwatersrand Native Labour Association Report No. 93/247 (1906), Memorandum on the System of Cattle Advances in the Cape Colony.
 4. For example, interviews, Vulizibhaya, Bomvini AA, Lusikisiki, 18.1.1977; Kohlabantu, Zalu Heights AA, Lusikisiki, 9.2.1977.

into operation soon after recruiting began in Pondoland and reached its height during the first decade of the twentieth century. There is no regular record of how many Mpondo migrants took cattle advances at this time. In 1907, proponents of the system claimed that about half did so, although magisterial reports suggest that the proportion was considerably higher.¹ Many more took advances of goods or cash.

Labour recruitment at this time was largely in the hands of the mining industry itself, or specialist labour contractors. The Government Labour Agent, appointed by the Rhodes ministry after the Glen Grey Act, succeeded in making only a marginal dent in the dominance of private sector recruiters.² Employers and contractors usually used local agents to mobilise labour; in Pondoland, most of the agents were established traders. The latter provided a network of recruiting points throughout the area and were keen to augment their cash income with the capitation fees offered by employers and contractors. Traders, and the specialist agents who based themselves in the magisterial towns, in turn employed runners, often African or Coloured men, who actually went from homestead to homestead persuading Mpondo families of the attractions of an advance. The runners received a commission for each worker that they channelled to an agent.

It was not only the capitation fee, usually twenty to thirty shillings a worker, but sometimes more, that led the traders to take to recruiting. They also had an interest in ensuring that migrants' wages were spent in Pondoland rather than at their place of work. A system of advances was the best method of ensuring that local business would benefit from wages earned outside Pondoland. Cash advances - the money would later be paid

1. CA NA 708/F2, CMT to SNA, 18.8.1908 and enclosures; Cape, Blue Books, 1904-1909, reports by Pondoland magistrates.

2. CA PMO 145 A.

by the employer to the recruiter - increased turnover in the trading stores. Advances of goods over a period of time were even more profitable as interest could be charged on the debt, and the profit margin for goods given on credit was usually higher than on goods sold for cash or exchanged for produce. But cattle advances, for reasons that will be explained, opened the way to even higher gains for the traders. It was they who created the system, and they did so in order to increase their profits. At the same time, the system was highly successful in mobilising Mpondo workers, and employers and contractors had, initially, little choice but to leave most of the recruiting in the hands of the traders.

The traders were in the best position to organise a supply of cattle from which to offer advances. Many ran herds of cattle themselves which they grazed on their stations or on the commonages. Although they also suffered severe losses during Rinderpest, they purchased cattle from outside the area in order to supplement the natural increase of their herds. As the number of cattle in Pondoland began to increase in the first decade of the century, they also renewed the local cattle trade and because of the very high prices they offered for animals, those Mpondo families with sufficient stock or in need of cash income, began to sell. A beast could fetch over £15 at the turn of the century, the equivalent of at least thirty bags of grain and few families could produce this amount in surplus crops. Even so, the local supply of cattle was never sufficient to meet the demand under the advance system and by the end of the first decade of the century, syndicates with substantial capital had been formed to organise and finance the purchase of stock from outside Pondoland and distribution to agents and traders within the area.¹

1. Henry Burton, Memorandum on a Visit to the Native Territories submitted to the Prime Minister John X. Merriman (Cape Town, 1909).

Prospective migrants, sent in by a runner, or on their own initiative, would have to visit the trading stations if they wanted an advance. In many cases, the actual cash wage for the job was not mentioned in the negotiations over the contract.

We found [wrote two officials appointed to investigate the system in 1906] that the arrangements about the cattle had in all cases been made between the Pondo and some trader, the latter pointing out an animal and asking the native if he would work so many months for it to which the native readily agreed. In no transaction, so far as we have been able to ascertain, was a money value placed upon any animal as between trader and native.¹

The cash wage was paid by the employer directly to the trader. It was possible for a worker to complete a contract without seeing cash at all, although in 1907, the Transvaal authorities stipulated that a minimum of 10/- had to be paid out to workers on the mines every month.²

The migrant would return to his homestead with the animal and often stayed at home for some months before going out to work. When he did depart, his family would keep the animal, but ownership would not usually pass until the trader had received the full cash wage from the employer. Recruiters specified this in the contracts in order to protect themselves, for if the migrant did not complete his contract, employers might refuse to pay the cash wage. If an advance beast died before ownership had passed, the trader was not usually bound to replace it. A migrant could find that he had worked through his contract, as one complained to an official, 'for a hide'.³ As an animal was indivisible, it was all or nothing. Cattle imported from the interior into Pondoland were highly

1. CA NA 557/950, A.H. Stanford and W.T. Brownlee to SNA, 15.3.1906.

2. CA NA 708/F2, SNA circular, 10.12.1907.

3. CA NA 557/950, A.H. Stanford and W.T. Brownlee to SNA, 15.3.1906.

susceptible to redwater and lungsickness, diseases that were more prevalent on the coast, and some did in fact die.

The traders were well protected, at least on paper, against losses in the advance system. At the same time, they made sure that their profits covered all contingencies. The value of cattle advanced relative to the value of the cash wage varied considerably from contract to contract.¹ Six months work for a beast became a fairly standard rate although some traders demanded more, and some took less. Factors such as the place of employment, the wage offered, or the quality of the animals could all affect the agreement reached. But if the worker went to the gold mines on a standard advance contract, the trader stood to get roughly £18 for a single animal as the basic underground pay for Cape workers by the middle of the first decade of the century was three pounds a month. (The term 'month', as used in the contracts, referred to thirty shifts which would take well over a month to complete.)

Traders who bred stock themselves, and advanced beasts from their herds, could make a very large cash profit as their overheads were low. If they had to purchase stock from outside, where the cost of scrub cattle was lower than in Pondoland, they could probably realise half the value of the cash wage as profit. If they had to purchase from within Pondoland itself, their margins would be cut as they sometimes had to pay prices approaching £15 until about 1904 and 1905. However, after this time, when the period of acute shortage had passed, cattle prices in Pondoland began to drop and by 1908, the traders themselves admitted that £7 or £8 was a good price for an animal bought locally.² By this time,

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1. Information on contracts from sources cited and CA NA 554/950, RM Umzimkulu to SNA, 16.10.1906; CA NA 557/950, SNA Transvaal to SNA Cape, 27.2.1906 and enclosures; CA NA 708/F2, SNA to Secretary, Law Department, 29.4.1908; CA NA 712/F2, RM Port St Johns to Assistant CMT, 15.3.1907; CA NA 740/F76, RM Ngqeleni, report 30.1.1911.
 2. CA NA 708/F2, Petition from Pondoland West and Umtata Recruiters, 8.8.1908 in CMT to SNA, 18.8.1908.

cattle could be got for £5 or less outside Pondoland. Yet the terms of the advance contracts remained relatively stable. One source suggests that in 1910, when another virulent cattle disease, East Coast Fever, was raging in Natal and the areas around Pondoland, syndicates bought up cattle for next to nothing in areas where the disease had struck and moved them to Pondoland, which was still clean, for disposal at inflated prices under the advance system.¹

Although there is no doubt that profits could be high, the business was not without its risks. In an area where redwater and lungsickness were rife, and in an era of uncontrollable cattle diseases such as Rinderpest and East Coast Fever, traders and agents could face large and sudden losses while handling cattle. They also ran the risk of finding that a worker had deserted before completing his contract. While they may have been entitled to reclaim animals under the contract, recovery could be impossible if the family had sold or hidden the beast, or if it had died. Recruiters designed the system to transfer as much of the risk as possible onto the migrants and their families, but still felt it necessary to keep their margin of profit high so that losses could be absorbed. At least one trader in Western Pondoland, and probably others, also reserved part of the cash advances he made as risk money, which he did not pay back to the worker when the contract was completed.²

In 1902, when the gold mines recommenced production after the South African War, they were faced with an acute shortage of labour and turned their attention to the Transkeian Territories in order to win back and augment their former supply. While they relied to some extent on

1. Burton, Memorandum.

2. CA NA 710/F2, Acting Assistant Director of the Government Native Labour Bureau (GNLB) to SNA, 6.1.1910 and Acting RM Libode to SNA, 20.1.1910.

independent labour contractors and recruiting firms, the mining house established their own recruiting organisation, the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA), which had its roots in a similar body set up before the War. The Cape Regional Manager of WNLA had little in the way of permanent staff and was forced, as in the case of most other firms, to rely on the traders.¹ His chief agent persuaded him that there was very little chance of winning Mpondo workers back to the gold mines unless cattle advances were offered. Despite reservations, WNLA committed itself to the system in 1904.² They agreed to pay traders at a rate of £2 a month for each advance contract. The workers would receive 10/- a month on the mines, in addition to their advance. The remaining 10/- of the £3 wage was reserved by WNLA to start a fund which would cover losses incurred in the operation of the system. In effect, Mpondo workers were being paid at below the rates paid to voluntary workers from the Cape in return for the benefit of receiving cattle advances. The traders were fully protected from claims by WNLA for the return of the cash paid to them and WNLA sought to cover itself by stipulating in the contracts that 'the cattle should be returned to the Association in the event of the native's death or desertion before the agreement was completed.'³

In the first half of 1904, 358 workers were sent to the mines through the WNLA scheme; in the second half of that year, 1,083 and in the first half of 1905, 1,560. Advances were initially limited to the cattle equivalent of £20, but this soon went by the board. The traders, who were anxious to commit WNLA as far as possible for the scheme gave them

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1. Transvaal Archives, Pretoria, Secretary of Native Affairs (PTA TAB SNA) 7/742 and 7/745, letters by M.S. Erskine in WNLA reports.
 2. C of M, Memo on the system of Cattle Advances; CA NA 557/950, SNA Transvaal to SNA Cape, 27.2.1906 and enclosures.
 3. C of M, Memo on the System of Cattle Advances.

an immediate cash income, started to offer much higher advances, and longer contracts. The Secretary of WNLA, on his side, felt that the success of the scheme in winning workers offset the problems that large advances might cause. He even went so far as to try and have the regulation limiting contract periods in the Transvaal to an initial twelve months waived.¹ One Mpondo migrant was advanced cattle to the value of £76, a sum which would have taken about four years to work off. In the first half of 1904, the total value of advances of £26 and over (implying contracts of at least 390 shifts or nearly one and a half years) amounted to £142.² In the next six months the sum rose to £2,951 and in the first half of 1905, to £17,264. These amounts did not, of course, represent the total cash value of advances made to Mpondo workers by WNLA.

Payment of such large advances would not have led to serious problems in a situation where the work force was totally controlled. But despite pass laws, compounds and police, many Mpondo workers found it possible to desert; as their wage was at home in the shape of cattle, they had little to lose but the advance itself and a great deal to gain. Some, in fact, never left home. Some deserted on the journey to the Rand and walked home. Once on the Rand, migrants could purchase forged passes from a distribution network that appears to have been organised by the African clerks on the mines, and could use these to return by train to the stations nearest Pondoland.³ Extra passes, obtained by friends posing as voluntary workers under false names, could also be sent from home.⁴ WNLA called on the local traders, who had made the advances in the first

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1. PTA TAB SNA 46/1794, Secretary WNLA to SNA Transvaal, 28.7.1904.
 2. C of M, Memo on the System of Cattle Advances.
 3. PTA TAB SNA 59/3280 and 63/664, passim.
 4. CA NA 555/950, SNA circular, 28.9.1906; CA NA 609/1701, SNA Transvaal to SNA Cape, 13.4.1903; CA NA 718/F73, RM Mount Frere to CMT, 7.1.1910.

place, to help in reclaiming cattle, but many refused to do so unless they were paid extra cash for their services.¹ The fund established to provide for such a contingency had been discontinued early in 1906, when it was still in the black, and the advantage of cheap labour from Pondoland had been given directly over to the mines employing workers with advances. Though the losses faced - at least £6,000 and probably more - were not ruinous for an organisation of WNLA's size, it was clear that the system had to be stopped. Carried away in its eagerness to mobilise labour, the WNLA had devised a system which it could not control and had been, in effect, duped by the traders and those Mpondo workers who had deserted successfully. For these and other reasons WNLA withdrew completely from recruiting in Pondoland by the end of 1906.

Cattle advances did not die with the WNLA scheme; if anything they became more widespread after 1906. A number of independent recruiting firms, such as Mosterts, based in Johannesburg, Mackenzies and Rethmans, based in Natal, in addition to the agents sent to Pondoland to recruit for individual mining companies such as Goerz, and City and Suburban, continued to operate the system extensively.² These firms protected themselves more carefully in the contracts by placing greater responsibility on the traders. However, the reverses suffered by WNLA were not without repercussions. Some of the leading mining houses decided that steps had to be taken to abolish advances completely. The Chamber of Mines had long been anxious to eliminate middlemen and labour touts as they considered that such people, by taking a profit out of recruiting, increased the costs of labour to the mines. Cattle advances, in particular, made control over recruiters and workers difficult; they

1. C of M, Memo on the System of Cattle Advances.

2. CA NA 554/950, RM Umzimkulu to SNA, 16.10.1906; CA NA 708/F2, SNA to Director GNLB, 27.3.1908; CA NA 709/F2 passim; CA NA 711/F2, A.M. Mostert to Minister of Native Affairs, 17.6.1910.

led to irregularities and desertions, and were far too unpredictable. They also made it impossible to extend piecework, and some mining houses felt that workers on advances performed badly. As a result, when H. Taberer, formerly an official in the Transvaal Native Affairs Department, was sent to the Territories in 1908 as sole recruiter for such leading houses as Eckstein, Rand Mines and Consolidated Goldfields, he refused to operate the advance system.¹ By this time, the position in relation to the labour supply had changed dramatically. Chinese labour had saved the mines from their position of shortage and in the meantime, the supply of African workers had increased. Between 1904 and 1909, the number of Cape Africans working in the Transvaal soared from under 4,000 to nearly 50,000; from 5.2 per cent of the total labour force to over 25 per cent.² The increase, due on the one hand to continuing rural decline in many parts of the colony and on the other to the relatively good wage rates offered to Cape workers, made it unnecessary for the mines to take the risks involved in advances any longer.

Although the efforts to establish a state recruiting organisation in the Cape Colony had been abandoned before the turn of the century, the colonial government was by no means unconcerned with regulating the activities of the private sector. In 1899, a Cape proclamation stipulated that all those seeking to procure workers from the Transvaal + Territories for work elsewhere had to apply to the local magistrate for a Labour Agents Licence costing £5, and also provide evidence that they were backed by a surety.³ From 1902, runners also had to be in possession of a licence, which cost 5/-, and were allowed to work for one

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1. CA NA 709/F2, SNA circular, 13.1.1910.
 2. C of M, N.A. 1825/09, Memorandum on the Position of the Native Labour Supply in the Proclaimed Labour Districts of the Transvaal as at 31st March, 1909.
 3. CA NA 554/950, correspondence on Cape of Good Hope proclamations 101 of 1899 and 191 of 1902.

agent only. The licences had to be renewed annually, and they could be withdrawn at the discretion of officials; the government, therefore, had some power to ensure that its regulations were implemented.

Even at this stage, state regulations were in part stimulated by pressure from the mining industry to control the activities of middlemen and touts. The colonial government was, however, totally committed to labour mobilisation, and magistrates were directly used to encourage migration and assist in recruiting. Walter Stanford made this clear in a departmental circular of 1899, by which time he had become Secretary of Native Affairs in the Cape.

...Magistrates, being in touch with the people of whom they are in charge, are in the best position to bring influence to bear on them and encourage them to go out to work...The duties devolving upon Magistrates in this branch of their work are such, therefore, as to deserve and require special care and attention, and Mr Schreiner [the Prime Minister] trusts that Officers of the Department will interest themselves in it and spare no effort to assist in securing and increasing a reliable supply of labourers to meet a great demand which is likely to increase.¹

Especially during the South African War, magistrates had themselves been deeply involved in recruiting and organising labour supplies to various sectors of the Cape economy and to military installations. Regulations over recruiting, as Schreiner made clear in his speech to the 1899 Cape Native Labour Agents Bill, while they aimed at eliminating malpractices and giving some protection to the mines and the migrants, were primarily designed to maintain a future labour supply.

It was of the greatest importance [he said] that this should go on without such circumstances as would make the native labourer hesitate to go forth where labour was required, and to earn money and bring back money to this colony to make this colony wealthy.²

1. CA NA 527/516, SNA circular, 2.5.1899.

2. CA NA 554/950, cutting from Cape Times, 20.7.1899.

Any regulation of the recruiting business had to take into account the necessity of maintaining supply, and as there had to be some profit for private sector agents if they were to continue their efforts, interference had to be circumspect.

Desertions, forgeries, unsound contracts and the complaints and legal proceedings that arose from advance contracts soon made them into an important issue for the Cape Native Affairs Department. Magistrates had not been unaware of the system prior to the difficulties experienced by WNLA in 1906, as many of the contracts were attested by them. Though some thought that the system led to abuse, advances were not illegal. When officials were appointed to investigate complaints arising out of the WNLA contracts, they hesitated to suggest the abolition of a system so successful in mobilising labour.¹ They advised only cosmetic changes: the cash value of stock should be mentioned in contracts, workers should have some protection against the death of animals prior to the completion of their contracts, and cattle should be more realistically valued. Their recommendations had little or no effect on the working of the system, although the 1899 Agents Act, which demanded higher licence payments and higher sureties from recruiters, was extended to the Territories in 1907.

Administrative problems, pressure from the mining houses, and the changing position in regard to the supply of labour brought about a reversal of official attitudes in 1908, and circulars requesting that the magistrates phase out advances were issued.² The Pondoland traders went up in arms. Though some complained that the risks involved in the system were so great that it was hardly worth their while continuing it, their response to its

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1. CA NA 557/950, A.H. Stanford and W.T. Brownlee to SNA, 15.3.1906.
 2. CA NA 708/F2, CMT to SNA, 6.4.1908, SNA to Director GNLB, 27.3.1908 and SNA circular, 20.7.1908; CA NA 710/F2, SNA circular, 5.9.1908; CA NA 708/F2, CMT to SNA, 18.8.1908 and enclosures.

abolition suggests that such claims were merely designed to pull the wool over official eyes. They persuaded the Chief Magistrate that the workers were not getting an unfavourable deal. They agreed to replace cattle that died of redwater during a migrant's contract and to closer supervision by the magistrates over the terms of the contracts. They also suggested that if advances were abolished, they might withdraw from recruiting. Their concessions and threats won the day.

Their victory was, however, shortlived. Henry Burton, Cape Minister of Native Affairs, visited the Territories in 1909 to investigate labour matters.¹ His thinking had been influenced by mining interests, and by men such as Taberer, and in a confidential report to the Prime Minister, he argued strongly against all, but particularly cattle, advances. 'This pernicious system' he opined 'should be discouraged and if possible done away with altogether'.² Shortly after Burton's report and the Labour Conference in Cape Town in the same year, action was taken. Cattle advances were first abolished in all but the Pondoland districts, then, in June 1910, in Pondoland itself.³ The immediate pretext was the risk of spreading East Coast Fever to Pondoland and the Cape through the many cattle movements that the system necessitated. This urgency was dictated by a desire to protect mining interests rather than Mpondo stockowners. As the Chief Magistrate pointed out: 'I fear that if East Coast Fever breaks out in Pondoland and the labourers learn that their cattle are dying there will be wholesale desertions'.⁴ However, even in the absence of East Coast Fever, government action would not have been long delayed,

1. Burton, Memorandum.

2. Ibid.

3. CA NA 709/F2, SNA Cape to SNA Transvaal, 3.12.1909, and SNA to RM Ngqeleni, 18.2.1910; CA NA 710/F2, SNA circular, 18.6.1910.

4. CA CMT 3/711, CMT to SNA Cape and Transvaal, 13.6.1910.

for all advances of over £5, in whatever form, were abolished at the same time. The victory of the Chamber of Mines was entrenched in the Native Labour Regulation Act, passed by the Union parliament in 1911, which further restricted advances to £2. It signified the position of dominance in the country achieved by the mining industry which had succeeded in shaping the system of recruiting from Pondoland to its own ends. Local trading interests had been defeated and the abolition of advances was not without implications for rural homesteads. In order to understand the effects of wage labour and state intervention on the homesteads, the analysis must be focussed on their position in the early years of migrancy from Pondoland.

3: Advances, Homestead Structure and Differentiation

The specific system of migrancy that developed in Pondoland cannot be attributed to coercion on the part of the state, chiefs or recruiters, on the one hand, nor to ignorance on the part of migrants on the other. Though officials did their best to assist recruiters, their attitudes to advances were ambivalent and magistrates were certainly prepared to give passes to voluntary workers. Sigcau was willing to assist recruiters - in return he received 'a horse and other presents' from WNLA - and headmen were used as runners.¹ But the chiefs no longer had substantial controls over labour within Pondoland and appear to have played only a persuasive role. In fact one of Sigcau's efforts proved counterproductive because he was thought to be 'selling the Pondos for his benefit'.² The traders could force indebted families to send out a migrant. But the

1. CA NA 685/2608, S.J. Mabengu to RM Lusikisiki, 23.7.1904.

2. Ibid.

very fact that the vast majority of migrants were in a position to take cattle advances shows that they were still free of this type of bond. Traders and chiefs did probably have greater access to knowledge about conditions outside Pondoland and there are suggestions in the evidence that they attempted to exploit their monopoly of information. One worker who complained about the terms of his contract asserted that he 'was induced to enter into this agreement by reason of having been told... that there was no money in Johannesburg'.¹ However, it is unlikely that the Mpondo had no idea of the cash value of cattle - which they had been selling to traders for some decades - and information about wages would have soon filtered back into rural society.

To men like Burton, the cattle system appeared to be superexploitative; migrants were not receiving the full cash value of their wage and this type of recruiting opened the way 'to endless abuses and verneukerij'.² Yet the mining industry recognised that the system was the best method of mobilising a formerly recalcitrant rural population, and officials confirmed that the Mpondo would only go out for advances. Traders, throughout their struggle to defend advances, claimed that they had the support of the people. While such assertions should be viewed with caution, for traders had much at stake and were in a good position to convince outsiders of what the peasantry thought without fear of contradiction, there is little doubt that their claim had some foundation. Nor was the preference of migrants based merely on the 'fondness of Natives for stock and their inability to resist anything offered on credit', as suggested by one official.³

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1. PTA TAB SNA 59/3280 (1905), Statement by Mfitshane to C. Pietersen, Boksburg, 24.10.1905.
 2. Burton, Memorandum.
 3. CA NA 708/F2, SNA to Secretary Law Department, 29.4.1908.

One advantage in the system, for those prepared to take the risk, was the possibility of desertion. There is no doubt that some men took large advances, just as some took multiple advances, and disappeared without working at all or went to the mines and failed to complete their contracts. The magistrates had only moved into Pondoland shortly before migrancy began and the colonial administration was not sufficiently in control of the population to find and try every offender. In any case, colonial courts were reluctant to bring criminal charges in cases which were essentially considered to be breaches of civil contracts. Though the traders tried to press for harsher punishments for such offenders, men who were actually caught could escape with having to repay their advance and perhaps some damages and court fees. However, even in periods when desertion was at its peak, such as in 1905 and 1906, the percentage of deserters was probably no higher than 15-20 per cent of the total number of migrants.¹ The possibility of desertion cannot alone explain cattle advances.

The advantages of the system should rather be sought in the degree of control it enabled rural homesteads to exert over their migrants. By the end of the nineteenth century, it has been argued, rural production was essentially based on the homestead which may be conceived of, in physical terms, as a cluster of huts around one cattle kraal. In the nineteenth century, these units of settlement were composed of a number of families, often polygynous.² (It is difficult to assess whether or not polygynous marriage practices, the stated norm, were in fact common at all levels of society at any particular time.) They were structured around groups of close male kin whose wives - the system of marriage was

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1. Calculated from figures in C of M, Memo on the System of Cattle Advances.
 2. Following information from Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, and interviews.

exogamous - would move to their husbands homestead after marriage.

Hunter noted that 'formerly, when danger from man and beast made concentration necessary for defence, it is said that it was common for twenty married men, together with their wives and children to live together in one umzi (homestead)'.¹ Her evidence, collected in the early 1930s, probably refers to a period before annexation and the average size of homestead was almost certainly declining at the turn of the century. A gradual process of segmentation was built into the pattern of settlement; brothers and sons could move off and establish themselves independently, though often close by, when they had acquired wives, cattle and children. But it was probably still usual to find large homesteads when migrancy began, with brothers and sons of the homestead head still settled in the same unit.²

Each wife in the polygynous family was ranked, the most senior in commoner families being the first wife married. After marriage, a wife would move into her husband's mother's hut, but when she had children, a separate hut and store hut would be built for her, and she would be allotted a field. These separate 'houses' in the polygynous family had specific property rights. But overarching authority within the homestead rested with the homestead head, the eldest male member of the senior house of the family around which the homestead had been formed. If brothers of the original homestead head stayed in the settlement after his death, they would usually recognise his heir's authority over the homestead as a whole, even if they were older than the heir. The houses were the basic units around which agricultural production was organised but members of different houses co-operated in herding and cultivation.

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1. M. Hunter, 'The Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Status of Pondo Women', Africa, 6 (1933), 259.
 2. Interview, Kohlabantu.

The division of labour within the homesteads had never been static in the nineteenth century - at some periods men seem to have been more involved in cultivation than at others - but in general it followed clearly demarcated lines. Young boys herded small stock, later cattle, and scared the birds from the fields while crops were ripening. When they reached their later teens, youths became more involved in hunting and military activities and the homestead would not always have first call on their labour. They would still, however, have some responsibility for herding cattle. Once married - the age of marriage, which no doubt also changed through time, is uncertain, but a late age of marriage for men was probably the basis, in demographic terms, for polygyny - men would no longer go out to the grazing lands although they would care for cattle at home. As they became older, more of their time would be absorbed in supervisory activities around the homestead and political, judicial and social duties at the chief's Great Place. Men were responsible for a number of crafts, especially the preparation of hides and skins, hut building, basket making and metal work. They were not directly responsible for cultivation although they cleared the land and older men grew and cured tobacco.

Women were primarily responsible for household duties and cultivation. Once past the age of puberty they could not handle cattle, but household animals such as pigs and poultry were their preserve. They were usually the gatherers of wild food, firewood and water, and the porters of goods. Some crafts, such as potting and beadwork, were largely performed by women. The differentiation of female labour by age was not as marked; young girls helped their mothers although the heaviest household tasks fell to the newly married women when they arrived at their husbands' homesteads. Women probably also provided much of the labour for communal work parties, called at specific times in the agricultural cycle, in which members of

more than one homestead would participate. Men certainly did join such ilima groups, more so, probably, when they were called by chiefs, and they may have played a more important role in them before the beginnings of mass labour migrancy.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the division of labour changed in certain respects. The use of oxen as draught animals drew men more deeply into certain phases of the agricultural cycle, for only they could handle oxen. Similarly, they now transported goods. It may be surmised that as crop production was extended, more labour time was needed in all phases of cultivation and that this was provided by men. Certainly the men, especially the young men, had been freed of regular involvement in hunting and military mobilisations. However, the evidence on this point is unclear. Changes in the system of cropping probably enabled more land to be ploughed without a commensurate increase in the amount of labour necessary for cultivation.¹ It seems that though men did participate in communal labour to some extent, only a minority, particularly those in Christian families, became deeply involved in working the land throughout the year. Male labour was only essential at times when draught was used, especially during the ploughing season, and even then it was not essential to involve every male member of a large homestead. The labour of some young men could be spared for much of the year, perhaps the whole year, without any great disruption to agricultural production.

If indeed the young men did not become involved in cultivation, it may not be an exaggeration to suggest that they were becoming structurally underemployed in Pondoland at the turn of the century. Such a process would have been intensified in a period of rapid population growth, for the percentage of youths in the population as a whole would have increased.

1. See chapter 4, section 4.

(Tables 3 and 9) It was the young men who became the first migrants and the monthly figures on migrancy during the first decade of the century show that there was no marked pattern of seasonal migration.

(Table 7) Migrants do not seem to have timed their departure to meet with demands for male labour in cultivation; their contracts were often so long that they could not hope to return for the next ploughing season.

When migrancy began, the vast majority of homesteads in Pondoland still had access to rural resources - land for cultivation and grazing. They also had sufficient labour at their disposal both to produce crops for subsistence and exchange, and to send out one or two youths as migrants. Aside from those few men who had to migrate to pay debts and taxes or purchase grain, migrants, as has been illustrated, were intent on accumulating stock. Without cattle, the productive and re-productive capacity of the homesteads could not be realised. The critical problem faced by the homesteads was to ensure that the earnings of their youthful migrants did in fact return home and become converted into stock.

The parent of a young man who "joins" wishes to ensure that his wages shall come back to his kraal, and the young man himself likes to know that his earnings are safe as too many of them have experienced the cuteness of various 'sharks' that look out for the natives returning from the mines and rob them by some device or another of their earnings.¹

There were both gangs and shops between Johannesburg and the Pondoland recruiting centres of Flagstaff and Bizana that were adept in separating migrants from their wages. But even more difficult to avoid were the temptations of the city.

It is the unanimous opinion of traders and all who come into close contact with the native people at their homes [wrote one traders' representative] that most of the boys who go out to work return with little or no money. Their

1. CA NA 718/F473(1), RM Mount Frere to SNA, 7.1.1910.

money has been frittered away on tin boxes, concertinas, tawdry jewellery, sjamboks and suchlike things. It is no uncommon thing to hear them talk of illicit liquor sellers and prostitutes who have enticed their money from them.¹

'Tawdry jewellery' was of little use to a family trying to survive in the years after Rinderpest. The advance was therefore the best means for the family to remain in control of the worker's wage while he was away and to ensure that the spell of labour would benefit the household. Cash left at home, goods bought on credit over a period of time, or, best of all, a beast in the cattle kraal would guarantee this completely.

Advances had a further advantage for the homestead. They helped to ensure that the migrant himself also came home. With little or no income in town, a worker had no means by which to establish himself outside the world of the mine compound where his basic needs were taken care of. He had no cash to buy food, to pay rent, to use public transport. He could do little in the way of sampling urban pleasures and acquiring urban tastes. The lack of financial resources pulled him back to rural society as effectively as limited contracts and pass laws pushed him. Aside from emotional considerations, the people at home had to defend themselves against the loss of a member of the homestead who had value both as a rural worker and as a future migrant. They did not want him to abscond and, in the words of the paramount Marelane, 'increase the ranks of criminal gangs' in Johannesburg,²

After Rinderpest, when many families were short of cattle, the cattle advance system was particularly beneficial. It was far more sensible to place an advance beast in the kraal before the migrant left home than to wait, perhaps for more than a year, till he returned with cash. A cow in the kraal could make the difference between having a little milk

1. CA CMT 3/607/49(8), Conference of Merchants, Traders, Labour recruiters and Farmers Associations to Minister of Native Affairs, 22.1.1914.

2. CA CMT 3/607/49(8), Tshongwana to RM Lusikisiki, 6.3.1914.

and having none; an ox, the difference between being able to make up a span, or help a neighbour to do so, and having to dig the fields by hoe. A year was a long time to live without these resources. Most important of all, a cow could drop a calf in the period of the worker's absence and the advance would be doubled. It was better to get interest sooner rather than later and the potential rate of interest was high. These advantages offset the risks involved to Mpondo households in the advance system not only immediately after Rinderpest, but also when cattle stocks increased again. The Chief Magistrate suggested that towards the end of the first decade of the century, the Mpondo had become more discriminating about the type of stock they took as advances.¹ Whereas in earlier years, workers were content with oxen and any kind of scrub cattle, they later insisted on young breeding stock. He felt that this preference was the result of greater awareness of their interests on the part of the homesteads. However, in the years immediately after Rinderpest, there was an urgent need for oxen and any scrub stock for ploughing and bridewealth purposes. Once the cattle population had recovered and sufficient cattle were available for ploughing, young breeding stock may well have been preferred.

There was one further alternative open to migrants under the system of advances. They could take cash advances, thereby protecting themselves against overvalued cattle, and purchase stock immediately. Such a system would also have given migrants the opportunity to purchase other commodities with their advance wage. But it also introduced the danger that wages would be misspent. 'The inducement of cattle at the present time', mentioned an official in 1906, 'is that it prevents boys from spending their wage directly they receive it.'² A cattle advance was the final insurance

1. CA NA 708/F2, CMT to SNA, 18.8.1908 and enclosures.

2. CA NA 554/950, Acting RM Bizana to SNA, 13.10.1906.

against the wage being wasted on commodities which could not reproduce themselves. It guaranteed immediate conversion of earning power into stock, the best investment for any Mpondo family at the time. Cattle could always be sold again, once they had been incorporated in the herd, been used in ploughing or provided increase, if it became necessary to purchase commodities or grain.

It would be a mistake to seek approval on the part of the Mpondo peasantry for every phase and detail of the cattle system. The terms of the advance were, in the first instance, decided on by traders and agents who had a virtual monopoly of advance recruiting and if migrants and their families could not be forced to take advances, they had sometimes to accept unfavourable contracts if they did want them. It may be true that more migrants wanted cash advances, but the traders may have been reluctant to provide these for they were not so profitable. In any case, many of the smaller traders probably found it more difficult to raise large sums of cash in the early years of recruiting. Migrants did sometimes object when they found that the wages they were receiving were, in effect, lower than those paid to workers on different types of contracts who were doing the same job.¹ They also objected, and deserted, when they learnt that their cattle had died and had not been replaced. But despite the sometimes unfavourable terms offered in advance contracts, both Mpondo families and the traders had an interest in defending the system against the policies of the mining industry. The specific interest of the Mpondo homesteads were not, however, taken into account by the state in its decisions about the abolition of advances. Cape Ministers preferred to regard the system as unfair and, in any case, they felt that the new schemes of deferred pay and remittances, paid after the work had been done, offered sufficient protection to both rural households and rural traders.

1. PTA TAB SNA 59/3280 (1905), Inspector Native Affairs Department to District Controller, Boksburg, 13.10.1905 and statement by Mpondo workers.

Advances, particularly cattle advances, were a means by which the Mpondo homesteads could resist the downward spiral of impoverishment, increased expenditure on consumer goods and, ironically, proletarianisation. The cattle earned by migrants were, for many families, the crux of agricultural recovery. Few could purchase cattle outright from the sale of crops or small stock as prices after Rinderpest were so inflated. Moreover, an adequate herd was a prerequisite for the extension of cultivation; there was little chance of a homestead being able to produce any surplus crop, much less sufficient to purchase stock, before they had actually acquired sufficient oxen for ploughing and transport. The system of migrancy preferred by the majority of Mpondo families enabled them to extend cultivation at the same time as the rate of migrancy increased. The continued necessity of migration after cattle had been reaccumulated can in part be explained by the increase of indebtedness and by the fact that recovery was uneven; some families were still without adequate herds. However, migrancy, together with other changes in the rural economy, tended to undermine the independence of the rural household yet further and it became incorporated in the process of household reproduction, as will be explained below.¹

Migrancy from Pondoland was not, initially, predicated on the development of stratification; any homestead subject to losses from Rinderpest may have needed to send out workers in order to restock. Yet the system of cattle advances was bound into, and reinforced, emerging patterns of differentiation. The demand for cattle in Pondoland after Rinderpest coupled with the high cash values attached to stock in advance contracts tended to keep the price of stock in Pondoland high. As the traders once mentioned when arguing for the system, high prices benefitted those Mpondo homesteads which were in a position to sell animals during the first decade of the century.² The sons of such families were more likely to be able

1. See chapter 4, section 4.

2. CA NA 708/F2, CMT to SNA, 18.8.1908 and enclosures.

to escape migrancy once an adequate herd had been rebuilt. On the other hand, poorer families, which were more dependent on their sons' earnings were, in effect, subsidising the price of cattle for the wealthier homesteads.

The advance system also hastened the commercialisation of stock exchanges within Pondoland. As those with cattle to sell could realise high prices and needed some cash income, there was less incentive for them to distribute cattle through loans. On the other hand, poorer families were less likely to be able to raise loans, even when the number of cattle among the wealthier had increased. Such changes in the pattern of stock distribution were not entirely to the disadvantage of those with fewer animals. For they could now accumulate the nucleus of a herd without having to enter into the relationships of service and dependence which had characterised stock distribution in precolonial times. They could also retain all the increase of the cattle they obtained from the traders. The cost they had to face was increased dependency on wage labour although, at least in the first decade of the century, this did not necessarily entail permanent proletarianisation for as their herd increased, their sons could escape further trips.

Commercial exchanges were not always mediated through the agency of the traders. There is evidence to suggest that loaning relationships between households became transformed. Africans as well as traders were involved in money lending, that is, in providing cash in return for pledges of cattle.¹ Cattle were also bought and sold outright between homesteads. How far such cash and credit transactions replaced the older system of loans is unclear. But the gradual transformation and collapse of loaning systems must have served to lock poorer families yet further

1. CA CMT 3/882/670, RM Ngqeleni to CMT, 25.1.1911 in CMT to SNA 12.9.1911.

into the system of migrancy. Such changes tended to reinforce the processes of differentiation based on the ability to produce a surplus crop. Those with more cattle were, after all, in a better position to extend cultivation. Although Rinderpest did not discriminate between rich and poor, and probably did reshuffle the hierarchy of stockowners in Pondoland, there is little doubt that some were in a better position to reaccumulate a herd than others. Those with larger herds may have saved more; the chiefs and headmen, the largest stockowners prior to Rinderpest, could still command some income from dues and fines.¹ The homesteads of the chiefs and wealthier commoners tended to be larger: they could most easily afford to send sons out, if necessary, and generally were in the best position to extend production with family labour. Chiefs also had access to some communal labour in their fields. They, together with some of the immigrant population, who tended to invest more into cultivation and implements rather than stock, and were more receptive to new crops, were almost certainly the largest crop producers in Pondoland.²

1. For a fuller discussion of chiefs and headmen, see chapter 5.

2. Rural differentiation is discussed in more detail in chapter 6.

Chapter 4

RURAL PRODUCTION
AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN STATE, 1911-1930

1; Drought, East Coast Fever and the Crisis of 1912

By 1911, the year after Union, the economic position of most families in Pondoland was by no means desperate. The herds of cattle had been rebuilt and the cattle population, at close on 280,000, was probably as high as before Rinderpest. (Table 10.) There were more small stock in the area than ever before. (Table 13.) If the extension of cultivation had been constrained by lack of markets, the homesteads still probably produced as much grain as they had immediately after the turn of the century. 'Every kraal possesses its plough' affirmed a magistrate in 1911 - the number returned in the census of that year exceeded 14,000 - and most could produce sufficient for subsistence in good and average years.¹ Despite an apparent increase in population from under 200,000 to over 230,000 in the first decade of the century, land was not yet as short as in the rest of the Territories. (Table 9.) Pressure on arable plots began to show in a few locations, but, in general, the magistrates still thought that their districts were 'by no means densely occupied', nor 'crowded' and 'thickly populated'.² (Table 9.) Immigrants from other Cape districts continued to find space in which to settle. Whereas roughly 9 to 10 per cent of the male population left Pondoland to work in 1911, the average for other Transkeian districts was around 18 per cent. (Table 8.) Yet the Mpondo were

1. Union, BBNA, U.17-1911, 185; Union, Census of 1911, 1357.

2. Union, BBNA, U.17-1911, 62-63.

locked in a position of dependence in the larger capitalist economy. Neither they, nor the peasantry as a whole, had any significant influence in the newly unified South African state which was dominated, to a greater extent than the Cape had been, by a European electorate and by interests which viewed the African areas as labour reserves. Their position was to be highlighted by a new series of natural disasters and the measures taken to combat them.

In 1911, drought, following its regular cycle, returned to Pondoland.¹ The harvests in that year and the next were poor and little grain could be stored. As the ploughing season of October 1912 approached, demand for grain from the traders rose sharply not only because many families were already short of food, but because the rains were still inadequate and yet another harvest failure was anticipated. At the same time, East Coast Fever, a cattle disease which equalled Rinderpest in its destructive capacity, reached Pondoland and severely hampered ploughing. Traders, who had begun to import maize soon after the 1912 harvest, seriously underestimated demand. When they tried to increase the scale of imports in October, they found that movements of produce were being hampered by the shortage of draught oxen consequent on East Coast Fever. With their cattle dying around them, it became clear that the people in Pondoland faced a serious famine.

East Coast Fever, which progressed more slowly through southern Africa than Rinderpest, had long been expected in the Cape. As early as 1904, when the disease had spread into Rhodesia and parts of the Transvaal, colonial veterinary officials were discussing preventative measures.²

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1. This section is based largely on Union Archives, Pretoria, Native Affairs papers (PTA SA NA) 100; CA CMT 3/902 and 3/903; J.R.L. Kingon, 'The Economics of East Coast Fever as illustrated by the Transkeian Territories', Report of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science, 1915.
 2. CA NA 691/2683, enclosing W. Robertson, 'African Coast Fever', Agricultural Journal, 1904.

It was known that, unlike Rinderpest, the Fever was not directly contagious but could only be transmitted by certain types of ticks once they were infected. The disease could therefore be controlled if the herds were isolated and sprayed or dipped so that the ticks would be killed. Anxious to prevent another disaster on the scale of Rinderpest, the colonial government began to build dipping tanks in the Territories in 1906.

Stringent controls on the movement of cattle were proclaimed during the next few years.¹ Again the preventative measures were inadequate; dipping had hardly begun in Pondoland by 1910 when the disease crossed the Transkeian border from Natal. Within a few years East Coast Fever had spread throughout the Territories.² Losses in Pondoland, and other coastal districts where the disease carrying ticks were most prevalent and the dipping programme most backward, were particularly serious. An official estimate made in 1914 suggests that only 76,000 head, or 27 per cent of the cattle enumerated in the 1911 census, survived. (Table 10.) In the same year, a headcount in Lusikisiki and Flagstaff gave total figures of little over 17,500 cattle in these districts, or about 20 per cent of the 1911 figures.³ O'Donnell lost all but sixteen of his 205 cattle in the nine months from June 1912 to March 1913.⁴ East Coast Fever was not as sudden as Rinderpest, but the losses were as great. It made its greatest

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1. CA CMT 3/573/40. See chapter 5, section 2 for a more detailed analysis of dipping.
 2. Kokstad Advertiser, 19.3.1910, 2.4.1910, 28.5.1910 and 1911 and 1912, passim; CA CMT 3/884 - 889/692 - 694.
 3. Cape Archives, Resident Magistrate Lusikisiki (CA 1/LSK) 2/2/2/3, Report by H. Tucker, Stock Inspector, February and March 1914, in Tucker to RM Lusikisiki, 29.3.1914.
 4. CA O'D 23 and 24. Calculated from figures in diaries.

inroads in Pondoland during the latter months of 1912, precisely the time when the drought was most keenly felt. Further, the drought in Pondoland was more serious than in other Transkeian areas, a reversal of the usual pattern.

Imports of grain were not only limited by the shortage of oxen - teams could be found in Natal, where the disease was under control, and East Griqualand, where it made less impact - but also by restrictions on the movement of cattle. Though the railway through southern Natal had advanced to Paddock, six or seven miles from the Pondoland border, veterinary officials were reluctant to allow oxen to pass through the intervening farms and locations.¹ There was no overall shortage of grain in the country as a whole. Fifty million pounds (250,000 bags), grown largely on European farms, were apparently available for sale in South Africa in 1912.² Further, grain could be imported from overseas if necessary. The crisis facing Pondoland was largely the result of problems of distribution rather than supply. Other isolated areas such as northern Zululand - the drought threatened many parts of South Africa at the end of 1912 - were also highly vulnerable.³

The ban on cattle movements was not absolute. Officials were prepared to allow a few immune or 'salted' teams to travel along selected routes. However, demand for haulage was so great that the costs soared.⁴ Rates on the short routes between Natal railheads and Pondoland increased from under

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1. PTA SA NA 100, Principle Veterinary Officer, Department of Agriculture to SNA, 24.10.1912.
 2. PTA SA NA 100, Callaway to Prime Minister, 15.11.1912.
 3. PTA SA NA 98/6011/F179.
 4. Paragraph based on CA CMT 3/902/725(1), RM Bizana to CMT, 18.11.1912; Kokstad Advertiser, 22.11.1912; D.S. Grant, Trading Book, 1912; PTA SA NA 100, passim.

two shillings a bag to between eight and ten shillings. Some traders invested in mules which could move about freely; but the cost of a team, at around £200, was very much higher than a team of oxen. Mules were also more expensive to feed as they could not survive on the pasturage, itself reduced by drought. The use of equine transport did little to alleviate the difficulties of distribution or reduce costs. At the same time, general drought conditions in the country drove up the price of grain; in October and November, people in Pondoland had to pay between 40/- and 55/- for what little maize they could find. The pressure of rising prices soon began to tell on poorer homesteads.

The Mpondo did not suffer in silence. In November, Marelane, the paramount chief of Eastern Pondoland, sent a deputation to the Chief Magistrate in Umtata to 'represent the condition of famine'.

No such famine had been known in the history of the country. Last season the people had reaped no crops, - their prayers for rain had been in vain.The people were sharing what grain they had with one another. Those who had gave a bucket to those who had not. Marelane had got a few buckets to help his people but he could do but little. The dawn of each day saw the price of grain [rise] higher and now it was selling at £2 and £2/10/- a bag. The proceeds of the hides of dead cattle were exhausted and other means of obtaining money were insufficient.¹

The position in Western Pondoland was equally serious.

Representations were not limited to information about the famine; deputations also suggested methods by which it could be alleviated. As the traders themselves could do little, and some were suspected by the African population of capitalising on the shortage, the Mpondo specifically called for state intervention. They requested first that the state take over the

1. PTA SA NA 100, Minutes of a meeting of a deputation from Chief Marelane with the Chief Magistrate, 20.11.1912 in CMT to SNA, 23.11.1912.

distribution of grain at a controlled price.

We are starving here at Mtombe so we ask the government to send us bags of mealies that will charge £1.00. We are selling bags of mealies to shopkeepers for 5/- now they charge us £2-00. We are unable to pay £2. Our cattle are dead and we are bound to pay hut tax, that is why we send our grievances to the government because we look him upon [sic] as our father.¹

Secondly they asked that restrictions on cattle movements to the railheads be lifted so that the Mpondo themselves could arrange transport with the few remaining cattle. They also demanded that the £2 limit on advances be waived. Men were prepared to go out to work, but they found it difficult to purchase even one bag of grain before leaving while advances were so restricted.

Local officials were already well aware of the situation.² Missionary opinion also pushed for government intervention and the story was taken up by the national press which spread (untrue) rumours that traders had been attacked and murdered in Pondoland.³ One correspondent stressed that '10,000 starving Kafirs means trouble before long', a point which must have struck home in the official mind.⁴ While magistrates tried to contradict alarmist reports, they did not and could not hide the crisis from their superiors. Yet whatever the response of the officials who had to meet the situation at a local level, they had little power to intervene themselves. The Native Affairs Department as a whole lacked the facilities to organise

1. CA CMT 3/902/725(1), Qanqiso Ndamase to CMT, 8.11.1912.

2. For example, PTA SA NA 100, RM Lusikisiki to SNA, 25.10.1912.

3. PTA SA NA 100, Callaway to SNA, 30.10.1912; Cutting from Transvaal Daily Mail, 1.11.1912; CMT to SNA, 2.11.1912.

4. PTA SA NA 100, Cutting from Cape Argus, no date, report dated 25.10.1912.

transport, had little to say in determining the nature of East Coast Fever regulations, and could not unilaterally amend the legislation governing labour advances. Any intervention had to be authorised by the central government acting through other departments.

A basic principle of 'native policy' in the Cape, which was carried over into Union, was that the African areas should, as far as possible, be self-supporting. The colonial government had been reluctant to establish any precedent of relief during times of shortage except in very limited amounts to a few paupers.¹ Officials felt that if they were to distribute grain in Pondoland at less than £1 a bag, the state would have to shoulder very large losses. Some did suspect that traders were using the shortage to drive up prices. There were suggestions that Natal traders and farmers were refusing to clear grain from the railheads, thus blocking further deliveries, until prices rose even higher.² It was also rumoured that Transkeian traders had tried to create an artificial shortage in order to force the government to extend railway lines into the Territories.³ However, officials allowed themselves to be persuaded by an active lobby of leading traders that all but a few speculators were as much the victims of high grain and transport prices as the African population.⁴ There was, in fact, some truth in their argument. By November, it was costing traders as much as 30/- a bag to land grain at their stations. While they were certainly taking some profit from the sale of grain, their mark up of ten to fifteen shillings was not very much higher than in ordinary

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1. For example, CA NA 516/355, RM Kentani to CMT, 30.11.1900 and following correspondence.
 2. CA CMT 3/902/725(1), RM Bizana to CMT, 30.10.1912.
 3. PTA SA NA 100, C.E.S. King to Ashfield, 8.12.1912.
 4. CA O'D 22, 24; CA CMT 3/902/725(1), RM Bizana to CMT, 18.11.1912; PTA SA NA 100, Director of Native Labour to SNA, 2.12.1912; CMT to SNA, 27.11.1912, 2.12.1912.

years. The government was offered grain at below this price during the crisis, but officials were aware that the costs of setting up an alternative distribution network would be prohibitive. The traders, who were opposed to a system of distribution which could undercut them, therefore received a sympathetic hearing despite some official suspicion about their motives. The cabinet decided that no direct relief would be given until it was certain that the crisis was beyond the resources of private enterprise.

The government was, however, prepared to ease the shortage of transport so that the existing network of trading stations could meet demand. Veterinary officials, under the Department of Agriculture, reluctantly agreed to relax restrictions on the movement of cattle within Pondoland itself. They also allowed some traffic between the railheads and the borders of Pondoland. The South African Railways and Harbours and the Native Affairs Department provided additional equine draught and 'salted' ox-teams to ply these routes at commercial prices. Deliveries to the railheads were speeded up as grain was cleared more rapidly. Government vessels were used to increase the supply through Port St Johns. (A suggestion that Port Grosvenor be reopened was not acted on.) These measures were not implemented without mishap; deliveries through St Johns were delayed by the sand bar and one vessel was grounded. While transport costs from the railheads were reduced to 3/6 a bag for a short period, the cost soon rose again and the state was not prepared to subsidise its operations.¹ Communications between the various newly established Union departments were often difficult and the broader policies governing aid not always clear. However, state intervention, although it made little impact on prices, did help to bring more grain into Pondoland.

1. PTA SA NA 100, CMT to SNA, 4.12.1912, 9.12.1912.

Traders, for obvious reasons, and some local officials, joined the African population in demanding an increase in advances. But the proposal met with strong opposition from the mines which had only recently succeeded in abolishing them. The Chamber intervened at cabinet level to prevent any reversal of policy and were supported by S.N. Pritchard, Director of Native Labour, an official whose major task at the time was to organise the supply of migrants to the mines.

Prefer [he minuted by telegram] that Government pursue policy of inculcating into Natives at all times more especially times of distress that employment is offering at their very doors and all facilities afforded remitting home earnings monthly. I have not overlooked representations local officers that Natives prefer remain starving with their people to leaving them in distress. Present advance £2 however not spent so much on food as clothing etc., and if increased there is no guarantee it will be spent on food.

He advised the government not to 'place too much reliance on representations of certain interested traders' who 'naturally wished to perpetuate' the 'pernicious system'.² Other senior officials in the Native Affairs Department were not so sceptical, nor did they represent mining interests so directly; Pritchard became less adamant after he visited the Territories himself.³ By November, a compromise was reached. The advance given before departure would remain at £2, but workers would be given a further £3 as soon as they arrived on the mines which they could send home immediately.

In December, the rains eventually came and some land could be ploughed with the remaining oxen. The demand for grain fell slightly, for though

1. PTA SA NA 100, Minute by Director of Native Labour in SNA to CMT, 17.10.1912.

2. ibid.

3. PTA SA NA 100, Pritchard to SNA, 2.12.1912.

the rains did not immediately ease the position of those who were already short, families were no longer so desperate to lay in stocks against yet another lean season. Imported grain was more readily available as was the cash, from advances, with which to purchase it. Although some deaths resulted from the famine, the immediate danger of widespread starvation had passed.¹ There is little doubt that the inordinate rush on the trading stores and the calls for state intervention had come before any actual starvation. However, the crisis of 1912 revealed the vulnerability of the rural population and it drove more migrants onto the labour market, thereby entrenching the dependence on earnings. The number of men leaving Pondoland increased to over 16,000 by 1912 and probably rose higher in the next year. (Table 5)

The crisis also served to define the parameters within which the state was prepared to act. Officials were clearly not prepared to see the peasantry starve. They showed some sensitivity to local demands, were concerned to maintain order and to keep publicity at a minimum. A more detailed study of the changing attitudes of the mine and the state to rural conditions may reveal that these bodies were already beginning to connect, as they did later, good health with the maintenance of the labour supply.² During the next major drought of 1919 and 1920, following the Spanish influenza epidemic in which over 5 per cent of the population of Lusikisiki district died, the government again provided transport facilities for imports into the Territories.³ On this occasion, motorised

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1. CA 1/LSK 6/13/2/6, W.P. Nicol, District Surgeon of Lusikisiki, reports, 5.3.1913, 20.1.1914, 24.1.1915; RM Lusikisiki, Health report, 21.1.1914.
 2. CA 1/LSK 6/13/2/6, District Surgeon, report, 24.1.1915 suggests such a connection.
 3. PTA SA NA 101/351/16/179; CA CMT 3/920/774.3; CA 1/LSK, 6/13/2 for influenza deaths.

transport, which was not restricted by East Coast Fever regulations, was used in the southern Transkei; the drought in Pondoland was not so severe as to merit extensive intervention. Although the basic legislation governing advances was not altered, despite pressure from the rural population, the limit was again raised to £5 for short periods in 1916 and in 1919.¹ Officials and traders were alerted to the danger of famine in the rural areas. A system of crop reporting, and an annual agricultural census, started throughout the country in the second decade of the century, helped to provide prior warning of shortages.²

While the government was prepared to act in an emergency, it declined to intervene in the relationship between traders and producers. Throughout the decade after 1912, there were demands from the General Councils in the Territories for an end to speculation in staples and for payment to producers in cash rather than 'good fors', but these fell on deaf ears.³ The administration never allowed its resources to be used for purchase of grain or price subsidies, and even refused to accept the suggestion that General Council funds be spent on grain in an emergency. The structure of local trading remained intact. In only one respect did officials try to reduce the monopoly of local trading firms. Some major concerns began to

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1. CA CMT 3/607/49(7), RM Bizana to CMT, 31/10/1913; CA CMT 3/607/49(9) Acting Director of Native Labour Circular, 4.10.1916; CA CMT 3/605/49(2), Director of Native Labour Circular, 12.1.1920. For discussion on advances, Union of South Africa, Report of the Native Grievances Enquiry, U.G. 37-1914; CA CMT 3/607/49(7), RM Bizana to CMT, 31.10.1913; RM Port St Johns to CMT, 9.2.1914.
 2. CA CMT 3/918/774(1).
 3. For example CA CMT 3/902/728.1, Extracts from debate of Pondoland General Council and Transkeian Territories General Council (TTGC) in CMT to SNA, 2.5.1916; CA CMT 3/918/774(1), Extracts from TTGC debate, 1917.

purchase numerous stores. In 1917, the administration articulated an informal regulation of refusing to grant licenses to the same firm for stations within twenty miles of each other.¹ Their idea was that 'every trading station should have a competing station as a neighbour'.² The regulation was designed to protect smaller traders, who had initially agitated against concentration, as much as the peasantry. It was, however, difficult to enforce. Firms adopted the practice of establishing tied stations, owned by individual traders, but financed and exclusively supplied by one merchant house.

The crisis had revealed some difference of opinion between local officials and the central government, and between different government departments. Yet it emerged clearly that the central government saw the solution of the problems facing the rural population primarily in terms of increased rates of labour migrancy. During late 1912, the Department of Native Affairs was inundated with requests from a variety of sources, including farmers and other public departments, for labour.³ These were all rejected and Transkeian migrants were largely channelled to the gold mines. In some cases, officials informed agricultural employers that the wages they offered were too low to attract Transkeian workers; in others, they declared that they would not be directly responsible for recruiting and referred applicants to private organisations. The Department of Native Labour and other officials reserved their efforts for the gold mines, a reflection of the importance of the industry and its position of dominance in the state.

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1. CA CMT 3/552/36, Secretary, Mount Frere Traders' Association to CMT, 20.3.1917 and correspondence following; PTA SA NA 80, SNA to CMT, 9.8.1917.
 2. CA CMT 3/552/36, CMT to SNA, 21.6.1917.
 3. PTA SA NA 100, passim.

2: East Coast Fever Regulations and Stock-keeping in Pondoland, 1911-1930

Whereas Rinderpest had disappeared soon after its initial ravages, East Coast fever remained endemic once the ticks in any area had been infected. Veterinary officials felt that a district could only be declared 'clean' once it was completely free of the disease and all the cattle were being dipped regularly. The government was not prepared to finance dipping tanks itself; in most of the Transkeian Territories, General Council funds were used for this purpose. The threat of East Coast Fever had, in fact, been one reason for the urgency attached by the administration to the implementation of the council system, and dipping expenses drained the General Councils of much of their resources. In Eastern Pondoland, where the council system had not been introduced, funds for dipping tanks were short. An extra five shilling tax was levied from 1915, again in the face of considerable opposition, and it was only by about 1920 that regular dipping of the large majority of cattle could be enforced.¹ There were sporadic outbreaks of the disease during the intervening years. After the drought of 1912, the regulations restricting cattle movements were tightened in order to prevent inter-district movements in Pondoland without a special permit.

Under an Act of 1911, and subsequent regulations, permits for cattle removals were granted in special cases by the magistrates who, up to 1915, had to receive prior authorisation from the Department of Agriculture.² Applications were usually granted if it could be shown that cattle were from clean areas and had been quarantined for a period in isolation from

1. See chapter 5, section 2.

2. CA 1/LSK 3/4/2/2(27.1.); CA CMT 3/941/183 and 3/884-892/692-696.

other animals. As the Mpondo could not isolate their herds effectively in a communal grazing system, few could get permits. Officials allowed some movement of stock into Pondoland from surrounding districts but would permit little traffic in the other direction. They made an exception in the case of transport riders with immune teams who were generally free to ply their trade in and out of Pondoland as long as they did not leave their oxen in Pondoland for over three months.¹ The record of permits granted by the magistrate of Lusikisiki suggests that exemptions for inter-district movements were initially given largely to European traders and butchers. Marelane, the paramount chief, was given permission to move dowry cattle on the grounds that his was an exceptional case; he had his own dipping tank and his herds were, by and large, grazed on separate pastures.²

In the years immediately after East Coast Fever, the cattle population in Pondoland remained low. It was not impossible to import stock, but fewer came into the area than after Rinderpest. Young cattle continued to succumb to the disease and only those which had become immune were assured of survival. However, the pastures were again rich and once a good base of immune breeding stock had been established, once dipping began to take effect, cattle numbers increased rapidly. (Dipping also helped to stave off other tickborne diseases, such as redwater, which had remained endemic.) By 1918, the cattle population had increased from around 70,000 to a little over 100,000. (Table 10) During the next two years the figures leaped to 146,000 despite the minor draught; by 1925, the number of cattle doubled again to over 300,000, and probably exceeded

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1. CA 1/LSK 3/4/2/2 (27.1) Senior Veterinary Surgeon (Transkei) to RM Lusikisiki, 23.5.1913, and following correspondence concerning permits. For permits to remove hides see also CA CMT 3/892/696.
 2. CA 1/LSK 4/27/1, RM Lusikisiki to Senior Veterinary Surgeon, 2.5.1918.

the pre-East Coast Fever total. The figures are based on dipping statistics which were totalled twice annually in each district, and they may reflect, at least till the early 1920s, a rapid increase in the number of cattle being dipped rather than the actual number of cattle. But such rates of increase - over 20 per cent a year between 1918 and 1923 - were not impossible in optimum conditions. (Table 11)

As the demand for cattle for restocking in the Transkeian Territories was high during the 1910s, the price of cattle kept well above £5 a head. But when cattle numbers began to increase, local demand fell off and prices declined for the traders could only sell cattle within the area. In districts well away from the coast, where the losses during East Coast Fever were not as severe as in Pondoland, prices were already beginning to fall before 1920.¹ In Pondoland, the price remained stable for a few more years; yet by the mid-1920s, stockowners could not even realise £5 for a good ox. Towards the end of the decade, cattle prices reached their lowest level since the depression of the early 1880s and perhaps since the beginnings of the stock trade in Pondoland. Hunter found that the average price in the early 1930s was around £3 a beast.² One man who was buying stock in Lusikisiki a couple of years later remembered even lower prices.

Prices were very low - £1, £2; £2/10/- was the price of a big ox. Sometimes you would buy a cow for £2 and the owner would say 'No, don't separate the calf, it must stay with its mother'. You gave him another five shillings.³

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1. Library of Parliament, Unprinted Annexures to House of Assembly debates, An. 242-1915, Report by W. Stanford on the Disturbances in East Griqualand, 1914; CA CMT 3/918/774(1), RM Mount Fletcher to CMT, 14.9.1914; CA CMT 3/903/728.2, RM Engcobo to CMT, 31.12.1918.
 2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 141.
 3. Interview, Mr Lawrence, Mzinthlavana Store, Lusikisiki, 25.1.1977.

Those who owned sufficient stock to sell animals were well aware that their difficulties were a direct consequence of the restrictions on cattle movements. In 1914, the limitations on export were an important issue of conflict in East Griqualand; the Transkeian Territories General Council made representations to have the regulations relaxed as early as 1915.¹ In the face of declining prices, the pressure to allow export increased, but the administration remained adamant that East Coast Fever should be thoroughly stamped out for it threatened not only herds in the Transkei, but in the country as a whole. Only in 1919, did the local magistrates begin to join the call for a change in policy.² They were persuaded that the people would not be able to purchase grain in the drought of that year unless they could obtain reasonable prices for their stock.

One of the major reasons for the Department of Agriculture's insistence on strict regulations was the absence of railways in the Territories. Any stock exported had to be driven over long distances overland to the railheads. By 1919, however, a railway had been built through the southern and central Transkei to Umtata, the major administrative and business centre of the Territories. The Department of Agriculture therefore decided to meet the representations of magistrates with minor concessions.³ They would allow immune stock, branded as such, to go forward in sealed trucks by 'fast special trains' to the quarantine sections of the Johannesburg abattoir where good slaughter animals could fetch as much as £25. Despite the high prices offered, traders made little use of the offer as the conditions were, in the words of an official, 'so stringent as to make the

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1. House of Assembly, An.242-1915, Stanford's report; CA 1/LSK 3/4/2/2 (27.1), CMT circular, 10.8.1915.
 2. CA CMT 3/903/728.2, CMT to SNA, 4.2.1919.
 3. CA CMT 3/903/728.2, Senior Vet. (Transkei) to CMT, 15.2.1919.

concession practically useless'.¹ There is no evidence to suggest that the railways provided the kind of service to the Transkeian stations that would have enabled the conditions to be met. The magistrates lost their sense of urgency about lifting restrictions on movement out of Pondoland. As late as 1930, the Member of Parliament for Thembuland, representing both traders and African voters, told the House of Assembly that 'in the Transkei they had more than half the cattle of the Cape Province, yet in view of the repressive legislation which had been introduced their cattle were valueless unless dead when the hide could be sold'.² Only in the 1930s was the policy relaxed.

Wealthier stockowners in the Territories could not longer realise significant profits on their cattle. They could only sell to local traders who had a monopoly of the market in the area around their stations. As sale of stock was inhibited, they seem to have been forced back into the type of relationship that governed the internal distribution of cattle in pre-colonial times; loans at least provided the promise of interest and enabled large herds to be spread around a district. As councillors in Western Pondoland argued, the restrictions limited movements of ngoma and bridewealth cattle:

It was their custom to have cattle in different parts of the country. As the law was now a man could not get his cattle from Mount Frere or Elliotdale to pay his debts with. In cases where cattle were well farmed, they were left, but now a new custom was springing up in the country and it was often found that people to whom one had farmed one's stock for a long time, now made difficulties about returning cattle when they were sent for.³

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1. CA MAT 3/921/774.3(2), RM Engcobo to CMT, 22.1.1920.
 2. F. Wilson and D. Perrot, Outlook on a Century: South Africa 1870-1970 (Lovedale/Johannesburg, 1973), 320.
 3. Pondoland General Council, Proceedings (PGC), 1916, 12; PGC, 1917, 22; PGC, 1918, 17.

However, it was still possible to use the loaning system within a district and even in neighbouring districts once the restrictions on inter-district movements in Pondoland were relaxed. There were also, no doubt, many illegal cattle movements. The loaning system had not died out prior to East Coast Fever and it is difficult to assess the extent to which it was regenerated. Buying and selling of cattle between Africans continued and many of those interviewed appear to have been able to purchase cattle in the 1920s and 1930s. However, the restrictions do seem to have reversed the trend away from pre-colonial loaning practices.

The declining price of stock also had important implications for the poorer families and those men who were trying to establish independent homesteads. While the wages received by migrant labourers remained static or even declined in real terms when compared against the price of commodities between about 1910 and 1930, the value of wages went up in relation to the price of cattle.¹ Whereas many migrants, particularly in the years immediately after East Coast Fever, had been forced to purchase grain and commodities with their wages, crop production soon recovered and more and more turned to stock again. Cattle were cheaper, and they still had many of the same advantages as in the years after Rinderpest. Grazing lands were still open to all those who paid taxes. It was probably also easier to find cattle through the loan system than in the first decade of the century. As household units in Pondoland began to decrease in size, at the same time as the population was increasing, there was a rapid increase in the number of people seeking to accumulate and maintain adequate herds for ploughing and milking.² The continued importance of bridewealth in marriage provided an added reason to invest into stock.

1. F. Wilson, Labour in the South African Gold Mines 1911-1969 (Cambridge 1972), 146.

2. See Chapter 4, section 4.

Migrants who started their working life in these decades confirmed that their major investment was in cattle and that they had been able to form the nucleus of a herd because cattle were so cheap.¹ With more households seeking to establish a working herd, and with sale outside Pondoland impossible, it is not surprising that the cattle population increased so rapidly. By 1930, there were over half a million cattle in Pondoland. (Table 10) Whereas most families had been short of both draught oxen and cows after East Coast Fever, Hunter found that all families in one part of Western Pondoland had an adequate supply of milk by the early 1930s and it seems that many had sufficient for ploughing.²

Between 1911 and 1930, the number of woolled sheep in Pondoland increased from about 200,000 to over 500,000. (Table 13) As after Rinderpest, sheep were used to compensate for cattle losses but they became of even greater importance in providing cash income in these decades. Though the market for wool collapsed for a few years during the First World War, and prices in the Territories dropped as low as a penny a pound, the situation soon changed.³ From the end of the war until the Great Depression, prices for Transkeian wool remained fairly stable at between sixpence and one shilling a pound. While cattle and crops were difficult to market, wool could always fetch a good cash price. Sheep became particularly important for wealthier families who were trying to make a cash income from their produce. The sheep in Pondoland were generally of low quality and yielded perhaps only four pounds of wool a year.⁴

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1. For example, interviews Kohlabantu, Zalu Heights AA, Lusikisiki, 9.2.1977; Xatsha and Job Cingo, Ngobozana AA, Lusikisiki, 8.2.1977; Elliot Jamjam, Zalu AA, Lusikisiki, 6.1.1977, and 17.1.1977; Vulizibhaya, Bomvini AA, Lusikisiki, 18.1.1977; Mgeyana, Msikaba AA, Lusikisiki 14.1.1977.
 2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 68-69.
 3. CA CMT 3/918/774(1), RM Mount Ayliff to CMT, 1.9.1914 and CMT to Secretary for Finance, 15.9.1914; CA CMT 3/903/782(2), CMT to SNA 4.2.1919; PGC, 1920, 14; PGC, 1922, 9; Umcebisi Womlimi Nomfuyi, vol.3, no.4 (December 1927), 27ff.
 4. Umcebisi, vol.4, no.6 (December 1928), 4.

Especially in bad years, when cash income was urgently needed, the Mpondo tended to shear too early and too often thereby reducing the value of the wool.¹ However, scab had to some extent been controlled by dipping and even a family with a flock of about 100 sheep, which was not particularly large by the standards of the time, could realise at least £10 a year. This amount was equivalent to the price of at least three or four head of cattle, or three months wages on the goldfields, yet it could be earned without diminishing the size of the flock or reducing the labour available to the homestead. In fact, sheep demanded far less labour per capita than cattle; they were particularly suitable in a situation where the size of the productive unit was declining. As one man put it; 'I had cattle so I wanted sheep; I did not want to keep a lot of cattle as there was nobody to look after them'.² Sheep were also unaffected by the restrictions on the movement of stock. They now shared, and competed for, the best grazing with cattle.

It seems that the goat population increased rapidly in the years immediately after the major cattle diseases, but once the cattle population began to recover, the number of goats stabilised and began to decline. (Table 13.) Few of the goats in Pondoland were angoras and though some income could be realised from their skins, they could not be sheared. They were more directly used to replace cattle for meat, ceremonies, bride-wealth and even milk, than sheep. Once the cattle herds recovered, goats became of more marginal significance to the larger stockowners although they remained an important part of the resources of poorer homesteads which

1. CA CMT 3/918/774 (1), Malcolmess and Co. to CMT, 1/9/1915, RM Tabankulu to CMT, 27.2.1918 and F. Meth to RM Tabankulu, 26.3.1918; Umcebisi, vol. 3, no.1 (March, 1927), 4.

2. Interview, Ned Xinwa.

could not accumulate adequate herds.

State regulations imposed after East Coast Fever undoubtedly contributed to the increase in the herds and flocks. In the 1920s, Pondoland was relatively free from the major tickborne diseases which had plagued the area during the previous half century. Diseases such as anthrax and lung sickness occasionally manifested themselves but never caused significant losses. The eradication of scab had provided the basis for increasing exports of wool. By 1930, there were almost certainly more stock, large and small, in Pondoland than at any time in the previous century. Yet the increase in the number of animals did little to free the Mpondo from their dependence on migrant labour or provide them with a cash income. Although wool and hides could be sold on external markets, the stock had little cash value. Even when sale was possible it was necessary to sell many more animals to realise the same return. This in itself may have contributed to the rise in stock numbers.

State intervention had further costs; the quality of animals probably began to deteriorate.¹ The original strains of cattle kept in Pondoland, so well suited to local conditions and so useful for draught, had been mongrelised by constant imports of mixed and scrub cattle from other parts of the country. While these new crosses may in turn have adapted to conditions in Pondoland and may even have led to better animals, it seems that the imports were often of low quality. In one report on the Territories, it was argued that dipping, which increased the chances of survival for weaker animals, had led to an overall deterioration in the standard of cattle kept.² As many families were trying to build up their herds,

1. PGC, 1929, 31.

2. F.W. Fox and D. Back, 'A Preliminary Survey of the Agricultural and Nutritional Problems of the Ciskei and Transkeian Territories, with Special Reference to Their Bearing upon the Recruiting of Labourers for the Gold Mining Industry', unpublished Typescript, Johannesburg, 1938?, 9.

whatever the quality of the animals, they were probably reluctant to slaughter weaker animals with any regularity and they could not sell them outside Pondoland. It is therefore possible that the average yield of milk decreased, and the average number of oxen that were needed to pull the ploughs and sledges increased.

While it cannot easily be proved that the stock actually deteriorated in quality, there is no doubt that the grazing did. Some of the inland parts of Pondoland with thinner grass cover, steeper ground and a lower rainfall, which tended to come in storms in the space of a few months every year, began to show signs of erosion in the late 1920s. Even in these parts of the Tabankulu, Flagstaff and Libode districts, erosion was not nearly as serious as in parts of the southern and western Transkei where, according to the Native Economic Commission of 1932, 'desert' conditions prevailed.¹ Yet, the drying up of watercourses, the washing away of topsoil, and the thinner grass cover contributed to a general deterioration in the condition of animals. The coastal districts with a higher rainfall spread out through the year, Lusikisiki, Port St Johns and most of Bizana and Ngqeleni, largely escaped actual erosion. But the grazing probably deteriorated in a more subtle way. Sweetveld grasses, which were most nutritious especially in the winter months, were subject to overgrazing. They were gradually replaced by sourveld types, particularly the Ngongoni veld (Aristida junciformis) which, while it was edible in the spring and summer months, became rank and tough in winter.² The spread of Ngongoni, hastened by constant burning of the pastures to provide young shoots, probably only assumed significance in later decades and it

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1. Union of South Africa, Report of the Native Economic Commission, 1930-1932, U.G. 22-1932, 10.
 2. J.P.H. Acocks, Veld Types of South Africa (Pretoria, 1975), 19-21; Interviews, J. Norton, Gonubie, 1.2.1977; Headmen Mathanda and Tandekhaya, Lusikisiki, 22.2.1977; Mgeyana; C.E. Hall-Green, Kenton on Sea, 10.12.1976; Lionel Mathandabuzo, Mfinizo AA, Lusikisiki, 17.2.1977.

remained confined to parts of the Bizana, Lusikisiki and Flagstaff districts. However it perhaps began to contribute to the deterioration of winter grazing resources. Restrictions on cattle movements also made it more difficult for cattle to be taken to the coastal pasturage in winter.

Whereas the annual rate of increase in the herds in Pondoland between 1918 and 1923 had been around 20 per cent, it dropped to around 12 per cent in the next four years and to little over 7 per cent between 1928 and 1930. (Table 11) The cattle population reached its maximum in the 1930s and then began to decline. (Table 10) From about 1930, the percentage of animals which died during the winter winter drought increased markedly. (Table 12) The sheep population also reached its maximum level around 1930 and then began to decline. (Table 13) No more animals could survive given the conditions in the Territories and the system of stock-keeping practiced in the area.

Officials were by no means unaware of erosion; even before the turn of the century, as has been illustrated, some articulated their concern about the dangers of overstocking.¹ Towards the end of the 1920s, these issues became of central importance to those more directly concerned with agriculture in the Territories. They, and the anthropologists who studied the Transkeian peoples, tended to ascribe overstocking to 'traditional' attitudes towards cattle.² By this they meant the reluctance to sell and the survival of such 'uneconomic' customs as bridewealth and loans. They felt that 'traditionalists' took little interest in the quality of their stock, and that the status of an African man depended largely on the quantity of stock he owned. They failed to appreciate the position

1. See chapter 3, section 1.

2. Union, Native Economic Commission, U.G. 22-1932, 11ff; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 65-71, 550; Umcebisi, vol.3, no.1 (March 1927).

of stock owners. Wealthier families could not realise good prices; poorer families had to accumulate draught and milking animals. Loans became of renewed importance and bridewealth served, in an era of mass migrancy, to ensure that workers' wages returned to rural society. The Mpondo had clearly not been reluctant to sell some of their cattle before the turn of the century, a fact which does not seem to have come to the attention of officials and observers. The reluctance to sell cattle was a specific feature of the 1920s and 1930s, a consequence of state intervention and the changes in family structure which accompanied mass migrancy. It may be, however, that officials were recording, at this time, changing attitudes towards stock in a transformed structural situation.

The remedies advocated differed. The Director of the Transkeian Department of Agriculture, which was established under the General Council in the 1920s, argued that while cattle should be reduced, and goats 'which had very little economic value...eliminated', sheep should be encouraged.¹ He felt that many parts of the Territories which were previously considered unsuitable for sheep, which needed shorter grass, had become suitable because of overgrazing. He implied that the situation should be accepted and that sheep, which in any case provided a quicker cash return, should to some extent replace cattle which needed longer grass. Both sheep and cattle should be improved by careful breeding with selected sires. On the other hand, a study sponsored by the Chamber of Mines argued that sheep had been the ruin of the Territories, that the official policy to encourage them had been mistaken, and that cattle should be encouraged instead.² Administrative action was, however, hampered by lack of funds and by the continued enforcement of East Coast Fever regulations. Aside from some

1. Umcebisi, vol. 3, no. 4 (December, 1927), 27.

2. Fox and Back, 'Preliminary Survey', 44.

efforts to offer improved breeding stock at subsidised prices, little action was taken prior to the late 1930s.

3: Cash Cropping and Rural Industrialisation

In the first decade of the century, when cultivation was extended so rapidly in the Pondoland districts, most homesteads continued to concentrate on their staple food crops. It was only a minority that experimented with crops such as oats which were grown solely for sale. yet for a brief moment, it did seem possible that one cash crop, cotton, could provide a source of income for the rural population in the coastal Transkeian districts. Cotton growing had been suggested, and even tried, in the subtropical belt along the east coast of South Africa at various times in the nineteenth century, but without success. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the crop was given a further trial after calls by the British Cotton Growers' Association for increased production within the Empire so that supplies formerly purchased in the United States could be supplemented.¹ A merchant house in the Eastern Cape, still anxious to encourage African production, put pressure on the administration to establish an experimental farm and to help in distributing free seed through the district councils. 'We take a deep interest in the progress of the Native Territories', they added, 'and we think that cotton growing is an industry that can be made to pay'.² In the same year, 1906, Izwi Labantu, an African newspaper published in the Eastern Cape, took up the issue and carried articles explaining where seed could be obtained and how it should be cultivated.³

1. Izwi Labantu, 27.11.1906.

2. CA CMT 3/772/353, Savage and Sons to SNA, 27.3.1906.

3. Izwi Labantu, 28.8.1906, 27.11.1906, 18.2.1907.

The official response was at first lukewarm. It was argued that Europeans in the Territories should first prove that cotton could be grown before any large expenditure could be contemplated.¹ However, officials also recognised that Africans would have to participate if sufficient quantities were to be grown, and their hand was forced by the response in the districts. Within a year the magistrate of Ngqeleni could report favourably on the progress made:

I have received applications for cotton seed from Natives in this district, including the Chief Dumezweni, son of the late chief Nquilisio [sic], and a very influential chief...This is a move in the right direction and one I think that should receive every encouragement.²

By 1910, the experimental farm, under an officer of the Union Department of Agriculture, had been established. Demonstration work, part of the council-sponsored extension scheme, started in a few coastal districts shortly afterwards.³ Wardlaw, a trader whose station included some of the rich alluvial lands along the Mngazi river, in which the Mpondo had settled in the early nineteenth century, also planted cotton with departmental help. The results on these carefully controlled plots were highly successful; yields compared favourably with those in established cotton producing areas of the world.⁴ In 1911, Dyer and Dyer, the East London merchants, offered to buy any quantity of raw cotton, however small, at reasonable prices, in order to stimulate production.⁵ Some was sent to

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1. CA CMT 3/772/353, Assistant CMT to SNA, 9.5.1906, and correspondence following.
 2. CA CMT 3/772/353, RM Ngqeleni to CMT, 17.12.1907.
 3. For extension schemes see chapter 4, section 4.
 4. A. van Reyneveld, 'The Pondoland Cotton Experiment', Practical Agriculture, vol.1, no.2, March 1914, 72-75; Interview, Mrs. Birkett, Port St Johns, 16.1.1977; Dominions Royal Commission, Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, Part I (1914), Cd. 7706, 274-284; Kokstad Advertiser, 14.11.1911, 30.8.1912, 4.10.1912.
 5. CA CMT 3/772/353, Acting Undersecretary for Agriculture to CMT, 13.10.1911.

England, where it was well received. Reports during the preceding few years suggest that a number of African growers tried the crop and that other traders became excited about its future.

The initial euphoria soon passed. Wardlaw's third crop was destroyed by grub; a trader further inland planted late to avoid insect pests only to find that his plants were caught by frost before harvest. If traders, with more capital, information and labour at their disposal, suffered setbacks, African cultivators seem to have experienced even ^egreater problems. Insect infestation was clearly the major difficulty in cotton production, but one producer complained that he had too little land for the crop, another that his plants were eaten by goats and sheep as they could not be properly fenced. Most found that their cotton was too spoilt or dirty to be of much value even at the relatively favourable terms offered by the merchants. Those who had not dropped out after one or two failures were forced in the crisis of 1912 to concentrate on food production.¹ Further, the chiefs, after their early enthusiasm, seem to have turned against the experiment. They were reluctant to allow any land to be fenced for this both affected winter grazing patterns and threatened their control over communal land. They were increasingly sensitive to the danger of losing land to Europeans, the likely consequence, they suspected, of a successful cash cropping enterprise.² When one headman in Port St Johns was given land by the local magistrate to plant cotton in 1915, he openly disobeyed by planting maize instead.³

1. CA CMT 3/772/353, RM Port St Johns to CMT, 11.11.1911.

2. See chapter 5, section 3.

3. CA CMT 3/714/281.5, RM Port St Johns, to CMT, 6.2.1915.

The final nails in the cotton growers' coffin were hammered home during the First World War.¹ War-time stringencies necessitated the removal of the most successful European demonstrator, and Dyer and Dyer now found it too expensive to continue their offer. By 1915, there were still two African and three European producers in Port St Johns, but they could no longer find any market for their crop. The magistrate persuaded his seniors to apply for funds for a system of advances which would provide capital for producers until such time as they could sell. But the central government had more important priorities and had already refused similar requests from European farmers in other areas. The magistrate of St Johns was forced to purchase the crop himself.²

After the war, demonstration work was started again and plans launched to place mills at one of the agricultural schools in the Territories.³ However, African growers had largely lost interest and although local traders and newspapers made sporadic efforts to whip up enthusiasm, the experiments petered out. Cotton growing could only have been regenerated by extensive state aid to find a way to combat insect pests and to create a marketing structure. Neither the traders and merchant houses, nor African producers themselves, had sufficient power to mobilise support for cash-cropping in the Territories. Export crops were by now considered the sole preserve of large-scale European farmers who alone received the backing of the research, marketing and financial resources of the state. It is unclear whether or not cotton could have succeeded in the Territories, but a number of other crops, particularly sub-tropical fruits such as bananas and citrus, were suitable for the coastal districts.

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1. CA CMT 3/849 - 850/593 (5) - (8); CA CMT 3/818/774 (1), CMT to SNA, 29.6.1915 and following correspondence.
 2. CA CMT 3/850/593 (8), Hughes to CMT, 19.8.1915.
 3. CA CMT 3/848/593.1 (1), Reports by Hughes to CMT, 1919 and 1920: Territorial News, 10.1.1924, 31.1.1924.

No further efforts were made to encourage market oriented production of these plants and they were seldom grown for more than household consumption. A few progressive cultivators continued to grow oats, wheat and fruit but the majority were thrown back on their pre-colonial staple crops.

If cotton production failed partly because of the lack of interest on the part of the state, another non-edible product, tobacco, succumbed to more direct state intervention in favour of European producers. Although the market for the Mpondo crop, considered the best of the varieties grown in the Territories, was limited by the expansion of European production in the Transvaal and southern Cape during the first two decades of the century, it had a small but assured niche among Africans in the rural areas, among migrant labourers in the cities, and even among some rural European consumers.¹ Tobacco was sold locally by growers themselves, or hawked further afield by African middlemen. Traders still bought substantial quantities and often paid close to 1/-, or even more, for a pound of carefully prepared roll tobacco in times of shortage. As in the case of maize, overproduction in good years sometimes resulted in a glut, and low prices, because of the restricted market. Producers had to be extremely wary of increasing their output for the curing and rolling of leaves was a time-consuming task. But production was not so constrained by pressure on the homesteads to produce food crops for, although some growers began to plant large fields, much tobacco was still grown on small garden plots. Further, there is no evidence to suggest that tobacco production infringed on chiefly controls over land.

It is difficult to assess with any accuracy how much tobacco was produced in Pondoland in the twentieth century, or how the level of

1. Following based on Royal Commission on Natural Resources, Part I, Cd. 7706, 191ff., 199ff., 235ff., and 278ff; Advertisements in Kokstad Advertiser, 1890s, passim and Izwi LaBantu eg. 1906; CA O'D 47,50; Interviews, Ned Xinwa, H.W. Clarke, Port St Johns (not on tape).

production varied over time. In 1921, a representative of the Ngqeleni traders estimated that the stores in his districts alone had 220,000 lbs. on hand.¹ Such an amount would have brought in a total of well over £5,000 for producers. If the figure is correct, tobacco must have been a very significant source of cash income. Magistrates were well aware that many families, especially those with less stock, depended heavily on tobacco for tax payments; £5,000 would have provided sufficient cash to pay the tax of perhaps 2,500 families - about half the total number - in only one Pondoland district. As income from cattle and staple crops was so limited after East Coast Fever, tobacco probably became an increasingly important crop. Magisterial estimates suggest that total production in Pondoland was something over 300,000 lbs., most of it grown in the coastal districts of Ngqeleni, Port St Johns and Lusikisiki.²

The First World War brought a windfall for both traders and growers. In February 1917, the South African army ordered 30,000 lbs. of African grown tobacco for the troops of the Native Labour contingent in France.³ It was to the Chief Magistrate of the Territories that the Director of supplies turned, and the Chief Magistrate immediately activated the Pondoland traders who were known to have the largest and best quality stocks. A month after the initial request, the traders, having driven up the price to their satisfaction, were able to supply 6,000 lbs. at 1/-, 1,500 lbs. at 1s.3d. and 3,280 lbs. at 1s.5d. No more could be found in Pondoland for any price. The Director of Supplies asked that the net be cast wider - considerable quantities were produced in other Transkeian coastal

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1. CA CMT 3/875/648, Secretary, Ngqeleni Traders' Association to Senator W. Stanford, 29.7.1921, and passim.
 2. Cape, Census, 1904; CA CMT 3/919/774 (3), Census of Agriculture returns, 1920-1921.
 3. Following paragraph based on CA CMT 3/930/778.3, Director of Supplies, Defence Department to CMT, 2.2.1917 and correspondence following.

districts - at the same time promising that the ration would be increased to compensate for the lower quality tobacco to be found elsewhere. By March, traders in Elliotdale and Mqanduli were able to supply a further few thousand pounds and more was on hand. Towards the end of the year, a new order was placed and by March 1918, when it was eventually cancelled, about 5,000 lbs. had been forwarded and a further 12,000 lbs. was on hand.¹

It is possible that traders and producers withheld supplies or under-reported their holdings in the hope of driving up prices still further; both may have continued to supply other markets. It is also possible that tobacco production was expanded in the next few years after receiving the boost. However, this evidence does suggest that the Nggeleni traders exaggerated their holdings in 1921; they certainly had reason to do so.

European tobacco farmers, whose crops could be counted in millions of pounds even before the First World War, began, in the second decade of the century, to advocate an excise duty on tobacco grown in the country in order to stabilise prices. Parliament, attentive to their demands and keen to raise revenue from tobacco, passed a Tobacco Excise Act in 1921.² Its aim was to restrict the purchase of tobacco to licenced dealers who would forward the crop to manufacturers, the latter paying the excise duty. Some of the tax would be used to purchase the crop in future years at fixed prices. Those who were involved in selling unmanufactured tobacco direct to the public would be subject to 1/- a pound excise so that they could not undercut the major producers.

Transkeian producers were not organised into co-operatives, nor was their tobacco suitable for manufacture into cigars and cigarettes.

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1. CA CMT 3/930/778.3, Director of Supplies to CMT, 2.12.1917 and following correspondence.
 2. CA CMT 3/875/648.

Whether best quality rolled tobacco, or loose leaves, it had already been sun-cured when it reached the traders and was used for snuff or pipes. All those who dealt in it would, therefore, be subject to the excise which threatened to double the price of African tobacco at a stroke. Traders felt the Act was 'greatly injuring a native industry which should be encouraged rather than discouraged' and officials argued that it would be impossible to collect the excise.¹ They claimed that it would decrease rather than increase state revenues from the African areas as many families would be deprived of cash income with which to pay taxes, especially when the market for stock was so depressed and maize could only be sold for 'good-fors'. But the Department of Excise insisted that some method be devised to collect the tax and that 'the bartering of tobacco...be controlled as effectively as possible'.² They need not have bothered as the threat of the excise alone was sufficient to scare traders out of the African tobacco market. A parliamentary candidate in the Territories suggested in 1924 that the excise had also sealed the fate of cotton as African producers feared that similar action would be taken in relation to that crop.³

Both traders and producers agitated vociferously against the excise, and after Hertzog's Pact government came to power in 1924, the African crop was exempted.⁴ But some longer term damage appears to have been done; in 1933, agricultural officials in the Territories were still lamenting the decline of tobacco production and suggesting that something be done to distribute seed so that growers could exploit the market among migrant

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1. CA CMT 3/875/648, Secretary, Ngqeleni Traders Association to W. Stanford, 29.7.1921.
 2. CA CMT 3/875/648, Commissioner of Customs and Excise to SNA, 29.11.1921.
 3. Territorial News, 5.6.1924.
 4. Territorial News, 3.1.1924, 29.5.1924, 3.7.1924; Umcebisi, vol.9, no.5 (October 1933), 3; PGC, 1922, 9.

labourers in the cities. Tobacco production did not die out completely; in fact census estimates suggest that there was only a marginal decline in output until the 1930s.¹ It is highly probable that marketing along African networks continued. However, other factors contributed to the decline in the importance of tobacco as a cash earner. Tastes among European and even African consumers probably veered towards the products manufactured on a large scale, and marketed with heavy advertising; Mpondo tobacco was very strong. Further, as home curing was so time-consuming, the quality and quantity of the African product probably declined as labour in each household became more scarce. In later decades, it was dagga which, as in the case of tobacco, had long been grown and smoked in Pondoland, that became of more importance in providing a cash income. Unlike tobacco, it needed little care and preparation and though production was illegal, it commanded a better price for those prepared to take the risk. Little reliable information on production is available and it is unclear when it started to be taken out of Pondoland in any quantity. However, oral evidence suggests that at some time in the middle of the twentieth century, if not before, homesteads in secluded spots, particularly in the deep river valleys of Lusikisiki and Tabankulu, started to produce dagga on a fairly large scale.²

The fate of cotton and tobacco in the Territories underlines the position taken by the state relative to African producers. At a time when state resources were being mobilised to protect and develop large-scale capitalist agriculture, African producers were at best neglected, or at worst the victim of measures such as the Excise Act. Loans from the central Land Bank, established in 1912, were not available to Africans. No action was taken to protect their markets - in the 1930s, African grown maize

1. Union, Agricultural Census, 1924-1937.

2. Conversations with Mr. F. Deyi, former police sergeant.

was also affected by an excise duty - and little was done to improve the transport infrastructure in the African reserves.' All funding for the development of African agriculture, at least until 1925, had to come from council revenues.¹ The lack of encouragement given to cash crops in the Territories, together with the effects of the East Coast Fever regulations on the sale of cattle and lack of markets for maize, served the interests of both mining capital and large-scale agriculture, two of the dominant powers within the state. For any reduction in the cash income of African families tended to push more of them onto the labour market, and their difficulties in finding a market for their produce protected white farmers from being undercut. How far these interests sought to use the state directly to undermine African producers is unclear. East Coast Fever regulations appear to have been enforced on sound veterinary principles, and sale of maize was largely inhibited by the operation of a market uncontrolled by the state. The Tobacco Excise Act, on the other hand, while designed primarily to protect European producers and increase state revenue, seems, initially, to have been designed to limit dealings in the African product. But there was little need for further government intervention when the supply of migrant labour was assured.

During the decade after Union, there was a significant growth in the number of import-substituting manufacturing industries in South Africa.² Industrial growth was largely confined to the major urban centres, the Witwatersrand and the ports, where both infrastructure and markets were available. However, amid the general excitement about industrial development, a number of schemes were floated by local traders, urban industrialists,

1. See chapter 4, section 4.

2. B. Bozzoli, 'Ideology and the Manufacturing Class in South Africa: 1907-1926', ICS, SA Seminar, vol.5, 60-80; T. Bell, Industrial Decentralisation in South Africa (Cape Town, 1973), 26-30.

and even officials, in the Transkeian Territories.¹ Most involved the primary processing of natural raw materials that were to be found in the area. It was suggested that the fibrous leaves of strelitzia (wild banana) plants and ilala palms be used for rope and sack manufacture, that milk from euphorbia trees and gum from acacias should be collected for rubber production. One magistrate felt that the local technique of boiling and scraping aloe leaves for ropes could be adapted to the needs of large scale industry. While individual officials sometimes reacted favourably to such initiatives, the administration felt they should be left to private enterprise and most schemes failed to get off the ground.

Only one idea, which envisaged the manufacture of paper from the long, sour 'dobo' grass, prevalent in the coastal districts of Pondoland, received serious consideration, particularly because of the shortage of paper in the country during the First World War.² The administration initially vetoed the proposal, which called for the construction of a factory near Umtata and exclusive rights over grass for one firm, on the grounds that grass, like the land in the Territories, was a communal resource and could not be alienated to private interests. It was also felt that the Mpondo paramounts - who had not been consulted - would refuse to give land for the factory. In 1915, a modified application was submitted, asking only that a pulping plant, if necessary situated outside the Territories, be enabled to purchase grass from the peasantry. Magistrates sounded the opinion of headmen and district councils only to find that their response was, for the most part, negative. They argued that the grass was too valuable to alienate even in limited quantities, that while the population was growing rapidly, natural resources were becoming scarce, that stock-owners would suffer and the poorer homesteads benefit, and that there would

1. CA CMT 3/919/774.2 and 774(2); CA CMT 3/942/817.

2. CA CMT 3/827/561(1)-(3), SNA to CMT, 18.12.1914 and correspondence following.

be friction between those wishing to use grass for domestic purposes and those wishing to sell. Mangala, regent in Western Pondoland, summed up the feelings of the people in the districts under his control.

...The grass helps people. We live on it. When one loses his way he goes to the dobo[sic] for shelter. When we put up a new hut we first put up a pempe [temporary thatch shelter]. We use the grass for thatching. It is good food for stock. We can't spare the grass; other districts have none to spare.¹

The issue had already been raised in some East Griqualand districts where headmen had used their authority to sell thatch grass to commoners. In these districts, officials had ruled against commercial exploitation of thatch grass in court cases and proclamations.² However, in the coastal parts of Eastern Pondoland, long grass for thatching, and reeds for mat and basket making, grew in abundance. Local people did collect and sell the grass to outsiders who came in to collect loads for sale in other districts. The grasslands were particularly rich and abundant after East Coast Fever and Marelane, the paramount of Eastern Pondoland, was not averse to the scheme so long as it could be controlled and the 'rights, comfort and contentedness of the Native inhabitants were not interfered with'.³ As in the days of concessions, entrepreneurs appear to have squared the paramount and it seems he saw the possibility of monetary advantage to himself, aside from the cash income and employment that would become available for the population as a whole.

Proponents of the scheme argued that the dobo grass in the Ngongoni veld was of limited use for grazing when it had grown long and rank and that cutting would not affect its ability to regenerate itself in the spring

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1. CA CMT 3/827/561(2), RM Libode to CMT, 5.1.1916.
 2. CA CMT 3/827/561(1), RM Mount Fletcher to CMT, 10.9.1909, 23.12.1910 (Proclamation 141 of 1910).
 3. CA CMT 3/827/561(2), RM Lusikisiki to CMT, 12.1.1916.

months. 'Just at present', the M.P. for Thembuland represented, 'any method of disposing of grass assets other than putting them into unsaleable and unexportable cattle seems to me to smack of sanity'.¹ Local traders were very much in favour of the proposal, and it was suggested that the headmen be won over by the promise of a place in the system of collection for which they would receive payment. Under pressure from the Secretary of Native Affairs, energetic entrepreneurs from Johannesburg, and local European opinion, the Chief Magistrate advertised for tenders and began to explore methods by which to organise the collection of grass.

Local officials were, however, very wary of acting against the thrust of African opinion and of becoming too far involved in controlling the scheme. They found numerous excuses for delay: the credentials of the first group of entrepreneurs were questioned; the tenders offered by others were considered too low. Officials changed their mind about the location of the factory, arguing that it should be in the Territories so that the people would benefit fully from the scheme. Then they suggested that the pending Native Affairs Administration Bill might make it impossible for whites to acquire land in the African reserves.² This objection was overruled, for the Bill exempted land which was to be used for trade and industries, but although interest was reawakened by the visit of a representative of a Swedish paper company, the scheme had been abandoned by 1918.³ The original applicants withdrew, technical problems involved in processing the grass were raised, and, at the end of the war, the urgency of finding a new source of paper began to diminish. The Native Affairs Department seemed to feel that any such industrial undertaking would cause more problems in Pondoland than it would solve.

1. CA CMT 3/827/561(2), W. Stuart to CMT, 26.1.1916; PCG, 1916, 10, 18.

2. CA CMT 3/827/561(3), CMT to SNA, 9.1.1917 and following correspondence.

3. CA CMT 3/827/561(3), SNA to CMT, 22.6.1917.

All the suggestions for rural industrialisation implied the alienation of communal natural resources. The administration, supported by the most chiefs and headmen in the Territories, increasingly took the view that these should not be exploited commercially. They did grant prospecting licences for minerals, but no significant deposits were found. Attempts to work the Mount Ayliff copper and nickel deposits failed; only a small marble quarry in the white-owned part of Port St Johns proved payable.¹ The state was also prepared to allow a few small sawmills near densely afforested areas such as in Tabankulu and coastal Lusikisiki, but in general the larger demarcated forests were reserved for the use of the administration. Windfalls were sold to the African population. Smaller forests in the area, under the control of headmen, were left to provide for household fuel and timber needs. Though some headmen were able to charge people for access to such resources, they could not provide the basis for an export industry. Various households craft activities survived but there was no great demand for African crafts outside the Territories. Training for new crafts, such as weaving and spinning, was included in some school curricula, and craft sections were started at the agricultural shows organised in the Territories.² Yet the administration made little attempt to develop handicrafts, and marketing of African products was left in the hands of the traders.

While it is unlikely that any large capital investment would have been made in the Territories during the first couple of decades of the century even if officials had approved it, the complete absence of rural industrialisation meant that no significant opportunities for local employment in privately owned concerns were developed. It was only the 1930s, when Africans began to move to the towns in far greater numbers, that economists

1. CA CMT 3/918/774, industrial census report, 1917; Interview, Mrs. M. Daniel, Port St Johns (not on tape); L.C. King, South African Scenery (Edinburgh, 1963), 99; Union of South Africa, The Mineral Resources of the Union of South Africa (Pretoria, 1936).

2. CA CMT 3/918/774.

began to take some interest in the ideas of industrial decentralisation. The South African state did not begin to act on such schemes until the late 1940s, when the political economy of the country had changed radically and the growth of parastatal organisations provided the government with more direct means to influence the location of industry than it had had at its disposal in the early part of the century.¹

4: Migrancy, Homestead Structure and Staple Crop Production

By the 1920s, producers in Pondoland had been blocked from access to external markets for their grain and stock, inhibited in their efforts to expand cash crop production and were intent on protecting their natural resources for communal purposes. Yet while the nature of, or lack of, state intervention hampered the development of export-oriented production, the state by no means smashed African agriculture. In the decade after Union, segregationist land policy triumphed; the Africans reserves were recognised and no attempts were made to encroach on land in communal tenure areas such as Pondoland.² Individual land tenure was jettisoned by the administration and communal tenure recognised. All taxpayers were still entitled to plots of land and access to grazing. These developments in policy had relatively little effect on the agrarian structure of Pondoland.

Land and labour policies were intimately linked. The creation of African reserves, and the survival of communal tenure, were a direct consequence of the particular form of industrialisation in South Africa. State policy was developed with an eye to the necessity of maintaining migrancy as the predominant form of proletarianisation. Rates of migrancy from Pondoland, as has been suggested, increased substantially after the crisis

1. T. Bell, Industrial Decentralisation, 1-5.

2. See chapter 5, section 3.

of 1912. Although no annual figures of the labour passes issued are available after that date, occasional statistics suggest that they did not again decrease. By 1921, according to the census of that year, nearly 19,000 men from Pondoland were at the labour centres, by 1936, around 30,000. (Table 5) The percentage of men absent rose from about 9 per cent in 1911 to 13.5 per cent in 1921 and to 17 per cent in 1936. (Table 8) In 1911, roughly 25 per cent of men between fifteen and forty five were absent; by 1936, around 45 per cent.¹ Migrancy rates remained lower in Pondoland than in other parts of the Territories, but in these decades migrancy became an experience general to most sections of Mpondo society. As men did not migrate in every year of their lives, it can be assumed that the large majority of homesteads - there were exceptions - had migrants.²

With the decline in communal forms of production, it has been argued, control over labour and productive activity were increasingly located at the level of the homestead. Although the homestead head's power over family resources was limited by the necessity of consultation with brothers, sons and even womenfolk, and by the specific rights of different houses within a polygynous family in certain property, he was ultimately responsible for acquiring and distributing property and making economic decisions.³ In the years before migrancy began, it was through him that the homestead obtained cattle by loaning or by the marriage of its daughters. In turn, he distributed stock between the houses and provided bridewealth for the male members of the homestead from its herds or by activating a wider network of kin. He would supervise the agricultural cycle - there is no evidence of chiefly control over planting and harvesting after the turn of

1. Calculations based on age breakdowns in Union Censuses.

2. See chapter 6, sections 1 and 2.

3. This paragraph is based on Hunter, Reactions to Conquest, especially 15-28 and material from interviews.

the century - and decide what could be sold to traders. The nature of his control cannot easily be defined at any particular period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; even then there were, no doubt, conflicts and tensions within each household, and it would be misleading to present a static picture of the nature of authority within the homestead. But once migrancy began, and the young men could acquire stock and property independently, the structure of rural productive units began to change more rapidly.

The cattle system, which had enabled families to control the wages of their migrant members, did not die out entirely after it was abolished by the state in 1911. Mackenzie's, a firm which had specialised in cattle advances, continued to offer them in the next two decades.¹ They supplied the Robinson group of mines which did not share the Chamber's point of view on the issue. Mackenzie's recruiters, including some of the leading Pondoland traders, disguised the advance contract by introducing third parties and promissary notes into the transaction, and defended their activities with some success in a series of court cases. Moreover, the 1911 Act regulated recruiting only for mines and works. Less highly capitalised agricultural enterprises, which were competing against mines and towns for a labour force, did not find the same advantages in close controls over the way in which labour was mobilised. When their supply of indentured Indian workers was cut off after Union, sugar farmers in Natal turned to the Territories to win a migrant labour force.² As they were able to offer advances, they succeeded in finding a considerable supply from Pondoland, despite the low wages offered. In

1. CA CMT 3/604/49, RM Flagstaff to Director of Native Labour, 22.11.1919 and enclosures; CA CMT 3/605/49(2), SNA to CMT, 6.9.1916; CA 1/LSK Criminal Cases, 1912-1924, R. versus George Wardle, Neil Mackenzie and J.B. Mackenzie; Interview, Bartwell Nkonya, Zalu AA, Lusikisiki, 10.1.1977.

2. CA CMT 3/604 - 608/49, 49(2), 49(8).

1921, parliament legislated to abolish advances in recruiting for all sectors of the economy, partly at the instigation of the Chamber which was concerned about the competition from the agricultural sector.

Although the cattle advance system survived in a variety of disguised forms for at least another decade, and migrants co-operated with recruiters to hide it from the view of officials, it became insignificant as a means of control over wages by rural families.¹ The mines did provide alternative systems of repatriating earnings through remittances and deferred pay. But deferred pay in particular, which was the most popular method of repatriation, did not provide the family with the same hold over wages. Migrants themselves collected the pay in cash when they came home.

Even when cattle advances were operating, but especially after they had been abandoned, it seems that tensions over the control of the migrants' wages within the family began to increase. Young men still often wanted to purchase cattle, when possible, with their earnings; the question was who would be able to control the cattle. Monica Hunter observed the result of such conflicts in the early 1930s, when the process of change was probably well advanced.

The son is the wage earner, and this gives him power. Gidli, a great grandfather, whose son still lived in his umzi (homestead), said, "Formerly an umzi was under the thumb of the father, now it is under the thumb of the son".²

In poorer families, where wages were of more importance to the family budget, the son probably acquired a relatively more important position. One man mentioned that he had actually paid the lobola for his father's wife from his, the son's, earnings.³ Another informant suggested that migrancy initiated changes in former ideas about the control over

1. CA 1/LSK, Criminal Cases, 1912-1924, R. versus Wardle, et al.

2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 60, 546ff.

3. Interview, Mgeyana.

resources within the family. Before labour migrancy 'the cattle belonged to the homestead head because there was no-one working'.¹

Tensions over the control of stock were resolved in part by brothers and sons moving out into their own homesteads at an earlier stage. Male members of the household could now obtain bridewealth, or at least a substantial part of it, without help from their fathers or the local chiefs. As they could purchase stock from traders, or from other homesteads, they could accumulate the nucleus of a herd for productive purposes without entering into relationships of service and reciprocity. There was no longer any need to remain in large homesteads for defensive purposes. Further, the new technology, access to draught and a wage, enabled a smaller family unit to survive and reproduce itself. Although there is no statistical evidence on which to rest such an assumption, evidence from observers and oral information suggests that the average size of the homesteads in Pondoland, the basic productive units, began to decline, a physical expression of the structural changes taking place.² This process was complex and uneven. Wealthier homesteads, with more resources to offer their members, could probably delay it for longer than poorer homesteads; the sons of the latter, on the other hand, may have found some advantage in maintaining a larger productive unit. Three generational settlements probably remained the rule, rather than the exception, at least till the 1930s. Forms of co-operation between homesteads at phases of the agricultural cycle, and reciprocal help at times of crisis, did not disappear. Yet the major outlines of the process, underlined by an apparent decline in the incidence of polygyny, began to take shape.

At the same time, migrancy became incorporated into the process of homestead segmentation and reproduction. A worker would migrate to earn

1. Interview, Ned Xinwa.

2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 1, cf. interviews, Kohlabantu, Vulizibhaya.

bridewealth. After marrying and establishing their own homesteads, many continued to work in order to build their herds, purchase agricultural implements and accumulate other commodities. A man who worked between about 1920 and 1942 recalled:

I ran away from school during East Coast Fever and... am illiterate...I was married before I went to the mines [ca.1920]. Joyi [his father's eldest brother] paid the bridewealth, seven head in one day. That was not the end: I paid twelve head for the first and nine for the second...whose bridewealth I paid myself... Things were hard so I went to the mines...I found out from friends which were the good compounds...We did not have machines at first but after getting them the money was better... That is how I got enough money to build a kraal...and that got me my second wife. I went twelve times and finished before I was old - only a literate man would remember the exact date [ca.1942]. I had a second wife when I finished...I bought cattle, cattle. They were cheap. Clothes were cheap. When I was putting up my kraal I got some [cattle] belonging to my late father. I bought a plough, I had six oxen for it and there were more too. I also had enough milk.¹

The position of the migrant within the family changed radically. He became both wage-earner and homestead-head, a joint role which was not unknown, but less common, in the earlier phases of migrancy. This was probably already the dominant pattern of migrancy in many other parts of the Transkeian Territories at the turn of the century, and may have been the reason for the relative unpopularity of advance systems outside of Pondoland at the time. State regulations contributed to the disappearance of advances in Pondoland and thereby hastened the changes in homestead structure. In turn, these changes rendered the system unnecessary.

The decline in the size of the rural productive unit necessitated further changes in the organisation of rural cultivation, of which the most striking reflection was the virtual disappearance of sorghum as a staple crop. Maize almost certainly displaced the older crop during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century when cultivation was extended and grain was marketed on a large scale. For maize gave a

1. Interview, Kohlabantu.

higher yield in good and well watered soils, stored better, and was more readily accepted by traders. But while estimates made at the turn of the century suggest that the output of sorghum still totalled at least half the output of maize, it was only planted in small quantities in dryer upland districts by the 1930s. (Table 14) Most informants agreed that they had stopped planting the crop, which had an open cob, because it was eaten by birds before the harvest.¹ It is possible that the feeding habits of birds changed during the early decades of the twentieth century; natural vegetation diminished as forests and bushlands were cleared for grazing, arable plots and firewood. Some species may have adapted themselves to feeding on crops and may even have become more numerous once the adaption had been made. However, informants made it clear that sorghum had always been threatened by birds while it was ripening unless it was guarded. This task fell to the children of the homestead; a temporary shelter (ipempe), or a platform, would be constructed in the sorghum fields where groups of children would spend most of their daylight hours during the couple of months before the harvest. They would throw stones and pellets of mud at the birds or scare them off by shouting. As the size of the productive unit became smaller, there were fewer children available to each family for day to day work in the fields; a number of informants confirmed that they had stopped growing the crop because they could no longer find the labour to guard it. The gradual spread of school education probably contributed to the shortage of labour in some homesteads.² Once the quantity of sorghum planted began to decline, each remaining field became even more

1. Following two paragraphs based on interviews, especially Bartwell Nkonya; Mpateni, Kohlabantu, Mathandabuzo, Mathanda, Fono, Xinwa, Mgeyana, Sihlobo, Zalu Heights, Lusikisiki 3.2.1977, Daisy Ball. CA CMT 3/919/774/3, G.J. Bosman, Report on the Status of the Maize industry in the Transkeian Territories, 1922?

2. See chapter 5, section 1.

susceptible to devastation by birds. Maize cobs, on the other hand, were protected against birds by their fibrous leaves.

The disappearance of sorghum opened the way to more far-reaching adaptations in the system of cropping. In pre-colonial times, vegetables and grain, at least in the coastal districts, had usually been planted separately. Pumpkins, beans and sweet potatoes were sown in gardens near to the homesteads; sorghum and maize some distance away in separate fields which were rotated after a few years. (Maize was known to grow well in soil previously planted with sorghum).¹ Sorghum, in particular, had been densely sown by broadcasting seed in small fields, perhaps in order to facilitate guarding. In the early decades of the century, this pattern of cultivation began to change. Maize, which could be planted at more widely spaced intervals, was more readily adapted to mixed cropping. It was sown, in larger fields, together with pumpkins, sweet cane, beans, and even sweet potatoes. The maize sprouted first and after it had been hoed a couple of times, pumpkin runners began to fill the spaces in between the stalks, drowning out the weeds. The beans would twine themselves around the maize stalks. This pattern of cultivation enabled day-to-day labour in the fields to be cut down; it was more suited to intensive inputs of labour at widely spaced intervals, where possible aided by ex-draught. Larger fields could be ploughed after the rains. Communal work parties could be arranged for a couple of hoeing sessions and for harvesting. Hoeing throughout the growing season became less necessary, and the fields did not have to be guarded while the crops were ripening. The timing and extent of adaptations made differed from homestead to homestead. However, it is clear that the concentration on maize opened the way to more extensive mixed cropping in a single field, a system which enabled smaller productive units to maintain their output.

1. Interviews, Kohlabantu, Mpateni, Nkonya.

Such changes were also integrally linked to labour migrancy. As the individual productive units were even more dependent on draught to maintain output, a period of wage labour to establish a working herd was essential. As there was, in general, less male labour available to each homestead, the absence of men for long periods threatened to inhibit agricultural production. However, male labour was only essential in the ploughing season and perhaps at harvest. From the late 1930s, if not earlier, monthly figures of migration to the gold mines indicate that the pattern of migration was assuming marked seasonal characteristics. (Table 7) Where possible, men would leave home in December, January and February. They were usually limited to six or nine months contracts and could return by October for ploughing.¹ August was also a peak recruiting month for men leaving at this time could return for the harvest in June. The number of migrants leaving during the winter months of May, June and July was far smaller. While the pattern of seasonality should not be exaggerated - only about 40 per cent of men left in the four peak months - and other factors affected the decision about when to leave home, it reflected the changes in family structure and cropping. (Table 7)

Not only could those families with adequate draught plant maize more extensively without having to increase the input of labour in cultivation, they could also sow more subsidiary vegetable crops. This evidence suggests that total and perhaps even per capita output may have continued to increase during the decades that mass migrancy became institutionalised. Such an argument should be advanced with caution. Although the lack of labour in each productive unit did not necessarily inhibit production, there is little doubt that some families found that their labour

1. Interviews, W. Hedding, Gonubie, 16.12.1976; T.E. Strachan, Port St Johns, 23.12.1976; I.M. Heathcote, Port St Johns, June 1976, 3.1.1977, 15.1.1977; National Institute for Personnel Research, 'A Study of the Factors Influencing the Seasonal Flow of Migratory Labour from Three Districts of the Transkeian Territories', Unpublished Interim Report, September, 1958.

became too thinly stretched. Women had to spend proportionately more time looking after children, gathering firewood - which in any case was becoming more scarce - and drawing water. Total output probably varied even more from year to year for maize was less resistant to drought than sorghum. As cash could be earned and grain purchased in an emergency, families were probably prepared to take greater risks so that they could capitalise on a good season. Further, in the longer run, the new system of cropping had its costs. More extensive and deeper ploughing brought with it the danger of topsoil loss, and even erosion in steep fields. Maize tended to exhaust the soil more rapidly, a process hastened by the dropping of field rotation and the shortage of new plots which was becoming evident in some areas by the 1930s.¹ Yet all in all, the adaptations in cropping did lead at least to further extension of cultivation, if not higher yields.

There are estimates of grain production in each district of the Transkeian Territories which bear out the tendencies suggested here. In 1904 and 1911, total grain production in Pondoland was estimated at between 350,000 and 450,000 bags. (Table 14) By the 1920s, returns of the crops produced in Pondoland had arisen to around 500,000 bags in average seasons and 700,000 in good seasons. On the basis of population figures, it can be calculated that per capita output in average years increased from something under two bags a year in the first decade of the century to between 2.3 and 2.5 bags in 1921. Only by 1936 had it decreased to below two bags again. These figures were, however, arrived at by estimating the number of homesteads in a district, the average landholdings of each homestead and the average yield per morgen in any particular year.² (Officials calculated that average landholdings varied between two and a half and four morgen, and yields between four and eight bags per morgen.

1. Chapter 5, section 4.

2. See correspondence about census returns and crops in CA CMT 3/919-920/774 and 3/903/728.

Consumption was thought to be about two bags per person every year.) Any of these estimates was subject to error for no records were kept of the relevant figures. As the system of taxation was not based on output, or even the quantity of land held, there was no reason for the administration to bear the cost of more detailed census work. One official felt that the returns were 'utterly useless'.¹ The agricultural census supervisor in the Territories was a little less pessimistic.

Outside the surveyed districts [he wrote] no one knows the extent of land allotted for arable purposes, and it is impossible to state with any degree of accuracy how much of the land usually under cultivation is under cultivation at any particular time. It is all guess work based on impressions made upon the minds of untrained men. The returns are not useless and as they cost little or nothing and give us a fair, even if vague notion of the general position, they are worth having.²

The statistical returns cannot therefore be used to prove or disprove the arguments advanced in this section.

The above analysis is based on a generalised view of the productive capacity of the homesteads. There were some families which were, even in the 1920s and 1930s, producing considerably more than they needed for subsistence and others which produced much less.³ The uneven levels of production within Pondoland in itself guaranteed a market for the larger producers. It does seem, however, that the adaptations made in cropping, coupled with the increase in stock numbers, enabled many families to remain self-sufficient in their basic foodstuffs in good and average years, at least till the 1920s. Considerable imports were necessary in bad years, particularly in 1919 and 1920, but in good and average years, the surplus

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1. CA CMT 3/846/585(10), extract from officials conference.
 2. CA CMT 3/919/774(3), E. Muller, Census Supervisor, to Acting Director of Census, 1.12.1919. See also CA CMT 3/918/774(1).
 3. See chapter 6, sections 1 and 2.

produced in some homesteads was probably nearly sufficient to offset the shortfall in others.¹ Producers still sold considerable quantities to the traders; one leading trader in Libode district remembered purchasing as much as 6,000 bags a year in the mid-1930s, a figure which suggests that the quantity sold had not diminished very markedly, and had perhaps even increased, when compared with turn of the century figures.² But although some grain found its way to other stations in the Territories, very little was exported. Grain was rather redistributed through the traders within Pondoland, on a commercial basis, or sold and bought back. The evidence suggests that the rural economy of Pondoland was able to recover after the major natural disasters of 1912/1913 and 1919/1920. It is worth noting that consumption of foodstuffs not produced in Pondoland, even of such basics as sugar which was later bought in large quantities, remained very low until the 1930s when output almost certainly began to decline.³ (Table 14) However, wages had become essential in the process of reproduction, in order to accumulate resources for production and for the purchase of certain commodities which were not locally produced.

One further factor may have contributed, in the 1920s, towards improved agricultural techniques and perhaps greater output. Local officials, as has been suggested in earlier sections, could act, to some extent, independently of the central government. They had to deal with the recurrent rural crises at a local level, and on some occasions helped to distribute seed and became involved in advocating cash cropping.⁴ They were also administrators of the council system and sat in the councils

1. For imports, see CA CMT 3/920/774.3(3).

2. Interview, G. Deutschmann, Port St Johns, 8.5.1976.

3. Interviews, Deutschmann, Lawrence, Heathcote and S. Gregory, Mount Bleak, Lusikisiki, 9.2.1977.

4. See chapter 4, sections 1 and 2.

themselves. While they were not always receptive to requests emanating from African council members, they were not averse to suggestions that some of the council funds be spent on agricultural improvements. While the Union government was reluctant to support African agriculture, the responsibilities of the magistrates were, to some extent, divided.

As early as 1904, an experimental farm was established in the Tsolo district partly in order to train African apprentices.¹ In 1912, an agricultural course was offered to African students, aimed at producing 'a man, who, when he left the school, would be able to farm on more up-to-date lines, and influence the people around him by his example'.² Shortly before, officials had initiated a scheme, inspired by the agricultural extension programme developed in Ireland, in which trained demonstrators were sent into the field to work plots. Young graduates of the European agricultural schools were first used as demonstrators, but it soon became clear that they were unsuitable for work in the Territories and after 1915, they were gradually replaced by Africans trained at Tsolo. As the council budget was small and the Native Affairs Department was not prepared to make any significant contribution to the scheme - it paid only the salaries of European demonstrators - there were still only ten African extension workers by 1920.³ However, in the next decade, the programme expanded rapidly. In 1925, the councils were freed from their part of their responsibility for funding education in the Territories. During the same year, the whole system of taxation in the Territories was

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1. Following paragraphs on demonstration schemes based on records of agricultural demonstrators in CA CMT 3/847 - 850/593. See also, Umcebisi, 1925-1933, passim; interviews with agricultural demonstrators Nkonya, Sigwili, Mpateni, Magazi and agricultural official C.E. Hall-Green, Kenton on Sea, 10.12.1976; Fox and Back, 'Preliminary Survey', 70-80.
 2. Umcebisi, vol.2, no.4 (December, 1926), 2.
 3. CA CMT 3/850/593(11), Hughes to CMT, 6.9.1920 and SNA to CMT, 31.10.1924.

changed; the hut tax was replaced by a £1 poll tax on every adult male, some of the proceeds of which went into a National Development Fund topped up by the state on a rough pound for pound basis. Though the Fund was small, and had to answer many calls throughout the Union, some money was channelled to the council programme: expenditure on extension work had doubled to roughly £24,000 in 1925 and in the next few years doubled again.¹ By 1930, there were one hundred demonstrators in the field, the supervisory bureaucracy had been expanded, a touring demonstration caravan put on the road and an agricultural journal in Xhosa and English, Umcebisi Womlimi Nomfuyi (Advisor to the cultivator and stock-keeper), launched. Two new agricultural schools were opened, one at Teko in Butterworth and one, in 1930, near Flagstaff in Eastern Pondoland.

Each demonstrator was equipped with a set of ox-drawn implements: a plough, harrow, cultivator and planter. His primary task was to show how they could be used to advantage; that better ploughs than the cheap, fragile 'seventy-fives' would cut the soil more deeply; that two ploughings were better than one; that harrowing would improve results. They advocated the use of hillside ploughs with reversible shares on steep lands so that the land could be more easily ploughed along the contour, rather than up and down the hills as was the usual practice. They tried to introduce winter ploughing so that the frosts could help to break up the soil prior to the rains, and weeds would find it more difficult to take root. They discouraged broadcast sowing, demonstrating instead that if crops were planted in rows, seed could be saved, each plant given more space to grow, and oxdrawn cultivators used. They castrated rams and caponised cockerels to increase the supply of meat and eradicate poor quality stock. Most demonstration work concentrated on improving production of existing crops and the quality of stock although in the 1910s, cotton was encouraged.

1. Umcebisi, vol.4, no. 4 (August, 1928), 13.

As the people in Western Pondoland had a separate council, and Eastern Pondoland was still outside the council system, they received demonstrators, except for those working on cotton projects, sometime after other Transkeian districts. But by 1922, officials decided that Pondoland should not be left behind and by 1926, there was a demonstrator in each district of the area.¹ (At the time there were two in each of the other Transkeian districts.) Their efforts met with mixed success. They were few in number and could work in only one location - there were over 200 locations in Pondoland - at a time. On entering a location demonstrators would have to secure permission from the headmen and it was often to the headmen they turned for their first plots. The latter were not slow to realise the advantages that could be derived from the scheme for the owner of the demonstration plot was entitled to keep the produce reaped. In some locations outside Pondoland, at least, headmen and a few wealthier families appeared to have monopolised the labour offered by the demonstrators.²

When demonstrators did succeed in moving beyond the headmen's fields - their supervisors tried to spread the work over as large an area as possible - they encountered a generally suspicious peasantry. There is little doubt that the crops reaped on their fields, at least according to their own reports, were better than those on the plots around them, but proof of the advantages in their methods was not always sufficient to stimulate imitation. Their success depended on resources that were not usually available in the homesteads. A set of implements cost well over £20; their use presumed adequate draught throughout the year. Improved seeds had also to be purchased. Many preferred their old seeds which could be saved from a previous harvest, which were suited to local

1. CA CMT 3/848/593.1(1) and (2), Hughes to CMT, 8.6.1920, 18.7.1922; Umcebisi, vol.2, no.4 (December, 1926), 3.

2. CA CMT 3/847/593(1), Hughes to CMT, 9.11.1916 and 15.2.1916.

conditions and which stored better and were more resistant to weevil than the standard white varieties. The experimental farms did, however, develop an improved yellow seed, the 'Teko yellow', more suited to Transkeian conditions, that became popular among progressive farmers in the Territories. Winter fallowing again interfered with grazing patterns and by removing the stubble and weed cover, increased susceptibility to erosion. The much-vaunted kraal-manure, which agricultural officers felt should be carted to the fields for fertilisation, was often in short supply and was reserved for tobacco or garden patches. Investment of more labour time and more cash into agriculture did not necessarily bring commensurate returns, especially when it was difficult to market crops for cash.

There is no doubt, however, that the schemes did make some small impact on the patterns of agriculture in Pondoland, even in the first few years that demonstrators worked in the area. A few progressive and wealthier cultivators adopted the demonstrators' teachings wholeheartedly and were able to grow very much in excess of their household needs.¹ Others introduced one or more of the suggested improvements or purchased new implements. The demonstrators' methods, while they did demand more investment into agriculture, were not highly labour intensive; they could in fact save labour in certain phases of the agricultural cycle. The success of demonstration work depended to some degree on the attitudes adopted by local chiefs and headmen.² These varied considerably: in Western Pondoland the schemes were generally better received than in Eastern Pondoland.³ But even when demonstrators met with success, they could do little to change the structural position of rural producers. At most they aided certain progressive farmers to increase output for sale on

1. Interview, Mathandabuzo. See chapter 6, section 1.

2. Interview, Nkonya. See chapter 6, sections 1 and 2.

3. Chapter six, section 3.

the internal market in the Territories and enabled a few average producers to stretch their labour a little more thinly. There is no evidence to suggest that demonstration work reduced the dependence on wage labour in the great majority of homesteads in Pondoland.

The broad trends in patterns of production after East Coast Fever, it has been argued, must be placed in the context of the specific way in which the people in Pondoland were incorporated into the capitalist economy. In this chapter it has been argued that the state was prepared to aid in the distribution of grain when famine threatened, but did not interfere in the relationship between traders and producers. Little was done to encourage the development of new cash crops and the marketing of stock, grain and tobacco was inhibited. Yet the state made no attempt to radically undermine production of staple crops and the entrenchment of communal tenure provided the homesteads in Pondoland with the opportunity to alter their pattern of cropping in order to meet pressures which arose out of labour migrancy. While the nature of intervention by the state set the parameters for the patterns of production in Pondoland, an analysis of economic change would be incomplete without any discussion of political relationships within the area. The following chapter attempts to come to terms with the changing role of chiefs and headmen in the South African state and to suggest how local political relations affected patterns of production.

Chapter 5

CHIEFS AND HEADMEN IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN STATE

1: The Dipping Crisis and the New Paramountcy, 1905-1920

Up to the time of Sigcau's death in 1905, it has been argued, the administration had expressly tried to curtail the power of the chiefs in Pondoland.¹ In the next decade, however, officials, faced with popular resistance to certain state measures, began to adopt a more ambiguous position, at least in relation to the paramountcy. Sigcau's accepted heir, Marelane, was about fifteen years of age in 1905. As he was considered too young to succeed, Mhlanga, son of Mqikela's first wife, was appointed regent by the chiefs and people with the consent of the administration.² Sigcau had intended to send Marelane to the United States to further his education.³ (A number of Transkeian youths were being sent to school and university there at the time.)⁴ But the colonial administration, intent on making not only an educated and progressive, but also a co-operative chief out of Marelane, felt that America might provide too liberating an atmosphere. They advised Mhlanga to keep him in South Africa and in 1907, Marelane went to Lovedale, the leading Eastern Cape Mission school.⁵ J. Henderson, the principal of Lovedale, made a great effort to mould him into a correct Christian citizen and even hesitated to allow him home for holidays lest he slip back into Mpondo politics and Mpondo habits.

1. See chapter 2, section 4.

2. CA NA 686/2610.

3. CA NA 686/2610, Assistant Chief Magistrate to SNA, 30.12.1905.

4. Interview, G. Dana, Tsweleni AA, Lusikisiki, 22.6.1976.

5. CA NA 751/F142, Chief Magistrate (Kokstad) to SNA, 5.2.1907; RM Flagstaff to SNA, 26.3.1907.

The lad shows promise of so much force of character [the principal wrote to the Chief Magistrate in 1908] that if he could be secured a respite of another year, he might be able to resist successfully the evil that will be presented him and develop into a useful man, able to exercise wisely and profitably the large measure of power which still clings to the Pondo chieftainship.¹

The administration encouraged Marelane to stay until, at the end of 1909, he was needed to resolve the crisis in which Mhlanga's regency ended.

Mhlanga's accession coincided with administrative attempts to enforce preventative measures against East Coast Fever. As the Mpondo would not accept councils, which financed tank building in the rest of the Territories, they had to agree, in 1906, to a once-off dipping levy of 2/6 on every hut tax payer.² In 1909, when the disease reached southern Natal, the administration informed Mhlanga that the levy would be introduced on an annual basis in preparation for compulsory dipping.³ The first collection had only raised enough to build sixteen tanks in the whole of Eastern Pondoland. At the same time, restrictions on cattle movements began to be enforced more strictly. A fence was built dividing Pondoland from Natal and a cordon sanitaire cleared on either side. Bizana district, which bordered on Natal, was cut off from the rest of Pondoland and itself divided into twelve zones among which cattle could not be moved. According to the administration, Mhlanga agreed to these proposals. But when the news became general, it occasioned widespread resentment in Pondoland; large deputations were organised to express popular views on the issue.⁴

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1. CA NA 751/F142, J. Henderson to SNA, 31.8.1908 and correspondence following.
 2. CA NA 526/509 and 691/2683 for correspondence on councils and tanks.
 3. CA CMT 3/824/558, Report of Meeting between Chief Magistrate and the Pundos, 17.12.1909; CA CMT 3/829/567, RM Lusikisiki to CMT, 11.11.1909 and correspondence following.
 4. Ibid.

Officials attributed the opposition to dipping to a combination of Mpondo ignorance and conservatism on the one hand, and to political agitation on the other. 'Surely when you agreed to the erection of these tanks', the Chief Magistrate told a deputation in 1909, 'you knew that they would be used. You did not think that the putting up of the tanks would frighten the disease away as a scarecrow frightens the birds in the lands...'¹ (The simile may have been lost on his audience for the Mpondo did not use scarecrows.) Magistrates generally felt that they acted for the benefit of the people, but on this occasion they were absolutely convinced that their motives were altruistic. They had even arranged for a party of Mpondo chiefs and councillors to visit southern Natal so that they could observe the effects of the disease at first hand.²

Some officials felt that the anti-dipping campaign was orchestrated by a group of councillors, and by Masarili in particular, who sought to discredit Mhlanga and take control of the regency. 'They were endeavouring by opposition to Government measures supported by him to secure his downfall'; Mhlanga on the other hand, 'had stood loyally by the government and should be supported'.³ It is difficult to assess the evidence filtered through the eyes of conspiracy-conscious officials, but such manoeuvres may well have been important in providing a focus for the opposition. During the crisis it emerged that there was great concern about the readiness with which the regent had accepted the administration's demands; he was felt to be unresponsive to the views of the councillors and chiefs. Considered in this perspective, the complaints that Mhlanga had not consulted his people before agreeing to the proposals, must be regarded as more than a smokescreen to cloud other issues.⁴ The regent

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1. CA CMT 3/824/558, Meeting, 17.12.1909.
 2. Ibid., and CA NA 751/F142, RM Lusikisiki to CMT and SNA, 8.1.1910.
 3. CA CMT 3/829/567, CMT to SNA, 13.11.1909 and RM Lusikisiki to CMT, 20.11.1909.
 4. CA CMT 3/829/567, Meeting at Lusikisiki, 12.11.1909, especially statement by Bodweni.

was being manipulated into a passive and collaborationist position; the precedent for unilateral state intervention was being set. Their right to consultation was the only power that the Mpondo subchiefs and people had to modify and influence state policy. It would seem that Masarili took on the role of defending the interests of the minor chiefs and people as she had done in the 1880s.

Underlying the general concern about state intervention in Pondoland were more specific grievances. Any new taxation was undesirable; all the more so a regular tax, over which the people would have no influence in the future, to implement an unpopular measure. Many believed that dipping would do as much harm as good. They had agreed to the dipping of small stock in 1903 after Sigcau carefully consulted his people, but some argued that when dipping first started, many of the small stock had died. 'Now!', said a spokesman, 'we are told that our cattle will be dipped with the same dip that killed our sheep and goats'.¹ The Chief Magistrate felt that they wrongly attributed death from wireworm to the dip.² But there may have been other dangers for stock which had not been dipped before, especially if they were not handled carefully at the tanks, or if the solutions used were too strong. During Rinderpest, rumours were rife that the disease had been brought by the administration to undermine African society.³ Such rumours began to circulate again in an era when suspicion of the state had increased; the measures introduced to combat Rinderpest, over and above the precautions taken by the Mpondos themselves, had not after all, met with much success. Further, some believed that the regular gathering of large numbers of cattle at the tanks would facilitate rather than retard the spread of East Coast Fever and other diseases.⁴

1. Ibid.

2. CA CMT 3/829/567, CMT to SNA, 20.11.1909.

3. CA PMO 249, Memo on Rinderpest in the Transkeian Territories, 6.9.1897 and correspondence following.

4. CA CMT 3/824/558, Meeting, 17.12.1909.

The Chief Magistrate took this point, but reiterated that in the long term East Coast Fever could only be stamped out if there were sufficient tanks. His assurances that dipping would actually improve the health and reproductive capacity of the cattle do not seem to have been widely accepted in Pondoland.

The Mpondo were well aware that some cattle diseases were spread by contact between infected animals; this was one of the reasons for their opposition to dipping and they had, as has been pointed out, isolated their herds at various times in the nineteenth century in order to stop the spread of disease. Some cattle movements were also stopped as a sign of mourning on the death of a paramount chief.¹ It is not, therefore, so easy to explain their dislike of government restrictions. Clearly, as has been illustrated, such restrictions had many adverse effects on the society, but they had been prepared to suffer these, at least in the short term, on previous occasions. It would seem that their opposition stemmed as much from their mistrust of the authority which enacted the restrictions, as the restrictions themselves. The people had no control over the nature of the measures, nor over the length of time they were to be enforced. Further, the measures, which would have important effects on the pastoral economy, were more rigorous than the steps taken in the past. They were combined with dipping, which necessitated long trips to the tanks that weakened the cattle. At the same time, government fences, anathema to Mpondo chiefs and people for they symbolised the confiscation of land by Europeans, were being built. The Mpondo were conscious of the events in Zululand at the time, where the sugar farmers were moving into some of the best coastal lands. East Coast Fever had also provided the administration with an excuse to abolish advances.

1. Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 51; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 400; Groser, South African Experiences, 38; CA CMT 824/582, RM Bizana to CMT, 9.5.1922.

Langasiki, the Ngutyana chief in Bizana, who was one of the most reluctant to buckle down and bear the burden of colonial rule, summed up popular feelings, or at least those of the chiefs, at a large meeting in December, 1909.

When Government first imposed the 2/6 tax they said that dipping is not compulsory. Now the disease is in Natal and a fence as high as this building [the magistrate's office at Lusikisiki] has been built to prevent the cattle coming to this side. We want all the Government Vets to go to Natal and stamp out the disease there. Government must not kill the children where the disease is not. When government came to the country they said they had come to maintain us, that we might grow, not to destroy us and not to take away our land. We must come under Government with our own blankets and the ground would remain with us always. What have we done today that he should kill our cattle. Our cattle are our own food. We do everything for Government dig his roads and his mines. We thought we were good subjects to Government. We were praising Government. We do not understand Government that now tramples on our heads and treats us like dogs. We are his children, we fill his house with money in one day, when we have none we work for it. What wrong have we done? I ask Government to tell us what wrong we have done.¹

His impassioned speech perhaps revealed his ignorance of the way in which East Coast Fever could be carried by ticks alone rather than by infected cattle. Yet it made clear the depth of suspicion with which the administration was regarded. East Coast Fever restrictions and dipping were interpreted, at least on the basis of this evidence, as punitive measures.

The administration did not sit by idly while the forces of opposition were gathered. The magistrate of Kingwilliamstown district, senior official in the Eastern Cape, was sent to Lovedale to obtain Marelane's assurance that he had no part in the disturbance and to inform him about the situation.² Marelane was rapidly subjected to a crash course on East Coast Fever and the measures that could be taken to prevent it. When Mhlanga died at the end of November 1909, the new chief was whisked back

1. CA CMT 3/824/558, Meeting, 17.12.1909.

2. CA CMT 3/829/567, SNA to CMT, 25.11.1909.

to Pondoland, fully prepared. His presence had little immediate effect. A number of chiefs and councillors had determined to contest the dipping regulations in court and employed a lawyer who took the case on condition that every hut tax payer in Pondoland contributed one shilling.¹ Collections began and payment in itself came to signify commitment to resisting the government. Magistrates detected further intrigues by Masipula, aided by some councillors, who was staging a bid for the paramountcy by discrediting Marelane.² At one stage, in February 1910, the administration felt they had lost the paramount to the forces of opposition. However, after his formal installation in that month, the Chief Magistrate placed a great deal of pressure on him, threatening to withdraw the subsidies of all the chiefs in Pondoland and arrest them as well.³ Ultimately, there was little the Mpondo could do short of violent resistance, and the implications of revolt were too well known. The collection broke down and by early March, Marelane was in a position to censure his councillors publicly for misleading him and announce that the government proposals would be accepted, though everyone realised that the 'Pondos generally dislike[d] the idea of dipping their cattle'.⁴

Marelane's accession was seen by the administration to herald a new era in relations between the paramountcy and the administration. The image of the paramountcy began to change. Whereas Sigcau had been seen as backwardlooking, and the major factor in retarding the advancement of a people hungry for the benefits of civilised rule, Marelane was cast in the role of a collaborative and modernising chief, dragging his people out of the darkness by their all too often absent bootlaces. Whereas a decade

1. CA NA 751/F142, CMT to SNA, 23.2.1910 and following correspondence.

2. CA NA 751/F142, CMT to SNA, 7.3.1910.

3. Ibid. and CA CMT 3/842/582, Meeting, 18.2.1910.

4. CA CMT 751/F142, CMT to SNA, 10.3.1910 and 11.3.1910.

before, Sigcau's attempts to resist seemed to be constrained by the passivity of the people, now the paramountcy was being used to neutralise opposition by the lesser chiefs, who had popular support. The transition was not as stark as these images suggest, but the dipping crisis certainly did highlight changes in the political balance within Pondoland.

The administration's hopes for Marelane were, to some degree, realised. In 1911, when East Coast Fever first broke out in the Territories, the paramount organised his own guards on the borders of Pondoland to prevent cattle movements and helped to enforce other regulations.¹ Between 1913 and 1915, he weathered another crisis over dipping which, if anything, was more serious than the first.² In 1913, when the disease had already killed the cattle, the administration decided to levy a further tax of five shillings annually, not only on hut tax payers, but on all adult males. There were still too few tanks in Pondoland to permit compulsory dipping of all the cattle. The threat of increased taxation, coming on top of an unprecedented series of natural disasters between 1911 and 1913, stimulated a new wave of resistance. In parts of East Griqualand, dipping tanks were blown up and some men took to arms. The Mpondo were, at one stage, thought to be implicated in this open rebellion which lasted, in various phases, for three years between 1914 and 1917.³ There does not, however, seem to have been any open violence in Pondoland. Marelane was personally given the credit for keeping the Mpondo out of the disturbances. Unfortunately, it is difficult to assess his role and the course of the crisis in Pondoland because one file dealing with this episode is missing from the

1. CA CMT 3/842/582, Marelane to CMT, 25.8.1911.

2. For this episode see CA CMT 3/868/635, 635(3) and 635(4). File 635(2), covering the height of the crisis in 1914, is missing. See also Cory Library PR 1140-1142, Obituaries in E.G. (Education Gazette), 9.9.1921, Christian Express, 1.9.1921, Territorial News,

3. House of Assembly, An.242- 1915, Stanford's Report; PTA SA NA 83,84; CA CMT 3/790 - 791/425.

archives. Marelane was able to secure acceptance of the additional tax and compulsory dipping although he did succeed in persuading the administration to limit the tax to hut tax payers. The underlying resentment against dipping and restrictions on cattle movement, surfaced on a variety of occasions in the next decade.¹

Not only did the new paramount co-operate with officials at times of crisis, when he was under great pressure from the administration, he also took 'progressive' initiatives himself, particularly in the educational sphere. In these he was greatly aided, or more likely led, by Tshongwana, 'one of the best educated and most capable of the Lovedale Native teachers of his time', who became the paramount's secretary, and was 'strictly speaking...from accession, the brains of the chief'.² It was later recalled, when the Christian Express unhappily had to publish an obituary for Marelane in 1921, that the young chief had applied to take Tshongwana with him when he was rushed back to Pondoland at the end of 1909.³ It is possible, however, that Tshongwana's appointment was actually organised by the administration.

Sigcau had not been entirely remiss in the field of education. He had given £100 to Emfundisweni mission school in the 1890s, had authorised and even arranged labour for the erection of schools and had educated some of his own children, including one daughter, beyond primary level.⁴ However, at his death there were still only twenty-eight schools in Pondoland, all primary, and the number of pupils was only 1,434 or about

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1. For example, CA CMT 3/714/281.5, Meeting at Port St Johns, 25.6.1915; CA CMT 3/824/558, Meeting, Lusikisiki, 12.12.1919.
 2. Christian Express, 1.6.1921; W.D. Cingo in Territorial News, 11.8.1921.
 3. Christian Express, 1.6.1921.
 4. W.D. Cingo in Forward, December 1928, 13; CA NA 699/2792 for information on Sigcau's daughter, Caroline.

two per cent of children between five and fifteen.¹ Marelane instituted, possibly with administrative encouragement, an annual two shilling education levy, which brought in between £2,000 and £3,000 a year to fund primary schools. By 1921, the number of schools in Eastern Pondoland had increased to 94 and the number of pupils to between five and six thousand.² The paramount's energies were particularly devoted to funding a Teachers Training College at the Methodist centre of Emfundisweni in Flagstaff district. A sum of £1,200 was raised, some of it by forceful methods, and in 1921 there were 142 student teachers at the institution. (At this time, education in the Territories was funded partly by the missions and partly by the Councils, the state providing some support for teachers' salaries and school inspectors.) The man appointed as principal of Emfundisweni Training School, W.D. Cingo, was himself a descendent of one of Faku's brothers, the leading Mpondo educationist of his time, advisor to and occasional spokesman for Marelane, and later author of traditional histories. He was an advocate of progressive Christian values and co-operation with the state; his college became a symbol for the new developments in Pondoland.

Marelané was appointed to the Cape Province Native Education Commission in 1919, as a representative of the Native Affairs Department, in recognition of his services to education.³ Whatever his influence with the Commission, it was an unusual step on the part of the Department and signified the importance attached to the attitude of the paramountcy not only at a local, but at a national level. Tshongwana, who attended the

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1. On education see Territorial News, 11.8.1921; PGC, 1912-1930, including Accounts of the Eastern Pondoland Trust Fund; Province of the Cape of Good Hope, Department of Public Education, Reports of the Superintendent-General of Education, 1915-1921.
 2. Cape, Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 31st. December 1920, C.P.2 - 1921, 20a, 21a.
 3. Cape, Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 31st. December 1919, C.P.4 - 1920, including Report of Commission on Native Education, 60-106.

Commission's sittings, seems to have played a more important role than Marelane himself. When the secretary died in 1919, while the Commission was still in session, Cingo felt that Marelane gave up his struggle and went to pieces. There are certainly a number of reports, from that time onwards, which reinforce this view.¹ Marelane started to drink heavily and his behaviour excited comment from both the administration and his advisors. Even his new secretary, Gordon Dana, who had been educated at university in the United States, and was not as sympathetic to the administration as Tshongwana, expressed his concern about the chief to officials.² Yet despite Marelane's decline in the last two years of his rule - he died, prematurely, of pneumonia in 1921 - he had, with the aid of men like Tshongwana and Cingo, stamped a new character on the paramountcy as an institution.

The new paramount was not, however, merely a tool in the administration's hands. From his accession, Marelane and his advisors attempted to use their position of favour in such a way as to restore some of the powers of the paramountcy which had been so impaired after annexation. During the dipping crisis, Marelane had direct access to the upper, decision-making echelons of the administration, access which had been denied to Sigcau and even to the paramounts before annexation. It had long been colonial policy to insist on an official intermediary between the Mpondo chiefs and the Chief Magistrate: a British resident before annexation, and an assistant Chief Magistrate in Lusikisiki afterwards. The latter official, R.W. Stanford, had been withdrawn from Pondoland after Sigcau's death and, despite Marelane's requests, was not again appointed. All communication was supposed to take place through the agency of the

1. CA CMT 3/842/582(3), CMT to RM Lusikisiki, 14.7.1919 and CMT to SNA, 22.7.1919; CA 1/LSK 2/2/2/3, RM Lusikisiki to CMT, 7.2.1921 and following correspondence.

2. Interview, G. Dana; CA 1/LSK 2/2/2/3, Dana to RM Lusikisiki, 18.3.1921.

Resident Magistrates in Pondoland. Nevertheless, the years of the dipping crisis (1909-1915) were punctuated by frequent meetings between the Chief Magistrate himself and Marelane, who was thus in a position to express his views directly to the top Transkeian official on a large range of important issues.

Any concessions made to the paramountcy depended on administrative adjustments, which could be reversed, rather than major legislative or policy changes at the national level. 'Native policy' was in flux during the first decade of Union as a programme for South Africa as a whole was being formulated; the propagandists of segregationist ideologies were beginning to regard 'traditional' political authority in the African areas in a more favourable light. But while there was no longer any desire, at the national level, to destroy the chiefs - they had, in the main, been subject to adequate controls - neither was any major concession made in proclamations governing the Native Territories. A Departmental Circular of 1914, which tried to define the role of chiefs more clearly, merely reiterated existing policy, at least in regard to chiefs in the Transkeian area.¹ They were recognised and subsidised at the government's pleasure, yet could exercise no 'autocratic powers'.² They were not employees of the state, nor public servants, unless they also acted as headmen, but should represent the people to the administration on the one hand and 'by example and precept and the proper use of....influence ensure the due carrying out and administration of the law' on the other.³ Official favour, and close access to the senior administrators in the Territories, was therefore particularly important to the Mpondo paramountcy at this time.

Shifts in official thinking, and in the position of the paramount,

1. CA 1/LSK 2/2/2/3, Acting CMT circular, 2.1.1914.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

were sometimes made in the heat of a dispute; in certain cases more general administrative principles were subsequently formulated.¹ Such changes are often difficult to identify as they could be specific to a particular dispute or disguised by constant articulation by officials of earlier administrative principles. However, it is clear that in the course of the dipping dispute, officials began to recognise that a strong paramount in Pondoland, if co-operative, would be an invaluable asset in implementing state measures and entrenching state control in the area. Such thinking had its roots in previous administrative practice: the authority of Dalindyebo in Thembuland and Bokleni in Western Pondoland had been weakened and moulded to suit the administration rather than completely undermined. But the paramount of Eastern Pondoland seems to have been able to win greater concessions from the state - a reflection of his greater power - than those in other parts of the Territories.

Although the chiefly struggle in Pondoland was shaped by relationships peculiar to the area, Marelane was not alone in his fight. In the Transkeian Territories as a whole, chiefs were on the offensive after the collapse of Cape liberal policies, Glen Grey principles and the demise of the independent peasantry. In Zululand, Solomon began a determined campaign to win formal recognition - for which the Mpondo chiefs did not have to fight - during the decade after Union.² The degree to which the chiefly struggle was co-ordinated in the Union as a whole is unclear, but their structural position within the country was not dissimilar and strategy coincided on at least some points. When Solomon tried to organise a large hunt as a symbol of his authority in 1916, for example, Marelane requested permission for a similar event in Pondoland.³

1. See this chapter, section 2 for analysis of disputes.

2. S. Marks, 'Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation', Journal of Southern African Studies, 4, 2, April, 1978, 172-194.

3. CA CMT 3/842/582(3), RM Lusikisiki to CMT, 4.9.1917.

Marelane's demands were certainly echoed by and probably influenced by the Western Pondoland chiefs after Bokleni's death in 1912. The latter had generally co-operated with the administration; he eased his people into magisterial rule, taxation, dipping and even the council system in 1911. But Bokleni's heir, Madukula 'Victor' Poto was a minor at the time of his father's death, living with and being educated by a Methodist missionary.¹ In 1913, Poto's mother, Mangangalizwe, was appointed joint regent with Mangala, brother to Bokleni. Mangangalizwe was sister to the Thembu paramount, and shared his conviction that the most suitable role for a colonial chief was to co-operate with the administration; she was also an enthusiastic lay preacher for the Methodist church. Mangala, on the other hand, was an ardent 'traditionalist', anxious to rebuild the authority of the chieftaincy. He had received primary schooling at the Methodist institutions of Buntingville and Clarkbury - and had taken seven wives by the time he finished - but had not acquired any sympathy for the colonial views on chieftainship during his education.² By 1915, Mangala had succeeded in warding off a claim to the regency by one of Poto's brothers and in isolating Mangangalizwe from the councils of Western Pondoland. He came to dominate the paramountcy for the next seven or eight years and his struggle was, if anything, more bitter than Marelane's, his demands more far-reaching. Partly because of this, partly because he was less useful to the administration, he evoked a far more unfavourable response from officials than Marelane. But Mangala did go out of his way to establish a closer relationship with the Eastern Mpondo paramount and seems, on occasion, to have given the lead in defence of chieftainship.

1. Following paragraph based on CA CMT 3/851/596(1); Poto, Ama-Mpondo, introduction; Interview, I.M. Heathcote (not on tape).

2. Poto, Ama-Mpondo, introduction.

2: The Struggle of the Paramountcy 1910-1930

There were clear limits to the kind of concessions that the administration was prepared to make to the paramountcies: claims for control over natural resources, concessions, traders and tariffs were not seriously entertained. However, on issues such as death duties and settlement fees, the administration showed some flexibility. It became essential for the chiefs to define and isolate such customary rights as a basis for their demands. Marelane and his councillors often couched their arguments in the language of custom, recalled the powers of the paramount before annexation and exhumed the agreement between the Cape and Sigcau in 1894. His paramountcy, while clearly progressive in some respects, therefore took on a 'traditionalist' character in others.

On occasion, the Mpondo paramounts attempted to reassert the symbols of their authority, and rights which no longer had, in themselves, important implications for the chiefly revenues. Marelane's request for permission to organise a hunt in 1916 may serve as one example; the Western Mpondo paramountcy was quick to lay claim to a tusk which was found buried on the site of Faku's old Mngazi homestead in 1910.¹ Yet the chiefly struggle was not conducted, essentially, at the symbolic level and certain important ceremonies, such as those surrounding army mobilisation and the first fruits, quickly fell into disuse. The major effort of the paramounts was geared to maintaining local political control through the headmen and reasserting their rights to those customary dues which could still provide a substantial income. The Chief Magistrate certainly perceived this when, in 1920, he summed up the state of play in Western Pondoland.

...As the chiefs can no longer exact presents from the people by force, the latter are not as ready to contribute to the chiefs exchequer as they used to be, when there was no escape from so doing....The chiefs of Western Pondoland, guided by

1. CA CMT 3/718/308, RM Port St Johns to CMT, 28.11.1910 and correspondence following.

Mangala since the death of Bokleni, have observed that the people are slipping away from them. This touches them in pocket, as well as in other ways, but it is the financial side that weighs most with Mangala.¹

Marelane raised the issue of immigration into Pondoland soon after his accession.² In 1910, he disputed the right of Sigidi, chief of the large Nci subchieftaincy in Tabankulu, to admit immigrants without the permission of the paramount.³ Sigidi had claimed his own settlement fees prior to and after annexation. But Marelane argued that Sigcau had been promised the right to vet all immigrants in 1894 and that this promise should now be kept. The Chief Magistrate, in a remarkable reversal of administrative policy, immediately overruled a previous decision in favour of Sigidi. The agreement with Sigcau was subsequently enforced throughout the whole of Eastern Pondoland. In 1915, after a dispute between Mangala and the Konjwayo chief in Ngqeleni district, similar rights were extended to the Western Mpondo paramountcy.⁴

The Chief Magistrate's decision was clearly predicated on a more sympathetic relationship between Marelane and the administration. In addition it seems that officials were now becoming concerned about the movement of settlers into the Transkeian Territories as some districts in the Territories were becoming overcrowded. Population movements often involved the movement of stock which could result in breaches of the East Coast Fever regulations. Magistrates in the European farming districts around the Territories, who were no doubt keen to get rid of unemployed, landless Africans as quickly as possible, had been giving passes to the latter without consulting or informing Transkeian officials.⁵

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1. CA CMT 3/846/585(10), Draft for minute by CMT, 30.8.1920.
 2. For further information on immigrants, see chapter 6, section 1.
 3. CA CMT 3/594/45(4), RM Tabankulu to CMT and correspondence following.
 4. CA CMT 3/851/596(1), RM Ngqeleni to CMT, 8.9.1915 and CMT to RM Ngqeleni, 22.11.1915.
 5. CA CMT 3/593/45, CMT to SNA, 29.10.1909; RM Engcobo to CMT, 24.3.1910; CMT to RM Maclear, 18.8.1910.

The Chief Magistrate ensured that the system of passes was tightened up, but also used the paramountcy to keep a watch on immigration. If local headmen omitted to report new immigrants, Marelane's indunas were likely to hear of their presence and relay the information to the administration. Conversely, when immigrants came with their passes to the Magistrates' offices, they would be sent to the Great Place to obtain consent. 'I.... took the pass to Chief Marelane', related an aspirant settler in 1913, 'and he said I should pay him £5 before he would consider my application'.¹ The paramount's approval was conditional on a fee, usually a beast or its cash equivalent. The right to vet all immigrants implied access to settlement fees throughout the Pondoland districts.

Gordon Dana, who acted as Marelane's secretary for a brief period in 1921 before the chief's death, suggested that the paramount had no great interest in enforcing the collection of death duties.² Yet Marelane's behaviour, especially during a dispute over his rights to the duties from Mhlangaso's old followers, indicates that the subject was indeed close to his heart.³ After a number of abortive attempts to end his period of exile, Mhlangaso returned to Pondoland in 1904 without permission from either Sigcau or the administration.⁴ When he was arrested, he threatened to take the Colonial government to court, claiming they had no legal right to detain him. The administration chose to negotiate rather than defend themselves in court. Sigcau was persuaded to

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1. CA CMT 3/595/45(7), Statement of Mazangazanga, Tabankulu, 4.1.1913 and CA CMT 3/593 - 596/45 - 45(9) passim.
 2. Interview, Dana.
 3. For details of this dispute, and sources for following paragraphs, see, CA CMT 3/793/442, especially CMT to SNA, 21.9.1911 and enclosures; CA NA 751/F142, CMT to SNA 19.2.1910; CA CMT 3/842/582, SNA to CMT, 16.3.1910 and passim; CA CMT 3/824/558, Meeting, 17.12.1909; PTA SA NA 89, Notes of a Meeting of Chief Marelane and Pondos with the Chief Magistrate, 7.9.1911, Interview of a deputation from Chief Marelane, 8.3.1912.
 4. CA CMT 3/793/442, CMT to SNA, 21.9.1911 and enclosures.

accept Mhlangaso's return on condition that the latter settled in Bizana rather than Nthlenzi, lived as a commoner rather than a chief, and had limits placed on his freedom of movement. However, Mhlangaso's following was not to be denied, and after Sigcau's death, they gave him a platform on which to re-enter chiefly politics. By 1909, Mhlangaso emerged as one of the major spokesmen for the Mpondo at a meeting about dipping.¹ For reasons that are not entirely clear, Mhlangaso's views of dipping seem to have changed by the end of that year. What is more clear, is that the administration lifted the restrictions which barred him from attending the Great Place so that he would have more freedom to work against his old rival, Masarili, who was prominent in anti-dipping movement.² Although there are no records of any promises being made to Mhlangaso for his co-operation during the dipping crisis, he certainly felt that the administration had given him the go-ahead to reassert his rights to chieftaincy. Such a bargain may indeed have been struck.

One of Mhlangaso's first steps in rebuilding his position was to start a collection of death duties from his ex-rebel followers in Nthlenzi location, an act which in itself testifies to the importance of such payments in the eyes of Mpondo chiefs. He could hardly have chosen a more sensitive spot, for Nthlenzi was the location over which Sigcau had fought and was the site of one of Marelane's homesteads.³ The paramount himself claimed all rebel dues and had tried to collect them soon after his accession. Marelane was, in fact, suspected of assaulting a rebel who rebuffed him in 1911, although the administration never brought him to court as they had Sigcau.⁴ When Mhlangaso started his collection, with

1. CA CMT 3/824/558, Meeting, 17.12.1909.

2. CA NA 751/F142, CMT to SNA, 19.2.1910.

3. See chapter 2, section 4.

4. CA CMT 3/842/582, RM Flagstaff to CMT, 17.1.1911 and following correspondence.

some success, Marelane immediately called on the administration to protect his rights over the death duties in Nthlenzi. Of his two new-found allies, the Chief Magistrate chose to support the paramount on whom he had pinned so much hope for the future. Despite Mhlangaso's appeal to custom - he argued that the isizi could never be claimed by right of conquest - his status as a commoner was confirmed.¹ He was not, however, so easily deterred; he continued to collect dues from his sympathetic followers and even tried to establish the homestead of his son Tomi in Nthlenzi. Only at the end of 1912, when the location was on the brink of violence, was he finally brought under control after many demands for administrative intervention by the paramount. Marelane had, with the aid of the state, won another important victory over a subchief and, if he could levy it, a new source of dues.

Prior to 1910, as far as can be ascertained, the death dues of immigrants went to the local chiefs and headmen responsible for admitting them. Now, on the basis of his right to vet all immigrants, Marelane claimed that their dues should be paid direct to him. How fully such claims could be enforced is uncertain for Marelane could not always call on the assistance of officials as he had done in the Nthlenzi affair. The administration still stuck by its principle that death duties could not be collected by force. Indirect evidence suggests, however, that the chiefs continued to collect them. In 1924, after violent conflict over the paramountcy's rights to claim the dues from one group of Nci people in Flagstaff, an official found it necessary to warn chiefs again that 'compulsory exaction of death duties will not be countenanced'.² When enquiries were made about the causes of the fight, magistrates in Eastern

1. CA CMT 3/793/442, Mhlangaso to CMT, 5.9.1911.

2. Hammond-Tooke files 11-605 and 11-650, CMT to RMS Pondoland, 29.11.1924; RM Bizana to CMT, 11.11.1924; Statement by I. Godlwana to Hammond-Tooke, 10.2.1956.

Pondoland were of the opinion that death duties were still regularly collected; they did not seem particularly concerned about such chiefly activity. The general freedom allowed to Marelane's indunas probably made it easier for him to levy his dues, including the education tax which was collected by the chiefs rather than the magistrates.

There is some evidence which contradicts the view suggested here. In his comment on the political situation in Western Pondoland in 1920, the Chief Magistrate felt that the people were 'slipping away' from the chiefs and that the latter wanted 'the Government to bolster up their position artificially'.¹ Monica Hunter gained the impression, during her fieldwork in the early 1930s, that death duties were no longer paid by most commoners.² Both these comments refer largely to Western Pondoland and the Chief Magistrate's assessment, at least, may be based on wishful thinking. The oral evidence collected in Eastern Pondoland is contradictory.³ While death duties probably continued to be of importance both as a symbol of chiefly authority and as a source of revenue for the chiefs during Marelane's time and perhaps during the next decade, it seems that many families stopped paying these dues in later years.

Although officials accepted many chiefly nominees for headmenships immediately after annexation, and sometimes consulted either with the paramount or other leading chiefs when the original nominees had to be replaced, they gradually developed a procedure of appointment which allowed the people of a location to show their preference by a show of hands. The popular vote was not final but it certainly undermined further the power of chiefs to secure posts for their own men. Marelane had some freedom to send indunas around the country, but he could not coerce people to meet

1. CA CMT 3/846/585(10), Draft for minute by CMT, 30.8.1920.

2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 428.

3. Interviews, Mgeyana, Dana, 7.1.1977, Xinwa, Laqwela.

his demands, especially if they were supported by local headmen who could appeal to the magistrates. He realised, as did Sigcau, that sympathetic headmen were essential to the maintenance of chiefly power. The paramountcy had also to extend its control over headmanships if positions were to be found for all the sons and brothers of the royal family. Marelane found that the seven locations around the Great Place, over which the paramountcy had the recognised right to appoint headmen, were insufficient; in any case, he, unlike Sigcau, was not averse to becoming a headman himself and tried, in the end unsuccessfully, to have these locations reconstituted into a block directly under his authority.¹ One of his major concerns was to find locations further afield, particularly those in which the headmanship was disputed, for his nominees; previous paramounts had always tried, with varying success, to place their sons and brothers away from the Great Place so as to extend the influence of the paramountcy.

The problem of finding locations for members of the royal family had to be faced soon after Marelane's accession. While Sigcau had arranged with the magistrates for the placement of his sons before his death, and most were accepted by the people of the locations to which they were assigned, his eldest son, Toli, remained at the Great Place.² The location in Tabankulu in which Toli was supposed to 'form a tribe' was under a headman who, with the support of the people, refused to stand down.³ Nci and Cwera chiefs in the district also felt threatened by the proposed presence of a senior member of the royal family so close to their centres of power. Marelane, stung by the rejection, and correctly concerned

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1. McLoughlin papers, Minute by CMT 29.8.1913 and enclosures, CMT to SNA, 24.10.1913.
 2. For extensive correspondence on Toli see McLoughlin papers; CA CMT 3/713/271; CA CMT 3/959/3/213; CA CMT 3/824/558, Meeting, 7.9.1911; CA CMT 3/842/582, Meeting, 18.2.1910; CA 1/LSK 2/2/2/3.
 3. McLoughlin papers, Mpondo deputation to Umtata, 13.6.1913.

that his inability to place Toli was considered as an indication of weakness on the part of the paramountcy, suggested that a new principle be laid down for the appointment of headmen in Eastern Pondoland.

We have two classes of headmen [he wrote to the Chief Magistrate in 1911] viz. Chiefs and Commoners. According to our custom the position of headman is hereditary only in respect of Chiefs and their heirs....Briefly my proposal is to the effect that commoners should be informed that they are merely acting for my children, who will replace them when they attain manhood. And that whenever a headman dies I should be given an opportunity of recommending a successor.¹

Officials again refused to make any concessions in principle. They reminded Marelane, as they had Sigcau, that the days when every son of a chief could become a chief were past. However, the Chief Magistrate indicated that he was generally in favour of royal nominees, when they were acceptable to the people, because they could usually command greater respect and because this tightened the hold of the administration over the royal family.² Moreover, after yet further difficulties were experienced in finding a location for Toli, the administration created one for him in 1915 by exising contiguous portions from a number of other locations in Lusikisiki without regard to protests from local headmen who were losing both land and people.³

The administration also protected Marelane from attempts by minor royal lineages to place out their sons and widen the area under their authority, a reversal of the policy adopted during the first ten years after annexation. Mhlanga, the regent between 1905 and 1909, claimed chieftainship and the right to place his sons in a number of locations

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1. CA CMT 3/842/582, Marelane to CMT, 26.3.1911 in CMT to Under SNA 17.12.1909.
 2. McLoughlin papers, Meeting, 29.3.1911 and correspondence following.
 3. CA 1/LSK 2/2/2/3, Acting CMT to RM Lusikisiki, 8.8.1914 and correspondence following.

between the Msikaba and Mtentu rivers in Lusikisiki district.¹ He legitimated his claim on the basis of a grant allegedly made by his father, Mqikela, but hoped that it would be recognised as a reward for his co-operation during the regency. Sigcau, on the other hand, regarded the area as a potential chiefdom for his eldest son Mswakeli. He was keen to have a regent headman appointed to one location in the area in preparation for the time when Mswakeli completed his education and achieved manhood. During his regency, Mhlanga tried to push Mswakeli into the Flagstaff district and the regent's heir pressed Mhlanga's claim after Marelane's succession. But the new paramount was able to call on the administration to install his brother Mswakeli in 1911.²

Official decisions were not always so clear-cut, partly because the basis for appointment had now become confused.³ A variety of factors came into play in any dispute over headmanship. Where the post was in the control of a chiefly family, the heir was usually appointed, although the administration reserved the right to depose a candidate whom they considered incompetent or unsuitable. Officials reiterated the principle that the people should be consulted in any dispute, and they continued the practice of organising a show of hands at public meetings within the location concerned. But the popular vote could be embarrassingly fickle, swinging from one candidate to another if more than one meeting was held.⁴

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1. PTA SA NA 79, RM Lusikisiki to RM Flagstaff, 13.5.1908 and following correspondence; CA CMT 3/713/271, Asst. CMT to SNA, 22.12.1911 and following correspondence.
 2. CA CMT 3/713/271, especially meeting 28.2.1911 and Asst. CMT to RM Lusikisiki, 15.5.1912.
 3. For other disputes over headmanship see CA CMT 3/713/271, 3/851/596(2), 3/959/3/213, 3/954/2/62, 3/954/2/29, 3/714/281.5; McLoughlin papers; District Record Books; 1/LSK 2/2/2/3.
 4. See especially dispute over Location no. 9, Bizana in McLoughlin papers.

Officials did not try to dissuade either paramount or minor chiefs from trying to put pressure on the people during disputes, and they never felt that they were bound to follow the result of the vote. Further, from Marelane's accession, they took the paramount's claims to any location seriously, thus opening the way to complex disputes between paramount and local chiefs about the history of control over the location. The chiefs in turn, continued to deploy the political strategies which had been developed in chiefly struggles in the nineteenth century, and tried to use the administration in furthering their claims even if these had little historical basis. The administration felt that it had to take all these, often conflicting, criteria into account in order to secure a headman who was both sufficiently popular to secure the support of the people, sufficiently pliable to co-operate with the state's demands, and sufficiently acceptable to the paramount or other powerful chiefs who had the power to make his position difficult if they did not approve of the appointment.

The cost of such ill-defined criteria of selection were protracted and often bitter disputes over headmanships. Although there are by no means adequate records of all disputes, it seems that Marelane did indeed succeed in placing his nominees in some locations over which the paramountcy did not previously have control.¹ Oral evidence suggests that a royal nominee replaced a local headman in one of the Gingqi locations in coastal Lusikisiki.² Marelane also nearly succeeding in ousting a nominee of the Isikelo house with one of his own in a dispute over a location in Bizana.³ After Marelane died in 1921, and his brother

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1. CA 1/LSK 2/2/2/3, Acting CMT to RM Lusikisiki, 17.6.1914, Tshongwana to RM Lusikisiki, 11.5.1912 and meeting, 7.2.1911.
 2. Interview, Laqwela.
 3. MacLoughlin papers; CMT 3/959/2/29, especially RM Lusikisiki to CMT, 23.7.1925.

Mswakeli became regent, the paramountcy maintained the pressure on the administration aided, initially, by the secretary Dana. Two of Marelane's senior sons, Botha and Nelson, were placed in important locations in Flagstaff which had not previously been under paramount control.¹ Mswakeli was even able to slip one candidate into a contested post in the face of popular disapproval which eventually became so heated that the paramount's nominee had to be withdrawn.

The issue of headmanship remained central to chiefly politics throughout the 1920s. Mswakeli's demands were, if anything, more extreme than Marelane's. He tried to have the procedure for nomination altered by reintroducing what he called the 'custom of bringing'.² Instead of the vote being organised by the magistrate, it would be organised in the presence of the paramount's councillors and the successful nominee would then be 'brought' to the magistrate for approval. Even this request was a compromise. In a moment of anger, Mswakeli revealed his true feelings. 'All the locations in Eastern Pondoland "belong" to the Great Place....when I make a nomination I do not want it put to the vote'.³ Both he and Poto in Western Pondoland, who succeeded as paramount in 1918, argued that by accepting popular nominees, the administration was allowing backward-looking rather than progressive headmen to succeed.⁴ The increased stridency of the demands for control of appointments in the 1920s probably reflect both increasing concern on the part of the paramountcy about its local political control as well as a resurgence of chiefly aggression. At no point, however, did the

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1. CA CMT 3/959/3/212, correspondence in connection with Ngabeni location, CMT to RM Lusikisiki 29.10.1925 and following correspondence, Dana to RM Flagstaff, 17.4.1923 and following correspondence.
 2. CA CMT 3/954/2/29, Meeting between Mswakeli and CMT, 7.4.1925.
 3. CA CMT 3/959/3/213, Meeting between Mswakeli and CMT, 30.11.1925.
 4. CA CMT 3/954/2/62, CMT to RM Libode, 1.9.1922 and enclosure, Meeting, 22.8.1922.

magistrates make any major concession in principle, though they continued to encourage the paramounts to nominate candidates and involve themselves in the procedure for selection.

An essential part of the paramountcy's strategy in maintaining local political control was to monopolise the role of intermediary between the administration and the people. The chiefs were well aware that headmen had direct access to the magistrates and could bypass the paramountcy in presenting popular grievances. They were also concerned that their role would be further diluted if councils, along the Glen Grey model, were imposed in Pondoland; these could even threaten the institution of chieftaincy itself. Bokleni, who had accepted a changed role as a colonial chief, was not averse to the council system in the first decade of the century, but was reluctant to take the plunge without the agreement of the Eastern Mpondo paramount and bided his time in order to obtain better terms. When he was eventually won over in 1911, his councillors insisted that Western Pondoland should have its own separate General Council, that the paramount should nominate all council members, and that the customs and system of land tenure which were central to chiefly power should not be subject to alteration by the councils.¹ These concessions were, in the main, granted although he was allowed to nominate only four out of six councillors in each district council and two out of the three General Council members from each district. The powers delegated to him were far greater than those to other Transkeian chiefs and the Pondoland General Council tended to operate as a permanent, slightly restructured, consultative committee between the paramount's nominees and the magistrates.

Marelane was initially in favour of a similar arrangement for Eastern Pondoland, and the administration was prepared to offer similar

1. CA CMT 3/609/50, Bokleni to ?, 3.2.1911, CMT to SNA, 7.2.1911 and enclosure, Meeting, 6.2.1911 and SNA to CMT, 17.2.1911.

concessions to him during the dipping crisis.¹ Officials felt that acceptance of the council system in the area would reduce conflict over the financing of dipping and placed considerable pressure on the paramount to accept. But Marelane held back. He was, after all, able to secure access to the administration on his own terms for a number of years during the crisis and this enabled him to make significant gains; at the same time both the Pondoland General Council and the Transkeian Territories General Council seemed to be remarkably ineffective in persuading the administration to act on their motions. He had also to take into account the popular association of the councils with the dipping programme which resulted in revived anti-council agitation throughout the Territories.

So ineffectual did Mangala regard the Western Pondoland General Council which he had inherited from Bokleni, that he tried to withdraw from the system.² He was particularly annoyed by the tight controls which officials maintained over council finances and by the fact that administration could and did refuse to accept paramount nominees. Officials had also been suggesting that, for ease of administration, the Pondoland General Council be amalgamated with the Transkeian Territories General Council, a move which was considered a threat by the chiefs. They feared that they would be swamped by representatives from the rest of the Territories. Not only would the council in Pondoland cease to play a protective role for the paramountcy, but the Mpondo could be forced to accept majority resolutions

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1. CA CMT 3/609/50, CMT to SNA, 9.5.1911 and previous correspondence.
 2. Paragraph based on PGC, 1912-1919, passim; PTA SA NA 134/5195/12/F253, Minutes of Libode District Council, 25.1.1912; PGC, 1917, 10; PGC, 1918, 9; Transkeian Territories General Council, Minutes of Convention held. to Consider the Amalgamation of the Transkeian Territories General Council and the Pondoland General Council (Umtata, 1929), 2; CA CMT 3/846/585(10), draft for CMT minute, 30.8.1920; CA CMT 3/851/596(2), Meeting, 4.1.1922.

inspired by southern Transkeian councillors who had different customs and weaker chiefs.¹ In fact, Mangala had, in 1918, attempted to counter this development by launching a proposal for a new General Council composed of the whole of Pondoland and large parts of East Griqualand, which the Mpondo paramounts would be able to dominate. This unsuccessful scheme - which had met with a favourable response at a large meeting held in Eastern Pondoland in 1918 - seems to have been seen as an alternative to complete dissociation.

The administration had not made further attempts to extend the council system to Eastern Pondoland during the decade after Union for the structure of 'Native administration' in the country had not yet been redefined. After the 1920 Native Administration Act, however, which provided for the extension of the council system to areas outside the Cape Province, pressure was renewed. Mswakeli still preferred to remain outside the system, but eventually accepted, in 1926, on condition that he was given an elected council constituted under Act 23 of 1920, rather than one on the Transkeian model, and that it remain separate from the other Transkeian councils.² Officials could not understand why the 'most backward and ignorant' people in the Territories should demand an elected council designed for the urban areas; 'in asking for such a system' the Chief Magistrate suggested, 'they are actuated by a feeling of pride or sentiment and wish to have something different from either the TTGC or the existing PGC'.³ But the aim of Mswakeli and his advisers, although it was not revealed to the government in a series of negotiations which eventually led to a meeting with the Minister of Native Affairs, was rather different. They wished to circumvent official control over

1. CA CMT 3/822/545, Carmichael to CMT, 5.1.1917 and notes.

2. CA CMT 3/951/4/212, CMT to SNA, 11.3.1926 and following correspondence.

3. CA CMT 3/951/4/212, CMT to SNA, 21.6.1926.

nominees and funds that characterised the Transkeian system. This, they felt, was best guaranteed by a fully elected council for, according to Dana, they felt that they would be able to control the procedure for electing the councillors.¹ In 1927, however, the administration closed negotiations and unilaterally imposed the Transkeian council system in Eastern Pondoland, at the same time creating a new General Council of all the district councils in Eastern and Western Pondoland. In the late 1920s, officials felt that there was no longer any justification for the expense of maintaining two separate council systems in the Territories and suggested the Pondoland General Council be amalgamated with the TTGC. Despite their reservations, the Mpondo chiefs, under the leadership of Poto, who had thrown in his lot with the council system, accepted.² They were guaranteed that the Mpondo paramounts would still be recognised, that their powers of nomination would remain and that chiefly rights and privileges would not be impaired. The first session of the United Transkeian Territories General Council met in Umtata in 1931.

The most striking feature of the period after Marelane's accession in Eastern Pondoland was the success of the paramountcy in maintaining its local political control, and its ability to levy certain kinds of tribute, despite a system of administration which was essentially designed to minimise chiefly influence and power. The paramounts and, to some extent, the lesser chiefs, were highly sensitive to any infringement of their powers and resorted to complex political manoeuvres in order to maintain them. The evidence suggests that they used the little bargaining space available with considerable skill. Where possible, they tried not only to prevent administrative infringement of their powers, but also to employ the administration in bolstering up their position and regaining

1. Interview, Dana.

2. TTGC, Minutes of Convention; PGC, 1928-1930.

certain rights from local chiefs and headmen. In doing so, they projected a mix of the ideologies of progress and tradition. Marelane and Poto, in particular, showed that they were not merely hidebound chiefs clinging to the past, yet they were always highly sensitive to the use that they could make of appeals to tradition. In fact, Poto, with the aid of Mangala and his Mfengu secretary, Makiwane, published a full length book on Mpondo history and customs, emphasising the role and powers of the paramounts, in 1927; Cingo wrote a similar book in the 1920s.¹

The changing attitude of the administration to the chiefs stemmed, initially, from the problems faced by officials in maintaining order in Pondoland and in increasing the effectiveness of government intervention. State attempts to radically restructure local political relationships had been abandoned. Given the nature of local political power, and the continued strength of the paramounts, officials had little alternative but to bargain with the chiefs. The administration was certainly not prepared to make many major concessions to the paramounts; indeed, they refused more chiefly demands than they granted. But, having accepted that chiefs would not, and could not, be displaced, officials were concerned to remould the institution of chieftaincy and to incorporate chiefs into the bureaucratic structure. This was achieved in Pondoland partly by allowing royal and chiefly families to dominate many of the headmanships, and partly by giving certain powers, such as those over immigration and the local council system, to the paramounts. The recognition of chiefs, and their more bureaucratic role, was enshrined in the 1927 Native Administration Act, a cornerstone of segregationist policy, which largely confirmed the position in the Transkeian Territories.² The state had

1. Poto, Ama-Mpondo; cf. W. Cingo, Ibali lama Mpondo (Palmerton, 1925).

2. J.T. Kenyon, An Address on the General Council Administrative System of the Transkeian Territories (Umtata, 193?), 12-15; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 421-426; J. Lewin, Studies in African Native Law (Cape Town, 1947), 13-31.

had ultimate control over the appointment and recognition of chiefs, who served at its pleasure; the administrative duties of headmen were more closely defined. The Act also provided for a more segregated system of justice. Chiefly courts could be recognised and 'native law and custom' was to be more extensively applied in civil disputes. It is interesting to record that Victor Poto's court was, in 1929, one of the first recognised in the country. Mswakeli's court was similarly elevated in 1931. The survival of the chieftaincy, and the use made of chiefs and headmen in administering Pondoland, had important implications for patterns of production, stratification, and political conflict in the area.

3: Chiefs, Headmen and the Land

Throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, the chiefs and headmen in Pondoland displayed great sensitivity to any threats on the part of the state either to dispossess the Mpondo of their land, or to change the system of communal tenure. Though the paramounts, at least, had not been averse to granting concessions prior to annexation, they did not construe the terms of these grants as providing traders or concessionaires with permanent title to the land. When their political power had been reduced, the chiefs began to reflect a deepset fear that the administration would bow to pressure from such interests. As Union 'Native policy' swung towards the entrenchment of the system of reserves during the first decade of the century, the dispute over land did not assume a central position in the relationship between chiefs and the state. There were, nevertheless, some areas of disagreement over land policy and chiefly insistence on the preservation of communal tenure had important implications the the nature of rural production.

The paramounts opposed, on a number of occasions, the alienation of even small areas of land for state purposes. They had had to accept the

reservation of commonages around the magisterial centres, but in future years, councillors maintained that these had been 'gifts' to the administration, and therefore could not be cut up into farms or urban plots as had been done with the land around Umtata magistracy.¹ Sigcau contested all claims by the traders to rights over the sometimes extensive grants that he and his predecessors had made; he even tried to prevent the erection of a lighthouse on the coast of Lusikisiki partly so that no precedent be set by which the administration could claim land for such purposes, partly because he felt it would disturb access to winter grazing.² Similarly, in 1915, Marelane opposed the alienation of land near Umtata for the construction of an electricity generating station.³

The fear of losing land to the state or to European claimants was a constantly recurring theme in disputes with the administration. Concern about the implications of the fences built before East Coast Fever was, as has been illustrated, articulated by a councillor when the Mpondo explained their opposition to state intervention.⁴ Such fears also underlay the increasingly hostile response by the Mpondo chiefs to cash-cropping schemes. Europeans in the Territories, especially in the established farming communities around Umtata and Port St Johns, themselves experimented with the new crops and some made it clear that they felt land in the Territories would be much more productive if it were under European ownership.⁵ The chiefs reached the conclusion that any successful attempt to grow cash crops would lead to confiscation of the

1. PGC, 1917, 11.

2. CA NA 686/2609, Meeting, 17.2.1903 in CMT to SNA, 3.3.1903 and Mabengu to Asst. CMT, 24.3.1904.

3. CA CMT 3/827/561(2), CMT circular, 29.10.1915.

4. CA CMT 3/824/558, Meeting, 17.12.1909, statement by Ben Matshikitshwa.

5. For example, C. Henkel, Native Territories, 124.

land on which it was grown. When making grants of land in the fertile Mngazi valley near Port St Johns town, Bokleni, according to Mangala, specifically 'instructed Gawe [one of the grantees] and other men not to plant fruit trees or make other improvements lest they should attract Europeans'.¹ Similar fears led to chiefly resistance against cotton-planting and in one Transkeian district, the council extension schemes were viewed as a plot through which the administration would acquire information about the potential of land in communal tenure before taking it over completely.² There is little doubt that the attitudes towards fencing, cash crops and winter crops - which in any case threatened winter grazing resources - were one element in the failure of cash-cropping and agricultural improvement.

The chiefs also remained on the alert against less direct threats on the land. The administration stuck by Rhodes's principle that no Europeans would be given allotments in communal tenure areas but they did make an exception for Coloured people, especially in Lusikisiki district.³ Marelane was highly suspicious about these Coloured plot-holders, for he feared that, being 'like Europeans' and less concerned to defend communal tenure, they might try to use their plots as securities for debts.⁴ In this way, European traders and lawyers might obtain some hold on communal land. This same issue underlay a bitter dispute between the administration and the Western Mpondo paramountcy. After Gawe, the grantee mentioned above, died in 1915 his plot was eventually given by the magistrate of Port St Johns to another immigrant named Maninjwa.⁵

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1. CA CMT 3/714/281.5, Minutes of meeting between Mangala and CMT, 17.5.1916.
 2. CA CMT 3/894/593, CMT to Head, Grootfontein, 31.12.1913; CA CMT 3/849/593, Acting CMT to SNA, 16.2.1914.
 3. PTA SA NA 61, CMT to SNA, 25.5.1905; CA CMT 3/824/558, Meeting, 7.9.1911 in CMT to SNA, 18.9.1911.
 4. Ibid.
 5. CA CMT 3/714/281.5, Meeting, 17.5.1916.

As Gawe had left debts, the magistrate, who dealt with such estates, felt that Maninjwa should pay the costs of improvements made on Gawe's land so that the debts could be cleared. (Gawe had not, apparently, obeyed Bokleni's injunction.) Mangala, the regent, was adamant that no cash value should be placed either on land or improvements in Pondoland. In a stormy meeting with the Chief Magistrate in 1916, he tried to prevent the transaction. He even offered to pay Gawe's debts himself in order that no precedent be set for land being used as a security for debts. He was quite clear about the basis for his argument: 'the reason for the request is to prevent the land going to a European'.¹ This was the direct implication of any commoditisation of land.

Though the Chief Magistrate refused to accept Mangala's argument in this case, the administration accepted in principle that land held in communal tenure could not be bought, sold or used as a security for loans and mortgages. While European farmers were able to raise capital on the basis of their privately owned land-holdings, Africans in the reserves had to rely on what they could earn through the sale of produce or through wage labour. The Land Bank, established by the Union Government in 1912, restricted its credit to Europeans partly for the reason that its system of loans could not be operated in the African areas. The inability of communal plot-holders to claim cash payments on improvements probably also inhibited investment into the land. Under the land proclamations of 1903 and 1919, plots were liable to confiscation and reallocation for a variety of reasons.² In fact, plots came to be regarded as the exclusive possession of the holder and were often passed from generation to generation, a practice which the administration by and large accepted.³ But any

1. Ibid.

2. Cory MS. 14,305, A.G. McLoughlin, 'The Transkeian System of Native Administration', thesis presented to the University of South Africa, 1936, 131 and passim; CA CMT 3/880/663; PGC 1926, 9, 10.

3. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 112-7, 119.

radical change in the use to which land was put would, no doubt, have attracted the attention of the chiefs and the lack of certainty about long-term rights to the land probably played a part in diverting much of the little income available into stock.

The administration made only one exception to these rules in the Territories.¹ Traders had long argued that they should receive outright titles to their trading stations for the very reason that they also found it difficult to raise mortgages and make improvements when their security of tenure was in doubt. In fact, trading stations were bought and sold, as if they were privately owned, even before annexation when the traders' tenure was subject to the chieftaincy. Partly because of objections by the chiefs, however, stations remained crown land, subject to confiscation by the state. But by 1919, the government bowed to pressure from traders' associations. It was envisaged then that the whole of the Transkeian Territories would be surveyed and in a proclamation of 1922, the administration provided for title to trading stores in surveyed districts. As the survey had hardly begun, Pondoland was not immediately threatened, but both Poto and Mswakeli raised strong objections to this change in principle. Dana argued that in giving titles to the traders, the administration would be providing them with stronger rights to the land than the people themselves.² The paramounts were reluctant to recognise that Pondoland was crown land and therefore ultimately at the disposal of the state.³ They asserted that the terms of annexation had recognised the land as belonging to the Mpondo nation as a whole, personified in the chieftaincy. Mangala argued in 1917 that the 'land

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1. PGC, 1920, 11; CA CMT 3/959/15/415, 416; CA CMT 3/851/596(2), Notes of Meeting between CMT and Poto, 4.1.1922; CA CMT 3/824/558, Skeleton report of Meeting held in Lusikisiki, 11.4.1922.
 2. CA CMT 3/824/558, Meeting, Lusikisiki, 11.4.1922.
 3. Hammond-Tooke files, CMT to RM Libode, 20.12.1923.

is mine'; it belonged to the paramountcy as representative of the people.¹ But the administration insisted on its ultimate right to dispose of land in Pondoland; though the survey of the Territories was jettisoned in the 1920s, the administration allowed traders even in unsurveyed communal tenure areas to claim title once their stations had been surveyed.

It would be misleading to suggest that the chiefs alone defended communal tenure. Though a small minority of wealthier producers who wished to fence land, to experiment with winter crops and expand the area they cultivated may have found the implications of communal tenure inhibiting, the system of land-holding had the support of the bulk of the population in Pondoland. For it guaranteed to every homestead at least one plot and access to grazing. If land were to become privately owned, or even distributed according to the system of individual tenure provided for under the Glen Grey Act, many families might find themselves deprived of land. It need hardly be added that every family had to provide at least some of their income from the land, that even when they had to send out migrants, they attempted to reinvest wages into rural production. Access to land was therefore critical to the reproduction of the homestead. Communal tenure underpinned the whole fabric of rural society in Pondoland. However, although the chiefs were not alone in their struggle to defend it, and although the issues surrounding land tenure provided the basis for an alliance between chiefs and people against state intervention that threatened communal tenure, the chiefs and headmen did have a special interest in maintaining the system for their partial control over the distribution of land became an increasingly important element in their revenue and political power.

It is by no means clear how land was distributed at various stages of the nineteenth century; changes in the organisation and control of production may well have been echoed by shifts in the system of land tenure. Traditions and comparative information from other chiefdoms, however,

1. CA CMT 3/714/281.5, Meeting, 17.5.1916.

suggest that every homestead received land and access to grazing.¹ The chiefs' control and the ideology surrounding it, was expressed in terms of rights over followers, tribute and cattle.² Once a follower had been accepted and paid the relevant dues, he established a homestead and had all the rights that surrounded this institution. The homestead head could break new ground where he chose, probably after consultation with the local subchief or leading family in the area.³ There were no limits on the amount of land that could be cultivated by one family; these were determined by the available labour and technology. Most homesteads cultivated garden plots in their near vicinity and usually planted a number - perhaps two or three for each wife - of fields with crops, dispersed around one or even more valleys and ridges. By dispersing the fields, the risk of natural disasters was minimised. Chiefs and some wealthier families had more than one homestead and could have fields over a wide area. Each homestead usually broke some new ground each ploughing season; when land was plentiful, they might leave former plots uncultivated, although the rotation of sorghum and maize enabled output on each field to be maintained over a longer period than in a typical 'cut and burn' system. Certainly by the twentieth century, if not before, families continued to cultivate the same area of land over a long period.

The colonial administration accepted, in broad terms, the precolonial pattern of distribution. Existing land holdings were supposed to be registered at the magistrates' offices, but, as late as 1918, officials admitted that registration had never been enforced and that they had no clear idea of the extent of land holding.⁴ The land proclamations made

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1. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 71-75, 112-7 and passim; Interviews.
 2. See chapter 1, section 2.
 3. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 71-75.
 4. For example, CA CMT 3/918/774(1), RM Tabankulu to CMT, 4.1.1918.

the allotment of new plots, whether to established households or immigrants, the responsibility of the magistrate acting through the headman.¹ In practice, the headmen maintained control over distribution; the magistrates would only interfere in a dispute. The headman was supposed to report each new allotment at the magistrates office, but they often omitted to do so; in any case, the magistrates usually confirmed such grants without question. Many disputes over land, as in the case of all civil disputes, seem to have been settled locally without magisterial intervention.

The rising pressures on arable plots in the second and third decade of the twentieth century provided headmen with some scope to use their key position in the distribution of land. Before annexation, local chiefs, and after annexation, the headmen, had probably always demanded some small gift when agreeing to the allotment of a land; such gifts were customary whenever calls were made on the chiefs for their time. But when their position within the colonial administration had become more secure, and as arable land became shorter, the headmen began to demand higher payments before they would allot land. As late as the 1920s, magistrates noted that headmen required 'a goat or a sheep' - this does not sound extravagant and some probably demanded more.² By the 1930s, they demanded perhaps one or two beasts or their cash equivalent at £5 a head.³ Immigrants had, of course, to pay settlement fees to both the paramount and the local headmen before they would receive an allotment but payment now seems to have been demanded from anybody who attempted to set up a homestead or break new ground. Such claims gave the chiefs and headmen an indirect hold over a portion of migrants' wages.

1. For a general discussion of land distribution see McLoughlin, 'The Transkeian System of Native Administration'.

2. PGC, 1928, 44-46, 51

3. PGC, 1929, 37; Interviews, Xinwa, Mpateni; Fox and Back, 'Preliminary Survey', 32, 33.

There was no absolute shortage of plots - the bulk of land in each location was still the communal grazing area - but headmen had to be persuaded that they should allow further encroachments on pastures. The stock population was, after all, rising rapidly, and grazing was at a premium.

There is also evidence to suggest that some headmen began to accumulate plots, and exclude those who could not pay or were not their political allies. As early as 1910, the magistrate of Libode found two hundred people without land in the Nci location. 'This state of affairs', he thought, was 'doubtless traceable to William Valelo [the headman's son] who would only allow his friends to plough lands'.¹ The case was unusual. Land in the location was very short as it lay on the steep banks of the Tina river, with only a small strip of riverside fields. Because of the area's inaccessibility, the headmen had been allowed almost a free hand. But by the late 1920s, magistrates were speaking of accumulation as a general phenomenon.² One headman in Tsolo district, neighbouring Pondoland, was able to accumulate one hundred plots, some of which he rented out to the landless.³ Reports from Pondoland suggest that accumulation took place on a smaller scale; perhaps between seven and ten plots came into the hands of some families, a few of which were rented out. Headmen and chiefs had always had access to more land and better land than the average commoner family. It is certainly possible that magistrates only began to notice such inequalities when they were called upon to distribute a relatively constant number of plots among an increasing population. But they did talk of the phenomenon of accumulation as a new development.

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1. CA CMT 3/712/270.4(1), RM Libode to CMT, 16.1.1911 and previous correspondence.
 2. PGC, 1928, 44-46; PGC, 1929, 37; Fox and Back 'Preliminary Survey', 32,33.
 3. PGC, 1928, 44-46.

The apparent development of rentier-type relationships was not highly significant in the pattern of land holding as a whole, nor did the headmen have much scope to accumulate. The 1919 proclamation formally introduced the principle of 'one man, one lot' into the communal tenure parts of the Territories. Magistrates had always tried to find adequate lands for all the families in a location; in 1910, for example, the magistrate of Libode cautioned William Valelo and proceeded to demarcate lands for those families that had been excluded.¹ Now they began to move towards the goal of giving each taxpayer a maximum of one land in only one location, not exceeding five morgen (roughly eleven acres).² Their progress was slow. In the late 1920s, magistrates and Pondoland General Councillors were still discussing how best the regulations could be implemented; they accepted councillors' proposals that separate lands could still be allotted to each wife as long as the total did not exceed five morgen. But officials in Pondoland did begin to intervene to prevent accumulation. They were aided by the introduction of surveying chains to measure plots in the late 1920s; constables, who formerly paced out plots, were now able to measure the size of allotments more accurately when sent to investigate grants.

It was not merely the lack of state resources that delayed the enforcement of stricter controls over land distribution. Officials were quite aware, as the Chief Magistrate made clear in a comment on agitation by the headmen for higher salaries, that headmen did not survive by their government stipends, now a minimum of £12 a year, alone.

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1. CA CMT 3/712/270.4(1), Correspondence concerning William Valelo and the Nci location.
 2. CA CMT 3/851/596(2), Report of meeting, 1920 in SNA to CMT, 12.8.1920; PGC, 1929, 36, 37; PGC, 1930, 61.

He would like to point out that he did not discern the pitiful picture that had been painted by one of the speakers because there were always a great many applications whenever there was a vacancy. He did not know whether the reason for this was because of the perquisites some headmen got, or the extra lands they gave out to themselves or others, or perhaps it was on account of the miserable pittance of £1 they were ashamed to mention.¹

Such perks diminished the expense to the state of maintaining the local administrative structure. By giving the headmen some scope to use their powers, the officials were able to entrench administrative control.

Differential access to land did have implications in the sphere of production. However, it has been argued that chiefs and headmen cannot be considered merely as a wealthier peasantry. Their control over land allotment gave local political momentum to the policies of the South African state, by this time broadly inimical to the maintenance of a large surplus-producing peasantry. As the chiefs and headmen received a once-off payment from immigrants, it was in their interests to admit as many as possible. As they could only claim payment for allotment of a plot or rents, the more plots they gave out, the greater their income. A larger population in their location broadened the base from which they could claim dues. The outcome of their struggle to defend communal tenure, the logic of their position in the system of land distribution and within the administrative structure, inhibited more general land accumulation and in the longer run resulted in diminished average land holdings. There were contradictions in their position. Some sought to safeguard grazing by limiting land grants, and others to provide scope for a limited number of people to acquire larger holdings. But chiefs and headmen increasingly became the agents of the state in its attempts to squeeze as many people as possible onto the land in the African reserves and thereby limit outright urbanisation and proletarianisation. If the

1. PGC, 1927, 25.

scope given to major chiefs to levy dues did in fact result in increased demands on commoners after 1910, the latter would have had less at their disposal to sell to traders. In addition, the state levied an additional ten shillings on hut taxpayers in Western Pondoland when the councils were introduced in 1911 and Eastern Pondoland homesteads had to pay almost as much in dipping and education levies, before they became local council tax-payers in 1927. The poll tax of £1 on all adult males, which replaced the hut tax in the Territories in 1925, also served to increase the tax burden on each individual homestead.¹ The entrenchment of chiefs and headmen in the administrative and political structure of Pondoland therefore increased the dependence of the great majority of families on wage labour, and helped to perpetuate migrancy as a specific form of proletarianisation.

1. S.B. Ngcobo, 'Taxation of Africans in South Africa, 1849-1939', Ph.D., University of London, 1964; H. Rogers, Native Administration in the Union of South Africa (Johannesburg, 1933).

Chapter Six

RURAL DIFFERENTIATION, ALLIANCE AND
CONFLICT, 1910-1930

1: Chiefs, Locally Employed Christians and Wealthier Traditionalists

The most fundamental change in the rural economy of Pondoland between 1910 and 1930 was the increasing dependence of a majority of homesteads on wage labour. Except for those few who left the rural areas permanently, complete proletarianisation was delayed. The great majority of families retained their rural homesteads and land; the predominant form of wage labour was migrancy. Although mass migrancy had been institutionalised, certain families were able, in these decades, to escape the general experience of leaving Pondoland to work on the mines, farms and industries of South Africa. Aside from the chiefs and headmen, whose position has, in part, been discussed, a diminishing group of wealthier traditionalist families who had managed to retain or rebuild their herds after East Coast Fever, whose homesteads were still large or who lived in isolated and favourable ecological niches were, to some extent, able to survive largely on the land. By the 1920s, at least, a group of families, identified by themselves and others by their adherence to the orthodox mission churches, by superior education in the mission schools, by their progressive attitude towards agriculture and their salaried jobs in church and state, had also emerged in Pondoland.

It was not alone their large cash income from the state, their continued ability to levy dues and fines, their surviving political authority and power that differentiated the paramounts from the bulk of rural society. They still had the largest herds - probably numbering their cattle in the thousands - partly because of their inherited wealth and

partly because of their continued access to dues.¹ Patterns of circulation of stock, which had previously been so important an element in their economic and political position, had changed in some respects. But the system of loans still operated, thus enabling the chiefs to draw on the labour of homesteads to increase their herds. Mqikela and Mhlangaso had been active participants in the cattle trade of the nineteenth century, and in the twentieth century the paramounts continued to sell stock. In 1929, for example, Poto mentioned that on one occasion he had tried to sell one hundred and fifty animals in a single lot.² They had also been receptive to innovations which could increase their cash income from stock. Sigcau had been keen on the idea of caponising cockerels; Nqwiliso kept a herd of three hundred 'fairly well bred' angora goats; Marelane requested with success in 1914, that homesteads near his Great Place in Flagstaff be removed so that he could 'keep and breed sheep on a larger scale' to compensate for his losses during East Coast Fever.³

Although the paramounts were probably amongst the first to purchase ploughs and wagons, and certainly produced more grain on their fields than anyone else in Pondoland, there is no clear evidence from the turn of the century or before that they were engaged in selling crops. (Bokleni did start a wattle plantation.)⁴ But by the 1930s, they certainly were. One agricultural demonstrator, who worked in Libode from 1934-1936, recalled Poto's agricultural activities.

1. Interview, Dana.

2. PGC, 1929, 45.

3. Interview, MacGowan; Cape, BBNA, G.5 - 1896, 116; CA CMT 3/842/582(3), Meeting between Mpondo deputation and CMT, 25.6.1914.

4. Cape, BBNA, G.36 - 1907, 45.

I was amazed to see a person harvest 500 bags. If you went to see him during the time of ploughing, planting, cultivation, go to his lands, you would find him there together with his wife Matinkulu. Growing mealies, pumpkins, beans. Paramount Chief Poto was a proper farmer, I daresay....He was selling mealies to the traders or to other districts where there was starvation. People took mealies from his place; people from Mount Frere would come with their wagons to cart mealies.¹

Only the paramount chiefs could gain access to land for crop production on this scale, perhaps twenty times the average produced by homesteads in Pondoland. They had what amounted to large personal farms around their homesteads, in addition to extensive private grazing lands. Work on their fields was still predominantly carried out by indunas or work parties from surrounding locations which would be called out at different times in the agricultural cycle; one man remembered seeing fifty teams of oxen on Marelane's fields at one time during the ploughing season.² Poto, in particular, was a leading advocate of agricultural improvement. He not only gave his backing to the extension schemes, as did Mswakeli in Eastern Pondoland, but followed and even anticipated the teaching of the demonstrators. He purchased implements, used fertiliser, and united his plots into large fields for ease of cultivation.³

Production for the market did not, however, provide the paramounts with a substantial portion of their income; even Poto would not have been able to realise more than £100 or £200 from his grain at the prices ruling in the 1920s and 1930s. There were also still some demands on the paramounts to distribute grain and stock. They had to provide for the many people attending cases and councils at their homesteads, for the indunas who still served a variety of functions at the Great Place, for

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1. Interview, Mpateni.
 2. Interviews, Mpateni, Mathanda and Tandekhaya; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 388.
 3. Interviews, Mpateni, Nkonya; PGC, 1929, 37.

the work parties on the fields. Some beer and meat could be levied from surrounding locations, but, especially in Eastern Pondoland, there seems to have been a limit on the amount that the paramounts could market. Marelane also tried to fulfil the function of providing grain in times of distress, such as in the famine of 1912, when he even purchased a substantial quantity of maize for distribution.¹ But by his own admission, the chiefs could no longer play a significant role during starvations. Despite demands on them by the people, the paramounts were able to spend a considerable amount of their income on consumer goods. The chiefs of Eastern Pondoland were not conspicuous consumers. They did have the best guns and riding horses, wore suits and employed secretaries, but they continued to live in huts. Poto, in Western Pondoland, seems to have spent more of his income; he was able to purchase a car in the late 1920s - probably the first African in Pondoland to do so - and imposed a special levy to pay for expenses when he crashed it a few years later.²

Thanks to the efforts of Marelane and the other paramounts, the chiefs' sons were assured of their position as headmen, even if they were not direct successors. Locations were found for the great majority of royal sons when they reached the age of maturity. From the time of Sigcau in Eastern Pondoland, and Bokleni in Western Pondoland - before in some cases - many of the paramounts' children were educated at the mission institutions. Marelane, Mswakeli and Poto all received some secondary education, as did their sons. Though few went beyond standard six - the first year of secondary school - even this level of education placed them among the most highly educated in Pondoland. They were superceded only by such men as Cingo and by the immigrant teachers, clerks,

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1. PTA SA NA 100, CMT to SNA, 7.11.1912, including report by RM Lusikisiki.
 2. Interview, M. Heathcote (not on tape); Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 386.

clerics and secretaries. But the paramounts' children did not have to work in professional employment, as did the latter, for their position in the colonial hierarchy was secure.

Although the lesser chiefs and headmen were a highly differentiated group, their position was broadly similar to that of the paramounts. They had some income from the state, from dues, fines and land; if they could not command work parties, they could at least raise more communal labour than the great majority of commoner households. Among them were some of the largest stock owners and crop producers. One headman in Tabankulu kept a flock of perhaps 1000 sheep; one in the same district as Poto grew, with the aid of an agricultural demonstrator, 300 bags of grain on one of his fields.¹ Headmen from chiefly families were more likely to maintain and achieve such wealth than recently appointed commoners, who received only £12 a year from the state. Yet once secure in the administrative structure, even the commoner headmen could use their position to gain access to resources and cash. Chiefly headmen could also guarantee posts for their heirs, and perhaps some other sons. Commoner headmen were less likely to secure a hold on the post - their sons were more likely to migrate - although some commoner headmanships did become hereditary. While a few leading chiefs did, as in the case of the paramounts, send their sons to school, many, particularly in Eastern Pondoland, were strong traditionalists. Yet all the headmen had their bureaucratic position and their ability to survive independent of wage labour, at least during their tenure, in common.

The nature of the administrative system that was established in Pondoland and the pattern of state intervention in the area not only enabled many chiefs and headmen to maintain a relatively privileged position, it also created an increasing number of local salaried jobs in the administrative

1. Interviews, Mpateni, Nkonya.

and mission hierarchies. In the years immediately after annexation, a mere handful of such jobs were open to Africans; those who sought to augment their income from the land without resort to migrancy had to forge an independent position as specialist craftsmen, transport riders, petty traders and recruiters or runners. The entrenchment of colonial rule, and extension of state activity in Pondoland, narrowed the scope for some of these activities and made it difficult for any family to survive independently from the land. Yet the size of the bureaucracy, and the openings for Africans within it, increased. The Native Affairs Department and the other state departments which had some responsibility for administration in the Territories absorbed Africans as clerks, interpreters, policemen and prison orderlies. More particularly, the state initiatives taken under the auspices of the councils, or the Eastern Pondoland Trust fund, tended to depend on African rather than European officials.¹ Whereas sheep-dipping, organised by the central Department of Agriculture was supervised largely by Europeans, cattle dipping was operated by African dipping assistants in almost all of the two hundred Pondoland locations. Some of the supervisory staff in dipping and road work projects were also African. Agricultural extension work depended solely on African demonstrators from the 1920s. Most teachers in the expanding educational institutions, funded increasingly by the Cape Province Education Department, were also African. The established mission churches also began to make more extensive use of African evangelists and even ministers. By the 1930s, there were at least six hundred such salaried positions available in Pondoland, possibly considerably more.² The salaries earned varied from about £60 to

1. For discussions on employment, see PGC, passim.

2. There is no record, in archival or published sources, of the exact number of Africans in state and council employment. This figure is calculated from sporadic information on the number of teachers, demonstrators, etc. and estimates.

over £120 a year, at least two to four times the amount earned by migrants on one contract.¹ But all these jobs demanded education up to standard four and some salaried posts, such as teaching and demonstration work, required secondary education, additional specialist education and a command of English.

Education at this level was only available at the mission institutions and it was usually accompanied by the teaching of Christian doctrine. The origin of the group of men who came to fill local salaried positions must be sought in the small Christian community in Pondoland. Mission activity dated back to the 1830s, but despite the important political role played by men like Jenkins, the early missionaries were unable to attract a significant number of Mpondo people to their message.² Many of those settled on the three major Methodist stations, Buntingville, Palmerton and Emfundisweni, in the nineteenth century were early immigrants from the Cape or Natal. In the decades immediately before annexation, as has been suggested, the missionaries came to be identified with the colonial powers and the advances made by the early missionaries were if anything reversed.³ There could not have been more than a few hundred Christian families in Pondoland at the time of annexation and the great majority of them were mission station residents.

The mission effort in Pondoland was intensified after annexation. Though the Methodists remained by far the most important church, the Anglicans put new life into St. Andrews, and started stations and small

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1. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 110; PGC, passim. For a comparison of teachers' pay to that received by others in urban and rural employment, see Cape, Report of Superintendent General of Education, 1919, C.P. 4 - 1920, 106.
 2. See N.A. Etherington, Preachers, Peasants and Politics in Southeast Africa, 1835-1880 (London, 1978), 71-74 for a brief assessment of mission work in Pondoland.
 3. See chapter 2, section 1.

hospitals at St. Barnabas, Ntlaza in Western Pondoland (1893) and Holy Cross in Eastern Pondoland.¹ Other denominations, including the South African General Mission and Presbyterians started activity.² Their efforts met with limited success. As late as the early 1930s, by which time certain of the chiefs, notably Victor Poto, had become Christians, less than 5 per cent of the population in Pondoland were adherents of the mission churches.³ The proportion was probably substantially less in Eastern Pondoland and Port St Johns. Nor is there evidence to suggest that separatist Ethiopian and Zionist churches attracted a significant following.

Even this relatively small growth in the Christian community in Pondoland was to a considerable extent accounted for by immigrants. For, as has been suggested in previous chapters, there was continuous migration into the Pondoland districts from the Eastern Cape and southern Transkei, and to a lesser extent from Natal, during the later decades of the nineteenth century and in the early decades of the twentieth century. The primary cause of migration was shortage of land in the overcrowded locations of the Eastern Cape. As Bundy has shown, parts of this area, and the southern Transkei, were affected by declining resources far earlier than Pondoland. It was often families rather than individuals that migrated and some of them moved more than once, first to areas such as East Griqualand and then, when the latter began to suffer the same problems as their home districts, to the relatively under-populated parts of Pondoland where the climate was more congenial for small-scale agriculture.⁴ Many of the immigrants were absorbed into Mpondo society. But amongst those from districts which had

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1. Callaway, Pioneers in Pondoland, chapters 12 and 13.
 2. E. Green and E. Eldridge, A Pondoland Hilltop (London, 1938?)
 3. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 349.
 4. Information on immigrants based on CA CMT 3/593-597/45-45(14); Interviews, J. Mhatu, E. Mhatu, Nkonya, Mpateni.

been more thoroughly colonised, where the mission effort had been more aggressive and more successful, were men who were Christians and had a smattering of literacy. Especially after annexation, the new waves of immigrants settled in the locations rather than on the mission stations. The Christians were often, but not always, monogamous and their families were probably smaller than Mpondo families. Aside from their identity as Christians, their willingness to invest more into implements, their experimentation with export crops and new techniques of cultivation distinguished them from the bulk of the Mpondo families around them. Their herds were unremarkable, but the men were prepared to expend more labour in the fields and to use the more favourable resources available in Pondoland to survive and sometimes prosper from the produce they sold, even if they had been forced to migrate to work at an earlier phase of their lives. Men from such families were also more likely to engage in petty entrepreneurial activities. Although the mission residents and the new Christian immigrants were not mainly responsible for the increase in crop exports at the turn of the century, some Christian families were amongst the largest producers.

While the first generation of immigrant Christian families may have been able to survive by marketing produce, the oral evidence collected suggests that they saw little future for their sons as independent peasants. The difficulties facing producers in the early decades of the century, the shock of Rinderpest and East Coast Fever, coupled with the importance accorded to formal education in Christian cultural attitudes, led almost all of these families to send their children to school in preparation for employment. Education, which opened the door to local salaried employment, rather than extended production, increasingly became the route by which migrancy could be escaped.

This transition from wealthy Christian immigrant father to locally

employed son was apparent in a number of interviews.¹ Mhatu, a Christian from Gcalekaland who came to Lusikisiki early in the twentieth century, was remembered by his sons and others as one of the most innovative farmers in his and surrounding locations. He was one of the few to irrigate his fields - by diverting a stream through furrows - in order to grow winter crops. He sold oathay as well as the staple crops in Lusikisiki and was remembered particularly for his successful stands of wheat, a rare crop in the coastal districts. In the 1910s and 1920s, he sent his sons to school; one became a teacher, another, after reaching standard six at Palmerton, apprenticed as a printer. Mpateni, the agricultural demonstrator from whom the information on Poto's agricultural activities was drawn, came from a Hlubi family which moved from Whittlesea (Hewu) in the Ciskei to Cala, thence to Tabankulu and eventually to Lusikisiki before East Coast Fever. His grandfather was 'an ordinary man'.² His father, a Christian, after migrating to work for some years, fenced his land, grew wheat and peas, constructed a harrow from an upturned sledge and developed a method of mixing grass and manure for fertilizer. He produced fifty or sixty bags a year, selling all but twenty. He and Mhatu arranged their own marketing, thus avoiding the difficulties inherent in dealing with the traders. (Such families were among the few wagon owners in Pondoland.) He too sent his son to Palmerton and put him through the new agricultural school in Flagstaff in the early 1930s, paying fees out of the proceeds of his crop.

It was not only in the already Christian families that such generational transitions took place. There were comparable changes, sometimes over one, sometimes over two generations in Mpondo families.³ In most

1. Interviews, J. Mhatu, E. Mhatu, Mpateni, Nkonya.

2. Interview, Mpateni.

3. Interviews, Xinwa, Mathandabuzo, I. Godlwana, Flagstaff, 21.1.1977, Ben Siposo Ndabeni, Mkanzini AA, Port St Johns, 25.2.1977.

cases, conversion to Christianity, usually orthodox Methodism, featured in the family history. Those who landed up in local employment often came from wealthier traditionalist families. W.D. Cingo, who became principal of Emfundisweni, was descended from an important and wealthy chiefly lineage in Lusikisiki.¹ Leslie Xinwa was son of one of the wealthier traditionalist commoners in Gomolo location, Port St Johns. Under pressure from the local headmen, he attended school and reached standard five during the First World War. After a period at home, helping his family on the lands - they did particularly well out of wool and tobacco - he went on one trip to the mines in 1920 to earn bridewealth. He then 'came home and farmed'.² In 1925, his education enabled him to gain local employment as a dipping foreman. He had, meanwhile, become a Methodist. Lionel Mathandabuzo, from Mfinizo location where the Cingo family held sway, was also born at the turn of the century into a generation of which many had to migrate.³ His family was sufficiently wealthy to keep him at home yet they saw no need for education. Inspired by the first agricultural demonstrator, Nkonya, who arrived in 1923, he adapted his methods of cultivation after founding his own homestead and was soon producing well over one hundred bags of grain, much of which he sold in surrounding locations. He became a part-time peripatetic evangelist for the Methodist church, living, for the next couple of decades, largely off his income from the land. In turn he sent his children to school; they became teachers and nurses. Mathandabuzo was exceptional, among those interviewed, in that he was far less dependent, by the 1930s, on a salary. It was his children who became professionals.

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1. For early contact between the Cingo family and the missionaries, see WMMS, SA Box 21, W. Milward to Secs. 20.4.1874.
 2. Interview, Xinwa.
 3. Interview, Mathandabuzo.

The other major element in the locally employed Christian group in Pondoland in the 1920s and 1930s, was first generation educated immigrants who had come specifically to take up employment.¹ Most came from families which had experienced a similar transition in other parts of the Transkei and Ciskei one or more generations earlier. Tennyson Makiwane, Poto's secretary in the 1920s, was descended from a famous Mfengu Christian family. Gordon Dana, secretary to the Eastern Mpondo paramountcy, had been sent by his father, a Christian but barely literate Mfengu from Qumbu, and a substantial crop producer, to school and university in the United States. On his return in 1913 with a B.A. degree from Lincoln College, Dana had entered the Native Affairs Department as a clerk and interpreter. A posting to a Pondoland magistracy brought him into contact with the paramount. Bartwell Nkonya, the first agricultural demonstrator in Lusikisiki, was brought up by his mother, a teacher, and an uncle, a priest, in the Tsomo district of Fingoland. A number of the other early teachers, demonstrators and junior civil servants in Pondoland came from the large, well-educated, Christian communities in the Eastern Cape.

The advantage of local employment was not only that it provided a salary, it also enabled such salary earners to maintain production. They had lands, implements and stock from their fathers, access to capital from their salaries and some knowledge of improved techniques. Though the process of incorporation into the capitalist economy worked against the development of opportunities for marketing of surplus produce outside Pondoland, the unevenness of production in Pondoland guaranteed limited yet sufficient scope for the marketing of produce within the area. State policy and the role of headmen within it militated against extensive land accumulation, yet those families with sufficient resources and local political

1. Interviews, Dana, Nkonya, Magazi, Dubana AA, Lusikisiki, 18.1.1977; Moses Ntobe, Intsimbini AA, Port St Johns, 12.3.1977; James Mvunelo, Mtambalala AA, Lusikisiki, 13.3.1977.

influence, including some of the leading Christian immigrants, could acquire enough land to produce very much more than they needed for home consumption. Those salaried Christians who came from Mpondo families, or from immigrant fathers, were clearly at an advantage, but first generation salaried immigrants usually established homesteads in the Pondoland locations and could build up their herds and agricultural resources.

Xinwa, for example, continued to produce wool and tobacco for sale after he became a dipping foreman. The Cingo family in Mfinizo were owners of large flocks of sheep. Mpateni's productive efforts superseded even those of his father.

In 1937, I did the ploughing myself. I was a demonstrator here in Flagstaff. I harvested 120 bags. Following year, 150 bags. And that caused me to buy a wagon for carting those mealies to Tabankulu where there was starvation or to Tonti, other side of Emfundisweni. I was selling mealies there, by my wagon, to Coloureds who were sawing planks. I took thirty bags to Tonti and then sold one bag for two planks, each plank was twelve feet....I took those planks to Holy Cross Mission where there were carpenters...Each plank at Tonti was five shillings... I sold them at Holy Cross for ten shillings.¹

He invested some of the proceeds into cattle, bought locally for between five and ten pounds a head, and sold them when stock prices soared after the establishment of government stock sales. A wagon facilitated independent marketing and small-scale entrepreneurship; Mvunela, an immigrant teacher in the traditionalist coastal location of Mtambalala, augmented his salary by carting wood from the nearby forests for sale in the magisterial towns during his school holidays.² But even those larger producers without wagons were able to dodge the trading stores. Once it was known that a man such as Mathandabuzo regularly had grain for sale, people from surrounding locations would come to his homestead to purchase. The entrepreneurial

1. Interview, Mpateni.

2. Interview, Mvunelo.

activities of this group of men usually depended on their own labour, but some were in a position to employ additional workers on their fields; as in the case of surrounding traditionalist homesteads, they also used communal work parties although they did not usually participate in parties organised by other homesteads.

The larger producers and independent petty entrepreneurs of the turn of the century had engaged in similar activities. The new generation, sometimes their sons, were not only able to rival their fathers' output but at the same time earned salaries. The wealthier Christians of the 1920s and 1930s were not usually simply peasants; their ability to maintain production was integrally linked to their position and income from salaries. In fact, it is likely that their salaries became an increasingly important element of their income and their profession took pre-eminence in deciding how their labour time was spent. None of those interviewed forsook their salaries to try their hand at surviving off the land alone. If they told stories of men who had taken this step, they stressed it it was unusual. They, in turn, made a point of educating their children to the highest level possible.

These educated Christian families lived in a manner which reflected their above-average income. They had square houses built of mudbrick rather than wattle and daub huts. They wore clothes and shoes rather than blankets. They bought furniture, a far wider range of household goods, and imported foodstuffs. They socialised in tea parties and mission gatherings rather than at beer drinks. But as they were far more deeply affected by the gradual - and in some periods, such as after the First World War, rapid - rise in the prices of commodities, their expenditure was governed by a philosophy of thrift.¹ For they could easily fall into

1. For the effects of post-war price rises on Christian communities in districts bordering on Pondoland, see CA CMT 3/951/411A.

debt with the traders. Yet the wealthier families of the 'dressed' or 'school' community in Pondoland, although small in number in comparison to some other parts of the Territories, were clearly able to maintain a lifestyle of a different character to all but the wealthier chiefs and headmen. Their political importance, as will be illustrated, far exceeded their numbers.

While a minority of wealthier traditionalist families saw education as the best means of securing the future of their children, the majority probably eschewed this choice. Nor did their sons usually take the course followed by Mathandabuzo. Those traditionalist families which were able to remain largely independent from wage labour were characterised by their size. Even in the early 1930s their homesteads would house more than fifteen people. (Hunter counted three or four such homesteads out of twenty two on one hill side in Ngqeleni; the average homestead housed eight people.)¹ One key to their survival was their family labour, for this enabled them to produce more than the average amount. Few traditionalist homesteads could match the output or progressive techniques of the leading Christian and chiefly producers, but they were polygynists and each married woman in the homestead would have one or two fields, making a total of perhaps six or seven in all.² They would be in a position to capitalise on good seasons and even struggle through bad on their own resources. While they may have marketed a few bags to the traders, they were unlikely to invest heavily in experimental crops or new implements once they had a plough. When their grain could not sustain them through bad seasons, they could fall back on their herds; their position was defined,

1. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 61-64.

2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 72-73.

above all, by their wealth in cattle. Some had by the 1920s and 1930s, over one hundred head, a number which rivalled the herds of all but the leading chiefs. Their need for family labour in cultivation and herding was an important element in their rejection of schooling, for education entailed not only the expense of clothing, books and, at higher levels, fees, but also the loss of family labour. Their traditionalism was in itself a measure of their relative wealth. 'Wealthy Natives did not care for education', remarked a General Councillor in 1917. 'The question often put to a Native boy who went to school was "Why do you try to learn. Your father is wealthy".'¹

The social roots of wealthier traditionalist homesteads are not easy to pinpoint. Inherited wealth, particularly in cattle, was no doubt a critical element in their position, but the indiscriminate ravages of Rinderpest and East Coast Fever must have affected even the largest stockowners. Nevertheless, those with larger herds in the early colonial period were often those with political influence - men who belonged to the lesser houses of chiefly lineages, or were important commoner councillors whose position could tell in their favour as opportunities opened up for re-accumulation of cattle. In turn wealth in cattle or sheep could bring with it larger families, more dependents and even greater political authority. Children from poorer families would live and work, especially as herds, at these wealthier homesteads; the relationship was not usually expressed in terms of wage labour.

In the era of mass migrancy, not all the sons from such homesteads could escape wage labour. It was the eldest son of the homestead who usually inherited the bulk of the cattle from his father - the property held in the great house - while the younger sons would have to rely on

1. PGC, 1916, 18.

migrancy to marry and accumulate a herd. Elder sons might go once or twice to the mines in an emergency or under pressure from their peer group, for once migrancy had become institutionalised, a virtue was made of necessity.¹ But there was clearly a differential rate of migrancy within most homesteads.

I went away in about 1918, to Durban to work...I went there only once and to the gold mines after that...My father died while I was away and my eldest brother became head of the homestead...He never went away to work, he worked only in Lusikisiki with Merbe the butcher, buying cattle from the people for the butchery...My older brother did not pay my lobola.²

Men who stayed at home were likely to become involved in managerial activities in surrounding homesteads with migrant heads. They would spend more time at the chiefs' homesteads, becoming councillors, or acting in court proceedings. All these functions would provide perks which, although small, would help to maintain them. The expenditure of traditionalist homesteads on manufactured goods remained small at least up to the 1930s and their relative wealth would not necessarily be reflected in heightened consumption of commodities which were not produced in their homesteads.

As there are no figures or even estimates of the distribution of wealth in Pondoland in the period under discussion, it is impossible to calculate the size of the wealthier sections of rural society with any accuracy. The size of the constituent elements was, in any event, changing constantly. While the number of chiefs and headmen remained relatively stable at around two hundred, the number of locally employed Christians increased while that of wealthier traditionalists probably decreased unevenly. Further, in creating stereotypes of wealthier families, this analysis has underplayed the shadings of wealth and cultural identity within the society. But judging from the number of chiefs,

1. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 143; interview, Xinwa.

2. Interview, Xatsha Cingo; cf. interview Kohlabantu.

headmen and salaried Christians on the one hand, and rates of migrancy on the other, the number of families which could still escape wage labour in the early 1930s could not have been much more than 10 per cent of the total.

2: Migrants and the Rural Poor

Between 1907 and 1910, the vast majority of migrants from Pondoland, well over 80 per cent, worked underground on the gold mines in Johannesburg. Although no annual figures on the number and destination of migrants after this date could be found, sporadic information suggests that the character of the labour force from Pondoland became more diverse. In 1936, only some 18,000 or 19,000 out of 30,000 workers (60-65 per cent) went to the Rand gold mines.¹ (Table 5) Perhaps five to seven thousand (15-20 per cent) worked on the sugar estates of Natal.² The remainder gravitated to a wide variety of jobs in the coastal cities, smaller towns in Natal and the Cape, and on farms. There were fluctuations in the supply to each sector, determined by the availability of work, of advances and by shifts in wage levels; without accurate figures it is impossible to analyse specific changes in the patterns of migration. But despite the overall movement away from underground work on the mines, Mpondo migrants remained, predominantly, mine workers and this helped to shape the particular relationship between wage labour and rural production that characterised the area.

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1. These figures are calculated from back files at the Umtata office of the Mine Labour Organisation (MLO).
 2. In 1920, 6,375 workers were recruited in Eastern Pondoland for work in Natal. (CA CMT 3/604/49, CMT circular, 19.12.1920 and replies.) Most of them probably went to the sugar estates. Others may have found their way to Natal without receiving passes. In 1947-8, the number of workers in Natal from Pondoland was estimated at around 7,000. (MLO, Johannesburg Office, Kokstad files, no.12, monthly reports, 1947 and 1948.) See also Union, Native Economic Commission, U.G. 22 - 1932, 129.

Though the educated element in the population of Pondoland was small, even in the 1930s, by no means all were able to find local jobs. A number of these jobs demanded specialist education, rather than a general primary education, and this entailed expense beyond the resources of many Christian households. The mission and location schools did not draw children from wealthier homesteads, traditionalist and Christian, alone; many poorer Christian families, especially those from the locations around Palmerton and Emfundisweni, also sent their children to school. Further, the state and church also recruited their employees from the much larger pool of educated Africans in other parts of the Cape province. If educated men could not find local employment, there was little alternative for them but to migrate.

Such a fate befell Elijah, one of the sons of Mhatu, who had completed standard six and been employed as an apprentice printer at Palmerton mission press.¹ In 1922, his apprenticeship was terminated and he was forced to go to Durban to work in a soap factory. He returned in the mid-1920s, was married and allotted a land next to his father's, but soon had to return to work, this time on the mines for two years. Just before his father's death in 1930, he went to Port Elizabeth where he found employment as a cook on a fishing trawler. His younger brother was in the meantime completing his teacher training course and the responsibility for supporting the family fell on the eldest son. He worked on the trawlers for over a decade, returning only for short holidays.

I went to Port Elizabeth on my own, my father gave me some money... there was no contract for Port Elizabeth...Work was scarce in those days and the only way you could find employment was in the boats...I preferred Port Elizabeth to the mines as people die underground and have to be carried up in stretchers...The Mpondo lived in different places in Port Elizabeth, there was no compound. I was staying in town...I did not like living in the location as the people drank too much there. I was right in town, not far from the jetty...just hiring a place to sleep when I was off duty.

1. Interview, E. Mhatu.

Elijah Mhatu's working experience, though shaped by the barriers faced by African skilled workers, and the problems of finding work during the Great Depression, was probably typical of that of the better educated Christian migrants. Even if they had, for a short time, to work on the mines, they soon extricated themselves and gravitated towards the more open and varied job market in the coastal cities. Jamjam, son of a Christian family, who reached standard four at Palmerton school, moved to the Kynoch explosive factory near Durban after four spells on the mines in the 1920s.¹ Such men left home without contracts, thus increasing their options on the labour market. If possible they found jobs which gave them the chance of some upward mobility; Jamjam, in the course of forty years employment at Kynoch rose to a relatively senior position in the African labour force. Their literacy, often coupled with a smattering of English, gave them an advantage in town. They stayed in employment more continuously, coming home only for a couple of months a year at most, especially if they moved upwards in the labour force. Sharing a wider cultural identity than traditionalists, they avoided the restrictive environment of compounds and home groups. They were likely to spend more of their wages in town and remit less home; smaller urban employers seldom organised the remittance schemes which were an integral part of the system of payment on the mines. While they were working, agricultural activities at home would take second place. (Jamjam and Mhatu did return to plough.) Yet as their wages tended to be higher than those of underground workers, they were not necessarily poorer, and could afford to maintain, at least in part, the lifestyle of wealthier Christians.

The feature of migration to the mines, by contrast, was that it provided a more controlled environment. In the first decade of the century, the

1. Interview, Elliot Jamjam, Zalu AA, Lusikisiki 6.1.1977, 17.1.1977.

persons and property of mine-workers were in constant danger both during their travels to and from Johannesburg and on the mines. Young men 'went forward in a group' for protection and advances gave some protection to their families.¹ But the mining industry, in its efforts to secure a regular and controlled labour force, progressively diminished the hazards attending mine migrancy during the next couple of decades. The Native Recruiting Corporation (NRC) gradually achieved, by the 1930s, a monopsonistic position over the labour supply, ousting smaller recruiters and contractors whose operations included advances, varied contracts and what the mining industry considered other irregularities. NRC recruiters offered standard contracts of six and, more usually, nine months.² In the 1920s, an Assisted Voluntary Scheme was launched to cater for those who preferred 'voluntary' rather than contract labour. The industry offered a minimum four months contract to such workers, who were allowed to seek work on the mine of their choice when they arrived in Johannesburg instead of committing themselves before leaving home. In effect, however, the NRC was taking control of the 'voluntary' labour force. Workers from Pondoland preferred the standard contracts, in contrast to the trend away from these in the mine labour force as a whole.³

The NRC also regularised the system of transport to and from the mines. By the 1920s, workers no longer walked for days to the nearest railhead. Their passes were organised for them at the major recruiting centres in the magisterial towns, they were loaded onto special motorised busses ('Mbombelas') for Kokstad and Umtata and then travelled by special trains to the clearing centre of the Government Native Labour Department at

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1. Interview, Vulizibhaya.
 2. Union, Native Economic Commission, U.G. 22 - 1932, 117, 297; Interview, W. Hedding; Fox and Back 'Preliminary Survey'.
 3. MLO, Umtata Office, back files.

Germiston. These transport arrangements, and the more rigid enforcement of pass laws, went some way to controlling desertion. Once on the mines, workers lived in compounds, though these were not completely closed. Mpondo workers tended to gravitate to particular mines in which they were often housed as a group. They appear to have been known largely as 'machine boys' (drillers).¹ The mines specifically encouraged this ethnic division of the labour force and the development of ethnic identities among workers from particular areas.

The Mpondo were in their own rooms; the Xhosa lived separately. It was all right as long as a man was Mpondo, it did not matter if he was from Nyandeni, but no Xhosa were allowed. We were not on good terms.²

Underground teams were more mixed but the predominant experience of mine labour was increasingly one of the compound, the home group, organised travel and organised leisure time. While such institutions, as van Onselen has pointed out, served as means of ideological and physical control over the labour force, they were also conducive to the maintenance of close links with home districts.³

The strength of rural identity, coupled with the availability of well-established schemes for remittances and deferred pay, contributed to a high rate of repatriation of wages by migrants to the mines. Not only were mine-workers likely to remit more than those working in other sectors, but observers noted, in the 1930s, that Mpondo mine-workers deferred more of their pay than those from other Transkeian districts.⁴ Even as late as the 1940s, when some incomplete figures are available, it seems that about

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1. F. Wilson, Labour in the Gold Mines, 94; Interviews, Kohlabantu, Xatsha Cingo.
 2. Interview, Xatsha Cingo.
 3. C. van Onselen, Chibaro (London, 1976).
 4. Fox and Back 'Preliminary Survey', 247.

45 per cent of mine-workers from Lusikisiki were deferring their pay in full and that perhaps 60 to 70 per cent of the total earned was repatriated.¹ Such high rates of reinvestment into the rural economy - wages still often went into stock - were predicated on the possibility for migrants to establish rural homesteads and accumulate herds from wages; conversely they made it possible for families to continue to supplement mine wages with rural productive activities.

Migrants from traditionalist families tended to remain as underground workers for much of their working life rather than to move to new areas of employment.² As they were illiterate, unilingual, and without the skills that could open up better opportunities in town, they had little choice. Though many would work over a long period, they tended to contract irregularly with gaps of a year or more between spells. Kohlabantu made twelve trips in about twenty-two years; Xatsha Cingo contracted fourteen times in twenty-seven years.³ (The average number of contracts undertaken by mine-workers from Pondoland was probably considerably less than these examples suggest; underground work often had serious effects on workers' health.) They were not target workers as conceived by the mines. For a certain period of their lives they depended on their earnings to establish their homesteads and herds, and sometimes to purchase food. But neither were they dependent, as were Christian workers in town, on wages for their day-to-day subsistence. Rural productive and social activities played a far more important role in determining their pattern of migrancy. Although there was little scope for upward mobility on the mines, those who acquired

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1. Calculated from figures in MLO, Umtata Office, back files; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 108-110.
 2. Interviews, Vulizibhaya, Kohlabantu, Xatsha Cingo, Nkwakwa Mgibe and Mbokoma Nompentshu, Matambalala AA, Lusikisiki, 11.3.1977,
 3. Interviews, Kohlabantu, Xatsha Cingo.

drilling skills, and could exceed the minimum demanded on each shift, could earn more than the basic wage.

Wages on the Natal sugar estates were lower than on the mines.¹ In the early 1930s, unskilled cutters and weeders - most Mpondo migrants worked at these jobs - received around £2, considerably less than the basic mine wage of about £3, for thirty shifts. Aside from the possibility of advances, Mpondo workers did find some advantages in employment on the sugar estates. Work was above ground, though by all accounts the dangers of work on the sugar fields were not significantly less than on the mines; contracts were usually for six months and workers could spend longer periods at home even if they migrated yearly; the estates were also more accessible. Most of the workers on the sugar estates came from the coastal districts of Lusikisiki, Bizana, Port St Johns and Flagstaff which were nearer to Natal; it seems that some of the traders in these areas, who specialised in sugar recruiting, were in a position to influence the choice of migrants as migration became more closely linked to indebtedness.

But the supply of labour to the sugar fields were also guaranteed by the less restrictive controls on recruiting for agricultural industries.² The estates were allowed to, and prepared to, employ men who had been rejected by the NRC on the grounds of health. They were also allowed to recruit youths of between sixteen and eighteen years, while the mining industry was supposed to employ only over eighteens. The Native Affairs Department stipulated that parental permission was necessary before under eighteens could be recruited but sugar recruiters found a variety of means to get by these restrictions, including the use of bogus parents.³ Their

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1. Union, Native Economic Commission, 128-134, 301; Herbst Papers, Minutes of Evidence to the Native Economic Commission, 1971, 2102, 2132; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 109; R.G.T. Watson, Tongaati. An African Experiment (London, 1960); Interview, Heathcote.
 2. CA CMT 3/607 - 608/49(9) - 49(10) passim.
 3. Interview, J. Norton, Gouubie, 3.5.1976.

activities were heavily criticised by Pondoland General Councillors during the 1920s, yet the magistrates were not able to devise a technique of ensuring the real identity of parents nor, it seems, were they prepared to enforce the regulations in such a way as 'would have deprived the sugar people of their labour'.¹ There is a good deal of evidence to suggest that sugar recruiters also sent up workers under the age permitted.

Shortly before ploughing season last and during starvation [related one Govuza to the R.M, Flagstaff, in 1921] my father went to Mr. A.H. Strachan Labour Agent...and took 5 bags of mealies at £2/10/- each and £2 cash as an advance against work and then proceeded to the Sugar Estate Natal to work six months and before he completed his contract and after he worked two months he took ill and returned home. He sold his horse and paid Mr Strachan the sum of six pounds which amount Mr Strachan said was for further two months and stated that there was still further two months unworked for. My father and Mr Strachan then arranged that I and my younger brother.... should proceed to the Sugar Estates and work off the balance....After we completed two months my younger brother....became sick suffering from stomach ache ...we both left work without our master's knowledge. About a month after our arrival at home we were arrested for desertion...I am about 14 years of age and my brother 12 years.²

The sugar recruiters were also prepared to use far more coercive means in acquiring labour; they would round up groups of youths in trucks and carry them back to Natal without passes or contracts.³ Their activities underlined the extent to which homesteads were losing control of their children.

Though Poto complained, in 1930, that many of the children were returning with no money, and some were not returning at all, adult migrants to the sugar fields usually went on contract.⁴ They came from poorer traditionalist families, and tried to reinvest their wages into stock.

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1. Interview, J. Norton; PGC, 1921, 11; PGC, 1930, 26-27.
 2. CA CMT 3/604/49, Statement by Govuza, 1.3.1921 in RM Flagstaff to CMT, 2.3.1921.
 3. Union, Native Economic Commission, 129, 130.
 4. PGC, 1930, 26-30.

Mgeyana, from a coastal location in Lusikisiki, worked five times on the sugar fields between about 1920 and 1926 during which period he was able to accumulate small stock and even some cattle to pay bridewealth, and contribute to the bridewealth for his father's third wife.¹ Those youths who did come back home after a few spells on the estates often switched to mine labour when they came of age, for it provided a better wage and more security. Their subsequent pattern of migration would then resemble that discussed above.

Migrants from the bulk of families in Pondoland, probably over 80 per cent of the total, experienced some variation on the patterns of migration to the mines and sugar fields. By the 1920s and 1930s, some traditionalists were also moving out of mine and estate labour into unskilled jobs in town, but even the latter were sometimes able to maintain close-knit home group networks and links with the rural homesteads. It is to such families - the average producers of perhaps between ten and twenty bags of grain a year, the average stockowners with herds of less than twenty head and a few goats and sheep - that the generalised analysis of household production, presented above, most clearly applies.² Though they were able to maintain rural production, they were too short of labour and capital to innovate further or engage in petty entrepreneurial activities. Though they may have received help from neighbours in the shape of work parties at various phases of the agricultural cycle, they could not employ people to work on their fields nor attract clients. The women of such families, who already had to spend more of their time on childcare and the gathering of water and wood, probably gave more labour to the wealthier homesteads in their locations than they received back in the work parties they organised.

1. Interview, Mgeyana.

2. These averages, drawn from stock figures, estimates of production, and estimates of family size, cannot be calculated with any accuracy. Cf. Union, Native Economic Commission, 41; Fox and Back, 'Preliminary Survey', 39, 108. See chapter 4, section 4.

Pattern of consumption in such families did not change dramatically in the first few decades of the century. They still lived largely in wattle and daub huts, constructed out of local materials with local labour and arranged as of old in a semi-circle around the cattle kraal. The men purchased clothing for their trips to the labour centres but at home they usually wore blankets and went barefoot. Though rural fashions changed continuously, the women also used blankets as their basic item of clothing to which were added German prints in the 1930s. Even the price of the limited number of commodities purchased in traditionalist households rose significantly: blankets, for example, after the First World War and again in the late 1920s when the Union government began to put up tariff barriers on imported textiles in order to protect its infant secondary industries. Such price rises, which were not matched by comparable increases in wages, in themselves inhibited expenditure on consumer goods, but traditionalist families were not so subject to bonds of indebtedness because of them. The expense of adopting a Christian lifestyle was one factor in limiting the rate of conversion and the social changes that usually accompanied it. Hunter noted that 'some pagans maintained that they do not wish any member of the family to become a church adherent and wear European clothes, "because dressed Natives are always poor"'.¹ Only a minority of Christian families could be assured of finding employment which brought sufficient cash to maintain a Christian lifestyle.

Families with migrants were not necessarily the poorest in Pondoland; a significant number of homesteads could not even be assured of any wage income. The size of such homesteads was usually smaller than the average - Hunter counted six out of twenty two with less than five inhabitants on the hillside she investigated in Ngqeleni in the early 1930s.² In itself a small homestead

1. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 142.

2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 61-64.

did not indicate poverty. Some of the salaried professionals were, for a time, single or lived in a nuclear family unit. Women involved in craft activities such as potters, and female doctors, often lived alone with a few children and could earn sufficient to stave off poverty. But to have neither education, nor a craft, nor family labour made it difficult either to produce or earn.

Poverty was closely linked to the process of homestead disintegration. Old couples could find their children marrying and leaving them with no means of support; those who were already poor were probably more vulnerable to isolation. Widows could be left with children and no paternal home to return to. Such families sometimes had no stock at all - surveys suggest that as many as 30 per cent of families in other Transkeian districts were without stock in the 1940s though the proportion in Pondoland was probably smaller - and could cultivate little more than a garden and a small field.¹ Young men who had recently established a homestead might find themselves in a similar position and could even, by the 1930s, be denied access to a plot. Yet as long as they could migrate, they had some prospect of building up their rural resources.

Those men who were too old to migrate, those of all ages who were too weak or ill for the heavy manual work on the mines and sugar fields, could still find casual daily labour, or sometimes more regular work, on council road gangs.² Their wages, between one and two shillings in the 1920s, were not markedly less than those earned by migrants, but they did not receive free food and housing while at work. Domestic servants in the magisterial villages and on the trading stations were probably drawn from such poorer families whose female members also had to find some cash income. They

1. Union of South Africa, Department of Native Affairs, Report of the Departmental Committee regarding the Culling of Livestock in the Native Areas, unpublished, 1951?, 98, 99.

2. PGC, 1927, 19, 20.

would receive around one pound a month. (The demand was limited by the small size of the European population.) Wealthier kin, or larger homesteads in the neighbourhood, sometimes absorbed the poor, provided them with keep to do odd-jobs around the homestead or took on boys to herd cattle.¹ Those who were dependent on poorly paid local employment, or on wealthier homesteads, those who were coming to the end of their life, had little chance of breaking out of the trap of poverty.

Patterns of wage employment, in part determined by rural cultural and economic differentiation, in turn tended to reinforce the divisions within rural society. The wealthier chiefly and Christian families in Pondoland were, to some extent, able to entrench their position through their political power, their cash income, their access to education and rural resources. The work experience of educated Christian migrants served to maintain their cultural identity and economic position in the rural areas. Migrants from the bulk of traditionalist families worked in industries in which the labour force was highly controlled and which became increasingly aware of the importance of cementing the rural links of their workers. At the same time, the wages they earned were insufficient to allow them to break out of the chains which bound them into the system of migrancy. Those families without migrants had little chance of raising themselves out of penury.

Such a conclusion should not be allowed to hide the processes of mobility within rural society. Christian and even traditionalist migrants were able to educate their children. Any migrant who invested carefully in stock and expanded his family could look forward to a period of retirement when he could fall back on his rural resources. But especially after the 1930s, when the herds became more susceptible to droughts and the grazing began to deteriorate, the opportunities for this sort of mobility probably declined.

1. Interview, Mgeyana.

Education, a salary, an entrepreneurial activity, perhaps success at dagga cultivation, became increasingly important if a family head was to secure any future besides that of long term unskilled wage labour. As homesteads became smaller, the economic position of each settlement became linked to the earning capacity of the household head or its other migrant members.

Though the process of proletarianisation in Pondoland was largely reflected in increasing rates of migrancy, in the break up of large homesteads, in a more seasonal pattern of migration, and in the emergence of the rural poor, some people did go to the towns permanently. It would be simplistic to relate urbanisation to rural poverty alone. Educated christians who could find no local employment and who had fewer rural ties might gravitate towards jobs in town. Youths who had been dragooned into labour on the sugar fields became absorbed into the locations of Natal's cities. Some mine-workers formed liaisons on the Rand and women who had absconded from their parents' homes might escape to domestic service or brewing activities outside Pondoland. In view of the nature of material used in this study, it has been difficult to assess the importance of permanent urbanisation. Hunter's book does include a chapter on urban African communities in East London, but she does not specifically follow up Mpondo communities in town.¹ It is also difficult to periodise urbanisation. Individuals had no doubt been leaving Pondoland in small numbers since the turn of the century, but it seems that the most marked movement took place after the 1930s. Judging from population figures, which may not be accurate, the rate of increase in the rural population of some Pondoland districts was beginning to fall off markedly between 1936 and 1946. (Table 9) It was also in this period that land became more scarce and that employment opportunities in the rapidly growing manufacturing

1. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 434-502.

sector became more widely available. (The scope for informal sector activities in the urban locations increased at the same time.) Manufacturing industry in South Africa did not, at this period, demand migrant workers.

The degree of differentiation in Pondoland by the 1920s and 1930s needs to be underlined. If income is taken as a criterion, the paramounts were immeasurably wealthier than average families. While some commoner headmen were hardly distinguishable, in terms of wealth, from the above average traditionalist families, most lesser chiefs clearly were. The salaries of educated Christians were substantially higher than the average earned by migrants. If they developed their productive activities and engaged in petty entrepreneurship they could realise perhaps two or three times as much as average families. Some homesteads could acquire plots amounting to over ten morgen, the majority probably had less than five morgen and smaller families only one or two morgen. As land could not easily be accumulated, stock remained of critical importance as an investment and index of differentiation. Hunter, who generally minimised the extent of rural differentiation, noted that stock ownership was highly unequal.¹ Investigators of the Transkeian economy in the 1930s found in one location outside Pondoland, three men (probably out of about one hundred families) owned 50 per cent of the cattle and 70 per cent of the sheep.² Sporadic figures for the distribution of cattle are available for some Transkeian, but not Pondoland, districts from the 1940s. These suggest that the degree of concentration was not as great, but that in a coastal district neighbouring Pondoland between 30 and 40 per cent of families had no cattle, about 10 per cent had more than twenty five head and 23 per cent less than five.³ All reports indicate that sheep were more concentrated in the hands of a

1. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 388.

2. Fox and Back, 'Preliminary Survey', 44-46.

3. Union, Departmental Committee regard the Culling of Livestock, 98, 99.

minority than cattle.

Considered in terms of rural resources alone, the ownership of stock and the capacity to produce crops, the degree of differentiation was perhaps not markedly different from that at the turn of the century. The inability of wealthier families to invest in land, on the one hand, and the ease with which migrants could purchase stock in the 1920s, on the other, offset the tendencies towards a polarisation between rich and poor. But cash income from employment was becoming increasingly important in differentiating rural families. Moreover, the implications of relative wealth and poverty were changing in a society which had been incorporated into the larger capitalist economy and the South African state. It is true that very few families could survive on the land by the 1930s; it is also true that the great majority had some access to rural resources. For this reason it may be misleading to suggest that discrete classes had emerged in Pondoland by this time. However, out of the division between rich and poor, a broader gap between what may be called a rural petty bourgeoisie, highly dependent on the state, and a proletariat based in the rural areas, was beginning to grow.

3: Patterns of Alliance and Conflict in Pondoland

Society in Pondoland had been deeply transformed during the first few decades of the twentieth century yet elements of the precolonial social structure remained, though modified, intact. The process of absorption into the capitalist economy had thrown up new social groupings and led to gradual proletarianisation, yet the chiefs were able to retain local political authority and power. It is in this context that the thesis will address the changing nature of alliance and conflict within rural society and, more hesitantly, the development of and absence of new forms of political action. This exercise, in turn, throws light on the changing

structural position of various groups in the rural population. Many of the disputes that were of concern to the administration, and were thus the subject of correspondence that found its way into the archives, centred around the nature and exercise of chiefly rights. Further, the passages of communication to magistrates were largely dominated by chiefs, headmen and the educated minority. Their demands, their ideology, sometimes articulated as representative of the broader mass of the people, emerges through the documentation. Any view of the response of the bulk of the population, traditionalist migrants and producers, is refracted through their eyes, or doubly, through those of the magistrates as well. The demands, changing social and political organisation and ideology of the rest of the population, more so the variety of their response, remains hidden from view, except when it surfaced in mass movements that caused concern to the dominant group of chiefs and officials. There may be means to bridge such gaps in the material but it remains a weakness in this analysis.

Both Bundy and Wilson have pointed to the potentiality of conflict between chiefs and headmen on the one hand and wealthier Christian peasants on the other.¹ Certainly there were issues such as those surrounding land tenure and control of political institutions like the councils which were divisive; differing attitudes to tradition and progress provided a language for debate. Yet the two groups were often closely linked. In Natal, the leading Christians had close family and financial ties with chieftaincies and political interests in common.² In the Cape, there were local alliances between headmen and the educated minority, especially during the disputes over the introduction of the council system.³ The changing structural

1. Bundy, 'African Peasants and Economic Change', 137-146; Wilson, 'Growth of Peasant Communities', 87.

2. For Natal see Marks, 'Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation', 191-193.

3. CA NA 526/509.

situation in the rural areas, the local effects of successive acts of intervention by the state, brought forth both alliances and conflicts between such groups.

In the early part of the twentieth century, the wealthier, often immigrant, producers and petty entrepreneurs in Pondoland do not seem to have organised themselves into an independent political force. Their numbers were too few and, especially if they were immigrants, they were dependent on the chiefs for land and sometimes cattle. Some served, on their arrival, as indunas at the chiefs' homesteads. They were therefore subject to controls by the chieftaincy. At the same time, their productive activities were not necessarily hampered; in fact, the availability of land in Pondoland often gave them much greater opportunities to extend production than they had had in their home districts. There is some evidence to suggest that salaried immigrants had contact with political organisations, such as the South African Native Congress under Rubusana, at this time.¹ But this organisation had only fragile links, and no significant following, in Pondoland. For a brief period in the early twentieth century, separatist churches acquired some influence in Pondoland. The chiefs were not always hostile to them at this time but the disapproval of magistrates and some headmen seems to have limited their growth.²

From the point of view of the paramountcy, at least, the small Christian population presented little threat. There was no legacy of hostility between the chieftaincy and converts as there was in the eastern Cape between Mfengu and Xhosa. Those Christian immigrants who brought with them skill of literacy were highly valued by the paramountcy. From the time of Marelane

1. CA NA 544/799, W.B. Rubusana to RM East London, 7.5.1906.

2. See for example, CA CMT 3/594/45(4), RM Bizana to CMT, 23.10.1912; P. Rich, 'Black Peasants and Ethiopianism in South Africa: 1896-1915' in Conference on the History of Opposition in South Africa (Johannesburg, 1978), 128; CA NA 699/2792, Asst. CMK to SNA, 3.2.1906 and previous correspondence.

in Eastern Pondoland, and Bokleni in Western Pondoland, the chiefs began to perceive the educated immigrants in an ever more favourable light. They had thrown their support, admittedly sometimes under pressure from the state, behind schools, hospitals, dipping and improved agriculture. Educated immigrants were necessary to make such schemes viable in Pondoland; they, as much as the officials and European missionaries, were the agents of 'progress' in these fields. Early in his rule, Marelane assured officials that he would favour immigrants 'whose presence may be beneficial to the Pondos, religiously or educationally'.¹ Though he may merely have been trying to pacify those in the administration who felt that his newly won powers over immigration might be misused, it is clear from the character of his paramountcy that he was encouraging the process of sub-colonisation in Pondoland.

Mangala, the regent of Western Pondoland, and Jiyajiya, his leading councillor, were slightly less welcoming to educated immigrants.

He [Jiyajiya] wanted to know where the employees had resided previously as when the idea of [dipping] appointments was first thought of the Pondo people wanted to get something to support their own children. People in Thembuland had their own tanks. They wanted Pondo money to go into the pockets of Pondo people. They did not wish to own cattle which would eventually be the inheritance of other tribes.²

Yet as Jiyajiya made clear, the issue at stake was protection of jobs for the local educated minority rather than outsiders. In itself, the attempts by the chiefs to protect such jobs testifies to the increasing importance of the accommodation between chiefs and educated Christians. Their attempts to intervene in appointments, over which they had little direct control, suggests that the chiefs sought to use them to broaden their local political authority.

1. CA CMT 3/594/45(4) Tshongwana to RM Lusikisiki, 15.9.1910.

2. PGC, 1914, 18.

It was the very fact that the wealthier peasants and petty entrepreneurs had, by the 1920s and 1930s, become dependent on education and salaried jobs that defused conflict between them and the chiefs. They now relied for their livelihood on employment by church or state; as in the case of the chiefs, had become a group dependent on the state. The accommodation increasingly received institutional expression. Aside from men such as Thsongwana and Dana in Eastern Pondoland, and Makiwane in the West, who were directly employed by the paramounts as secretaries, others such as Cingo became close advisors. Poto, in particular, attempted to balance his councils and courts between the traditionalists and the educated minority. During the conflict over Gawe's land in Port St Johns, Mangala had asked disdainfully of the new immigrant occupant: "Who is Maninjwa, I do not know him".¹ He was a Methodist, who married into an important local Methodist family, and clearly an able man for he became an advisor to Poto in the 1920s.² Leading Christians also served on the state constituted councils, sometimes as nominees of the magistrates but often as the nominees of the paramounts who controlled the majority of appointments. Hunter notes that in 1931 seven out of thirteen councillors from Eastern Pondoland in the Pondoland General Council were educated immigrants, the rest being of chiefly families.³ Some of the local district councils were of similar composition.

The social and religious networks surrounding the Methodist church, the common experience of mission schools, underpinned the alliance between educated groups and some of the chiefly families, especially in Western Pondoland. Poto was, like his mother, a lay preacher. Although Marelane

1. CA CMT 3/714/281.5, Meeting, 17.5.1916.

2. Interview, Majambe, Gomolo AA, Port St Johns, 13.3.1977; information from Mr. F. Deyi (not on tape); CA CMT 3/851/596(2), Meeting of a deputation of the Western Pondos with the Chief Magistrate, 4.1.1922.

3. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 432.

and Mswakeli were not practising Christians, they were involved in a number of local mission institutions. The Methodist network became of greater importance in Eastern Pondoland after the accession of Botha in 1939. Common interests and background also provided the basis for participation in new associational activities. In the wake of agricultural extension work, the administration, inspired by Bernard Huss, a Catholic missionary from Natal who lectured throughout the Territories, encouraged farmers' associations and agricultural co-operatives.¹ The response in Pondoland was slower than in other parts of the Territories, but in Bizana and Lusikisiki at least, and in Western Pondoland, where Poto again played a leading role, some associations, dominated by wealthier progressive agriculturalists, were started. These organisations served mainly to arrange bulk purchase of seed and implements and provide loans. As in the case of the agricultural extension programme as a whole, farmers associations benefitted, and were used by, a relatively small group of wealthier families and larger producers.

Although the educated minority may have been in the fore of the latter organisations, it is important to stress that local political authority remained in the hands of the chiefs. Furthermore, the concerns of the paramounts, at this stage, were essentially local in character, bound up in the chiefly struggle on the one hand, and issues such as dipping, education and agriculture, which were dealt with through the medium of the General Councils, on the other. The strategy of the Mpondo paramounts may have been influenced by that of the Zulu and Transkeian chiefs, but they did not associate themselves with emerging African national movements, nor

1. CA CMT 43/919/774(2), cutting from Native Teachers Journal, 3, 1 (October, 1921); CA CMT 3/968/35/50, CMT to SNA, 15.12.1931; Umcebisi, 1926-1930, passim, especially vol.3, no. 4 (December, 1927), 22, vol.4, no. 1 (February 1928), 27 and vol.4, no.6 (December, 1928); Interview, R. Bennie (not on tape); T.D. Mveli Skota, African Yearly Register (Johannesburg, 1932), 181, 247; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 143-4.

did such movements gain a foothold in Pondoland in the 1920s and 1930s,¹ Marelane was appointed to the Council of Chiefs of the South African Native National Congress, established after Union, but there is no evidence to suggest that he participated in the body's deliberations.¹ Mangala turned, in 1920, to the conservative Cape-based Bantu Union under Rubusana and Pelem.² He sought help from them only in his representations for an increase of salary and for chiefly control of headmen and land and his overtures do not seem to have led to any more permanent alliance. A small minority of wealthier men in Pondoland were able to vote for candidates to the Union parliament - Marelane voted for the South African Party under Smuts.³ But Hertzog's proposed legislation, drafted in the late 1920s, which threatened the African franchise in the Cape, did not become a major issue in Pondoland. The success of the General Councils in providing a vehicle for the articulation of demands by the chiefs and elements of the educated minority offset the development of national movements in the Territories.

In Western Pondoland, the paramounts consistently attempted to use the General Council funds for the purposes of the chieftaincy. They wanted to raise the salaries of headmen and the paramount and to pay for travelling expenses incurred in chiefly deputations.⁴ Their demands were as consistently refused by the administration, even though the chiefs argued that they were incurring expenses in the interests of the Mpondo people as a whole rather than for their own sectional interests. (Meetings with the magistrates were in fact often dominated by issues surrounding chiefly rights.)

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1. P. Walshe, The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa (London, 1970), 35.
 2. Hammond-Tooke papers, CMT minute 30.8.1920 and enclosures.
 3. Interview, Dana.
 4. Hammond-Tooke papers, Chief Magistrate's minute, 30.8.1920 and enclosures.

However, the way in which council funds were spent did tend to sharpen inequalities. Both the dipping of cattle and, in the 1910s, sheep, was funded out of the council revenue or, in Eastern Pondoland, by a general levy on all hut tax payers. As stock ownership was unequal, those with more cattle and sheep were, in effect, having their dipping costs subsidised by those with fewer. Councillors raised strong objections when officials suggested that differential dipping rates, which applied in other parts of the Territories, be introduced in Pondoland.¹ Similarly, agricultural expenditure tended to benefit a minority and although primary educational facilities were open without charge to the population as a whole, it was largely chiefly and Christian families that made use of them.

The relationships between the paramounts, lesser chiefs and headmen, and the Christian salary earners and progressive cultivators were not without their tensions. Some of the educated minority became disaffected with the government policy of segregation which could operate against their interests and in favour of the chiefs. In Eastern Pondoland, particularly, traditionalist chiefs and headmen, reflecting popular opinion, resented the role of 'progressives' whose activities furthered the implementation of certain state measures. The lines of conflict were most clearly revealed during the dipping crisis which left a legacy of unease about state intervention.² They again became apparent when the agricultural demonstration scheme was launched. Mswakeli himself was in favour. Yet, as Nkonya, the first demonstrator related, the regent's position came under attack.

I remember the first meeting I had, arranged by Chief Mswakeli some time in 1923, when I got here. Matwassa [headman of the location around Palmerton mission] and a few people from this location had accompanied us. A few older chiefs like Bodweni.... were in favour. All the Pondos? No, they don't want it. They said "It's going to kill this land. Wait until the young chief grows up and takes his place. You cannot accept an undertaking

1. PGC, 1921; 1922, 12, 13.

2. See chapter 5, section 1.

like this. You have no right." He [Mswakeli] was told in the face. They were angry. It was not just talk... In 1925, Professor Jabavu, who was a lecturer at Fort Hare, took a tour during the December holidays and held one of his meetings at Qaukeni. He talked mainly about agriculture. When he finished his talk, Chief Mswakeli asked the Pondos if they had any questions. The only educated chief there was Lamayi Langa of Flagstaff district. He stood up and supported what had been said by Dr. Jabavu. But all the meeting murmured against. Mswakeli got angry. He said all must be stopped. He said what Jabavu has said is going to be done in due time....The noise was too high to say anything. It was better to keep quiet.¹

The tensions that emerged during the meetings again reflected the feeling of lesser chiefs and popular opinion that the paramountcy, as in the case of the dipping crisis under a regent, had been too receptive to decisions taken by the administration. Again the role of the chieftaincy came under question, providing a focus for discontent about the broader implications of agricultural improvement: the fencing of land, the disturbance of winter grazing patterns and the threat of stock limitation which had¹ already become an issue.² Many lesser chiefs and headmen eventually accepted demonstrators but their position in successive phases of state intervention was always split. On the one hand, as salaried headmen, they were under great pressure from the administration to co-operate; on the other, they reflected popular opposition and suspicion. The paramounts and the salaried Christians increasingly moved to a position of co-operation with most state initiatives.

Although the paramounts and their allies clearly had sectional interests on a number of issues, they had never been divorced from popular opinion and in the twentieth century remained sensitive to it. The chieftaincy was now guaranteed by the state. It was no longer so dependent on popular support for its authority and survival. Yet the chiefs continued to work through councils drawn from the lesser chiefs and commoners throughout

1. Interview, Nkonya.

2. Ibid., see chapter 4, section 2.

Pondoland and, as in pre-colonial times, mass meetings were a regular feature of the political process. Many of the demands made by the General Council resonated with broader popular opinion: the councillors argued that council revenues should be used to provide grain at subsidised prices during famine; they advocated that the wages of road labourers as well as salaried council employees and headmen be increased; their defence of communal tenure, as has been illustrated, while underwriting their own position, protected commoner land holdings.¹

Aside from issues relating to land, those surrounding the rural family and migrant labour illustrate the common interests of chiefs and people. The chiefs did have a special interest in ensuring that wages came back to rural society. Although evidence is lacking, it seems that some tried to take a direct levy on migrant wages.² But, more indirectly, their continued ability to levy dues now depended on family income from wage labour rather than productive activities alone. The charges levied for plots of land served as an indirect means of taking a cut from wages for they were usually paid by young migrants who were engaged in setting up a homestead. Throughout the 1910s and 1920s, the chiefs, often through the medium of the General Council, advocated tighter controls over migrants and their wages.³ At one stage they advocated (unsuccessfully) that headmen be brought into a formal role in controlling migrancy by making it compulsory for each migrant to inform his local headmen when leaving and returning. In general, the chiefs recognised the importance of pass laws in controlling the labour force and in their evidence to a government commission investigating passes in 1920, some Transkeian chiefs supported

1. For example, PGC, 1913, 13; PGC, 1927, 18, 19.

2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 428.

3. For example, PGC, 1915, 10; PGC, 1921, 12, 13.

4. CA CMT 3/592/45, Evidence to Departmental Commission on Native Passes, 1920.

the system.¹ Poto argued, in the 1920s, for a system of compulsory deferred pay.² The debates about the effects of sugar recruiting reflected a similar concern about the loss of control of migrants and their wages.³ Some councillors also argued that pass laws should be extended to women in order to prevent uncontrolled movement to town.⁴ For the loss of daughters implied not only the loss of family labour, but of bridewealth payments.⁵ But these requests stemmed not only from sectional chiefly interests, but from the mass of traditionalist homestead heads whose authority was gradually being eroded. As migrants became homestead heads themselves, they may have found the controls over workers more oppressive. Whether or not this resulted in increasing divisions between chiefs and people in relation to such issues as passes, and to changing demands from the rural areas, remains to be investigated.

Under Mpondo family law, which was enforced by the magistrates' courts, homestead heads were ultimately responsible for the civil liabilities, fines and taxes of the members of their homestead.⁶ This was probably one of the reasons for their concern to defend their right to wages. In 1915, when the administration had tried to enforce a dipping tax on all adult males instead of on hut-tax payers alone, Marelane was strongly opposed.⁷ For if young men could be sued individually for their taxes and liabilities, the homestead heads' claim to control earnings and labour would be undermined.

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1. CA CMT 3/592/45, Evidence to Departmental Commission on Native Passes, 1920.
 2. PGC, 1928, 37.
 3. See chapter 6, section 2.
 4. PGC, 1918, 18.
 5. PGC, 1913, 14, 15; PGC, 1920, 9.
 6. G.M.B. Whitfield, South African Native Law (Cape Town, 1949), 257-264.
 7. CA CMT 3/868/635 (3), Tshongwana to RM Lusikisiki and following correspondence. For a similar response to 1925 poll tax see McLoughlin papers, meeting between CMT and Mswakeli, 30.11.1925.

The paramount's successful representations in this connection again seem to have reflected popular opinion. (Similar demands emerged from Zululand.)¹ It is interesting that some Pondoland General Councillors began to revise their position on this issue by about 1920. Although there was no unanimity, individuals suggested that the great house should no longer be responsible for the liabilities of minor houses for the very reason that the homestead heads could no longer control the income of the young men. Again these debates seem to have reflected more general swings of opinion.²

As chiefs still had a good deal of local control, as they could still support clients and impose sanctions on those who countered their authority, as they could articulate demands which had broad support in Pondoland, the scope for independent popular movements was limited. Whereas the dipping crisis had resulted in popular violence and a political movement led from outside the ranks of the chieftaincy in parts of East Griqualand where chiefly authority was far weaker, protest had been articulated through the lesser chiefs and headmen in Pondoland and the paramountcy had, with state support, been able to control the situation.³ Pondoland remained relatively immune from other popular movements that started in the Transkeian Territories, and particularly East Griqualand, during the first couple of decades of the century.⁴

Only in the 1920s, when the Territories were swept by a movement led by Wellington Buthelezi and others, did independent popular movements gain support in Pondoland.⁵ Buthelezi's support was based largely in East

1. Ibid.

2. PGC, 1918, 19; PGC, 1919, 13; PGC, 1921, 10. The arguments in these debates are not always clear, and the customary rules themselves were disputed.

3. See chapter 5, section 2.

4. C. Bundy and W. Beinart, 'State Intervention and Rural Resistance: The Transkei, 1900-1965', to be published in a collection edited by M. Klein for Sage publishers.

5. Ibid.; R. Edgar, 'The Strange Career of Wellington Buthelezi', unpublished paper, University of California, Los Angeles, 1975, and 'Garveyism in Africa: Dr. Wellington and the "American Movement" in the Transkei', ICS, SA Seminar, vol.6 (1976).

Griqualand, Fingoland and the western Transkei. Yet his millennial ideas about the coming of American blacks in aeroplanes to free the Transkeian people from oppression attracted substantial support in Pondoland. In Western Pondoland, the movement seems to have been linked directly to Buthelezi's organisation. However, in the coastal districts of Eastern Pondoland, the movement was led by local traditionalists who produced their own version of his message.¹ Its leaders, particularly one Nololo of Mtambalala location in Lusikisiki, advocated, like Buthelezi, that pigs should be killed and that the people's salvation would come at the hands of aeroplanes from America. In fact, the people of the coastal locations in Lusikisiki went so far as to build a landing strip to welcome them. But they called their movement the ICU after Clements Kadalie's Industrial and Commercial Union, the major African Trade Union of the 1920s.² Kadalie had been banned from the Territories and his Union organisation gained no foothold in Pondoland although one teacher in Lusikisiki, at least, was attracted to his ideas and sold the ICU newspaper.³ Through returning migrants, through rumour and the press, the name and some of the aims of the Union were absorbed by traditionalists and welded into a local movement dominated by Buthelezi's millennial thinking.

Although a few headmen were caught up in the surge of popular feeling, the paramounts, councillors, and at least the more prominent members of the Christian community felt threatened by, and were strongly opposed to, the movement. They co-operated with the state in bringing it under control. Poto made his position clear, and underlined his value to the administration, in a request for a raise in chiefly salaries in 1928.

1. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 570-572; Interviews, Nkonya, Gqambuleni et al, Alexander Soji, Hombé AA, Lusikisiki, 23.3.1977, Mvunelo.

2. S. Trapido (ed.), C. Kadalie, My Life and the ICU (London, 1970).

3. Interview, Mvunelo.

If the chiefs were loyal, it was easy for the people to be loyal, but if they were not loyal, the people would not be loyal...Dr Wellington and his followers were trying to cause trouble in various parts of the Territories but because of the good rule of the chiefs, they could not succeed.¹

The Wellington movement, and the ICU version of it in Eastern Pondoland, do not seem to have obtained such a strong hold as in East Griqualand and the Western Transkei. In these areas, the movement was accompanied by the establishment of independent schools and churches - a rejection of the state's apparatus of ideological control in the Territories. But there is not, at present, evidence of similar activities in Pondoland. Nor, is there evidence to suggest that Pondoland itself provided the cockpit for the development of new popular movements. There were sporadic waves of pig-killing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which seems to have taken place at times of popular discontent and political crisis such as in 1886, after Sigcau's death in 1906 and again after the introduction of compulsory dipping and rumours of a census in the mid-1910s.² Yet only during the 1920s did pig-killing become part of broader political movement.

The response of the mass of the traditionalists in Pondoland should not, however, be sought merely in organised political movements. The power of the chiefs was such to limit the scope for independent action and, in any case, the administration was quick to suppress such upsurges. The changing structural position of the population was also reflected in far less visible adaptations in social organisation and associational activities. At present, it is only possible to point to directions for research into such developments. One is the growth of new forms of youth organisation, particularly what may be called gangs. Such associations seem to have been

1. PGC, 1928, 49.

2. BPP, C.5022, 172; Beattie, A Ride through the Transkei, 66; MacQuarrie, Stanford, vol.II, 61; CA CMT 3/918/774.1, CMT circular, 23.12.1916 and following correspondence.

modelled on the urban amalaita gangs which emerged in Johannesburg soon after the turn of the century.¹ General Councillors complained of their activities in the rural areas in the early 1930s; their social roots in Pondoland appear to be linked to groups of returned mine labourers and especially youths who had been recruited onto the sugar fields in Natal. Their emergence underlines the decline in parental control. A second that calls for further research is the changing forms of beer drinking associations. By the 1930s, brewing and beer drinks had become, to some extent, commercialised.² At some later date, it became the practice for clearly identifiable groups called amatshawu to hold parties at which beer was sold, in rotation.³ It seems that most were returned migrants; the associations probably played a role in redistributing migrant earnings in the rural areas and were a direct reflection of the process of proletarianisation. The question of the political importance of these and other rural associations must at present remain open.

Because of the importance of the chieftaincy, conflict in the society was often expressed in disputes over chiefly rights. Civil dispute over a variety of issues in the late nineteenth century had taken the form of inter-chiefdom conflict: the battle between Sigcau and Mhlangaso has been described; in the late 1880s there had been a major war between the Western Mpondo paramountcy and the Konjwayo chief over rights to death duties, an issue which probably disguised territorial conflict.⁴ Chiefly disputes

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1. C. van Onselen, 'The Witches of Suburbia: Domestic Servants in Johannesburg', unpublished paper presented at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 9.3.1977; PGC, 1928, 41, 42; United Transkeian Territories General Council, Proceedings, 1933, 92.
 2. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, 140.
 3. Conversations, with F. Deyi.
 4. Interview, Lanyazima, Lutengele AA, Port St Johns, 26.2.1977; Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 40, 44.

in the earlier decades of the twentieth century echoed these conflicts.¹ Mhlangaso was able to mobilise his ex-rebel followers in Nthlenzi for a confrontation with the paramountcy soon after Marelane's accession in 1910. Mhlanga's sons claims for the right to appoint headmen in parts of Lusikisiki also threatened to spark mass violence. The administration, which kept a close watch on such disputes, was not prepared to countenance their escalation into 'faction fights' between the followers of different chiefs. Only on rare occasions, such as in the dispute between the paramount and the Nci chief over death duties in the early 1920s, did the conflicts spill over into mass violence. But strong local loyalties and fighting groups did not die out, although the dynamic behind them was changing.

Popular feelings were more especially expressed in succession disputes, where the language of legitimacy disguised broader political issues. During the dipping crisis, as has been illustrated, opposition to dipping was focussed on a rival claimant to the regency and even dissatisfaction with Marelane's succession. In the late 1930s, the question of succession to the paramountcy in Eastern Pondoland gave rise to a major and violent conflict. Marelane's accepted heir, Mandlonke, was installed on Mswakeli's death in 1934.² But three years later he committed suicide, leaving no sons. Successors were sought amongst Marelane's surviving sons. Botha, Marelane's eldest son by his first wife and a known government supporter, received the backing of the administration and also some of the leading chiefs and councillors, such as Poto. But Botha's opponents argued that according to Mpondo custom, the eldest son of the first wife of the paramount

1. See chapter 5, section 3.

2. Interview, Nelson Sigcau, Heathcote (not on tape), Dana; Conversations F. Deyi; Hammond-Tooke files, J.S. de Villiers and son to Lt. Col. R.Fyfe King, 7.7.1942 and following correspondence and memoranda on Sigcau vs. Sigcau; District Record Book, Flagstaff, especially speech by Chief Magistrate on Botha's installation.

could never succeed. The large mass of the people threw their support behind Nelson, who claimed to be son of one of the gadi (support) houses of Marelane's Great Wife. He was put forward as a candidate who would be far more sensitive to popular opinion and less co-operative with the administration. After holding a commission of enquiry, the administration installed Botha under an armed guard. Nelson's supporters responded by boycotting the installation and sacking the Great Place. When it became clear that violence would produce no result, they took Nelson's claim to the Supreme Court in 1942. (The case was lost.) Such conflict over succession highlighted the importance of the chieftaincy. The issues that surrounded the dispute again came to the fore when a mass revolt against the state's rehabilitation and Bantu Authorities programmes was organised in Eastern Pondoland in 1960.

Chieftaincy was only one of the elements of pre-colonial society that survived, although in a modified form, by the 1920s and 1930s. Land was still held in communal tenure, cattle remained of critical importance and the great majority of people in Pondoland rejected Christianity and the social and economic implications of conversion. It was the survival of such institutions, relationships and beliefs in rural society, and the anxiety of many Mpondo people to defend them, that led observers to characterise the area as traditional or conservative. The Mpondo could clearly be contrasted with other African communities, urban and rural, which had been more deeply transformed. Yet this thesis has demonstrated that there were indeed dramatic changes in Pondoland during the period between 1860 and 1930. A society which had been highly dependent on hunting, raiding and cultivation became predominantly pastoral and developed extensive trade relationships with the colonial states. In the late nineteenth century, systems of production in Pondoland were deeply affected by the introduction of ploughs. In the early decades of the twentieth century, dependence on the developing capitalist economy and

labour migrancy had been entrenched. All these changes in the nature of production had been echoed by shifts in the locus of control over productive activities, in the character of the chieftaincy and in the structure of rural homesteads. The survival or regeneration of relationships appropriate to pre-colonial society must therefore, it has been argued, be located in the context of the specific way in which Pondoland was absorbed into the capitalist economy and the South African state.

Moreover, it has been stressed that certain features of pre-colonial society not only persisted in a changed context, but themselves changed in form and role. Communal tenure survived as a result of the reversal of state policies on land once migrancy had been entrenched. At the same time, the defence of communal tenure became a major issue in Pondoland because of the specific form of proletarianisation that took place and because chiefs became increasingly dependent on their control over land. The nature of cattle keeping and attitudes towards cattle in the 1920s and 1930s cannot be divorced from the effects of state intervention in Pondoland on the one hand and the critical importance of accumulating a herd if rural production was to be maintained, on the other. Bridewealth remained of importance as a means of ensuring that migrants' wages were invested in rural society. Continued investment into cattle for production and bridewealth, and the very success with which homestead production was defended, decreased the necessity for investment into consumer goods. At the same time, the expense of such commodities put them beyond the reach of most families and forced them to limit their range of purchases. The institution of chieftaincy, initially anathema to colonial officials, became more acceptable to a state confronted with the problems of maintaining rural order and securing a migrant labour force. The strategy adopted by the chiefs, and their attempts to defend certain of their pre-colonial rights, arose directly out of their security within the administrative hierarchy and limits imposed on them by the state.

Though rejection or adoption of Christianity cannot be explained in materialist terms alone, there is little doubt that the economic implications of conversion played some part in limiting the extent of Christian influence. In sum, the character of rural society in Pondoland in the 1920s and 1930s was the product of the particular nature of structural change in the previous century. Only by understanding such changes can progress be made in identifying the response to capitalist penetration and colonial rule in the area.

TABLES

While some of the figures used in the construction of these tables are based on careful enumeration by officials and others, some are merely estimates and therefore of doubtful value. Even where figures were carefully recorded, they may not, for a variety of reasons, represent the situation accurately. The tables have nevertheless been presented because they give some rough indication of, for example, the size of population, quantity of stock kept, and extent of crop production in Pondoland. Where necessary, comments have been appended to the tables indicating the way in which figures were collected and possible errors. Such figures have been widely used in secondary works on the Transkeian Territories during the last half century though they are seldom subjected to critical analysis. The comments attached to these tables may serve to warn those who are confronted by Transkeian statistics of possible inaccuracies.

TABLE 1: Volume of Shipping and Trade Between
Natal and Port St Johns, 1857-1877.¹

Year	Ships leaving St Johns for Natal	Value of goods imported from St Johns	Ships leaving Natal for St Johns	Value of goods exported to St Johns
		£		£
1857	3	400	3	1649
1858	3	1541	4	3063
1859	5	1314	4	3519
1860	5	1154	5	4494
1861	7	2135	9	5735
1862	2	758	4	3399
1863	3	1682	5	1860
1864	5	1682	3	913
1865	1	512	2	1105
1866	1	539	1	--
1867	-	--	1	--
1868	1	--	1	292
1869	3	1626	2	962
1870	4	1749	4	2070
1871	4	4880	4	3493
1872	3	2643	3	3166
1873	6	6633	7	9451
1874	4	6256	3	5673
1875	6	5561	6	12884
1876	3	1292	4	11689
1877	2	421	2	5826

1. PRO C.O. 48/485, Rutherford to Frere, 4.1.1878, in Frere to Hicks Beach, 22.5.1878.

TABLE 2: Number of Ships Arriving at Port St Johns,
1879-1898, from all Colonial Ports.¹

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Ships</u>
1879	12
1881	20
1882	19
1883	15
1886	16
1887	23
1888	16
1889	12
1890	5
1891	15
1893	16
1895	58
1896	80
1897	136
1898	164

1. Cape, Blue Books, 1880-1899.

TABLE 3: Population Estimates in the Nineteenth Century

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Details</u>
May, 1830	7-8,000	Within two or three miles of Faku's Great Place on the Mngazi River. ¹
Nov., 1830	more than 10,000	Counted 'from one hill near the Great Place'. ²
Nov., 1830	20,000	Total under Faku, excluding some tributaries. ²
1834	40,000	'Faku's tribe'. ³
1839	50,000	Faku's 'tribe', not including the Bhaca. ⁴
1844	30,000	Mpondo East of the Mzimvubu only. ⁵
1845	25,000 <u>10,000</u> 35,000	East of the Mzimvubu West of the Mzimvubu Total Mpondo 'Nation' ⁶
1853/4	100,000	Total Mpondo. ⁷
1858	100,000 'if not more'	Faku's people. ⁸
1866	100,000 <u>50,000</u> 150,000	Under Faku (Eastern Pondoland) Under Ndamase (Western Pondoland) Total Mpondo. ⁹
1870	150,000	'Different tribes and people, acknowledging the house of Faku'. 'The Amampondo proper are a comparatively small tribe, though at the head of the nation'. ¹⁰

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1. WMMS, SA Box 5, Boyce to Secs., 11.5.1830.
 2. Steedman, Wanderings and Adventures, 268, extract from Boyce's Journal.
 3. WMMS, SA Box 7, Satchell to Secretaries, 14.1.1835 (Journal, 7.12.1834).
 4. Backhouse, Narrative, 266.
 5. Missionary Notices, January 1845, Shaw to Secretaries, 2.8.1844.
 6. Missionary Notices, April 1845, 60.
 7. F. Fleming, Kaffraria and its Inhabitants (London, 1854), 121.
 8. PRO C.O. 179/49 Scott to Stanley, 3.6.1858.
 9. Taylor, Christian Adventures, 346.
 10. WMMS, Kirkby to Secretaries, 21.2.1870 and 28.4.1870.

1875	200,000	Total Mpondo. ¹¹
1877	150,000	Total Mpondo. ¹²
1880	80,000 <u>40,000</u> 120,000	Eastern Pondoland Western Pondoland Total Mpondo. ¹³
1883	150,000	Total Mpondo (including Xesibe). ¹⁴
1890	120,000	Total Mpondo. ¹⁵
1893	150,000	Pondoland. ¹⁶
1893	200,000	Pondoland. ¹⁷
1896	185,000	Pondoland (Magisterial estimates for each district). ¹⁸

11. Cape, BBNA, G.21 - 1875, 131.

12. USPG, Annual Report (Oxland), No.209.

13. USPG, Series D 309, Oakes to Secretaries, 20.1.1880.

14. Cape, BBNA, G.5 - 1883, 10.

15. A.G.S. Gibson, Eight Years in Kaffaria, 1882-1890 (London, 1891), 10.

16. Groser, South African Experiences, 24.

17. J. Noble, Illustrated Official Handbook of the Cape and South Africa (Cape Town, 1893), 402.

18. Union, Third Census, 1921, 246.

TABLE 4: Rough Number of Cattle exported by M.H. O'Donnell from Eastern Pondoland¹

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Destination</u>
1886	513	Pietermaritzburg, Southern Natal and local military camps
1887	378	Pietermaritzburg
1888	614	Pietermaritzburg
1889	1004	Pietermaritzburg and Southern Natal
1890	807	Pietermaritzburg
1891	748	Pietermaritzburg (January to October only)
1893	894	Pietermaritzburg. Some sent elsewhere, but number not recorded
1894	354	Pietermaritzburg. Some exports probably not recorded
1895	367	Sold to outside buyers at cattle sales held in Pondoland.

1. CA O'D 1-10, Calculated from figures given for daily balance of cattle and exports.

TABLE 5: Labour Passes Given in Pondoland Districts, 1896-1912,
and Number of Absentees, 1921 and 1936

<u>Year</u>	<u>Bizana</u>	<u>Flag- staff</u>	<u>Lusi- kisiki</u>	<u>Tabankulu</u>	<u>Libode</u>	<u>Nggeleni</u>	<u>PSJ</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1896	1195	94	53	324	113	189	15	1983
1897	891	273		315	57	182	4	1722
1898	1767	353	472	949	343	235	8	4127
1899	1290	200	166	314	38	72	1	2081
1900	1946	271	233	596	185	198	44	3473
1901	3269	714	274	771	166	173	21	5388
1902	3790	1431	423	611	662	867	48	7832
1903	5488	1323	725	943	285	577	201	9542
1904	4766	1660	1154	1029	458	699	294	10060
1905	3632	1800	775	1426	947	1249	403	10232
1906	3748	1739	1842	1578	507	750	125	10289
1907	3588	2088	1318	1418	599	1095	180	10286
1908	3231	2383	1525	1254	746	1026	183	10348
1909	2879	2645	1400	1228	1336	774	252	10514
1910	3783	3893	1819	1773	3313	1661	672	16914
1911	4203	2615	1671	1271	1731	432	511	11434
1912	5592	3780	2432	2193	1753	782	402	16934
1921	3117	2181	4078	3044	2138	3062	1122	18742
1936	5432	3795	5183	4827	3701	4583	1830	29261

NOTE on Table 5

Figures for 1896 to 1909 are taken from the published Cape Blue Books. Figures for 1910 to 1912 are from the published Union Blue Books and Reports of the Native Affairs Department. Monthly figures of the passes issued in each Transkeian district were issued in the Cape Government Gazettes from 1901 to 1909. (See Table 7) These figures do not agree exactly with the annual figures in the above sources although the discrepancy is not great. After 1913 the Native Affairs Department ceased to publish an annual report and in the irregular reports which were issued, there are no figures of labour migrancy by district. It proved impossible to find such figures in any of the archival collections consulted. (Separate archival records of the number of passes issued prior to 1912

were not kept either.) Figures for the period after 1912 may be included in the papers of the Director of Native Labour. This archive was closed during the time that archival work in South Africa was being undertaken, although it is now open. As noted in the text (Chapter 6, section 2) occasional figures were located in the Chief Magistrate's papers after 1912, but these are too irregular to provide the basis for any tabular presentation. The 1921 and 1936 figures are drawn from a return of absentees from each district in the census reports. They reflect only the number of absentees recorded on the day of the census, not the number of passes issued, and therefore are not strictly comparable with the earlier figures. Migration to the gold mines only from the mid-1920s is tabulated separately. (Table 6)

As the 1896-1912 returns indicate only the number of passes issued, and not the actual number of migrants who left the Pondoland districts, they may be underestimates. However, administrative files in the archives suggest that few workers left without passes at this period. They had, after all, to contract in Pondoland if they were to obtain an advance. This objection does not therefore bring the accuracy of the figures into serious dispute. It is also possible that some migrants obtained more than one pass in a year, or that some obtained passes and did not leave home. As neither practice was widespread, the figures are unlikely to be overestimates of the actual number of migrants leaving. A far more serious objection to these figures arises from the fact that workers from the Transkeian Territories did not have to obtain passes in their home districts, although they were encouraged to do so. The figures of labour passes issued were supposed to be regularised by officials so as to reflect the actual district of origin of each worker, but no archival information could be found which indicated that this was in fact done efficiently. The table shows that substantially more passes were issued in Bizana than in other Pondoland districts throughout the period 1896-1912. (Flagstaff figures are also usually high.) Yet Bizana was not the most heavily populated district in Pondoland and although there is information in the magisterial reports to suggest that rates of migrancy from this district were higher than those for other districts in Pondoland, they are unlikely to have been as high as this table indicates. Bizana and Flagstaff villages were, however, the major recruiting centres in Eastern Pondoland as they were situated on transport routes out of the area. It is likely that some workers from other Pondoland districts obtained their passes in these villages. A comparison of the 1912 and 1921 figures tends to confirm

this point. The latter, which reflect the actual number of absentees, show a reduction in Flagstaff and Bizana and an increase in the other Pondoland districts. The only explanation would appear to be that the earlier pass figures did not accurately reflect districts of origin.

A further problem arises. Did many Mpondo workers contract outside Pondoland? If so, the figures used in the text may be seriously misleading. It is probably true that a number of migrants from the Western Pondoland districts obtained passes in Umtata between 1896 and 1912. However, the fact that cattle advances were most widely available within Pondoland suggests that most workers contracted within the area, if not in their home district. Furthermore, considerable numbers of migrants from the East Griqualand districts of Mount Ayliff and Mount Frere contracted for work in the Pondoland recruiting centres. (See CA NA 718/F473(i), RM Mount Frere to SNA, 7.1.1910.) Those from Mount Frere did so partly because there were few agents in their district, partly because of the availability of advances in Pondoland, and partly because they could pose as Mpondo workers, who were apparently in great demand on the mines. In sum, the labour pass figures for Western Pondoland districts from 1896 to 1912 do not show the full number of workers migrating, but those for Eastern Pondoland districts are almost certainly considerably higher than the number of migrants who actually originated from these districts. It is impossible to say whether or not these two anomalies cancel each other out. However, although the figures for individual districts are not a true reflection of the number of workers leaving, the total figure for all Pondoland districts in any one year is unlikely to be wildly inaccurate.

In general, it is possible to explain specific increases in the number of labour passes given between 1896-1912 without great difficulty. The increases are usually linked to natural disasters in the rural areas. (See chapter 3, section 2) However, it will be noted that there was a very large increase in 1910, although the sources do not suggest that there was drought or cattle disease in Pondoland in that year. This increase is almost certainly the result of the abolition of cattle advances. It was noted in the text (chapter 3, section 2) that cattle advances were abolished in all but the Pondoland districts in 1909, a year before they were abolished in Pondoland. It is likely that workers from other Transkeian districts flocked to Pondoland in the early months of 1910 as this

was the only way in which they could obtain advances. By 1911, when advances had been abolished in Pondoland districts as well, the number of passes given dropped to little over the 1909 level. The 1912 increase is, of course, attributable to drought and East Coast Fever. The 1910 figure is therefore probably made up, to a considerable extent, of workers originating from districts outside Pondoland.

TABLE 6: Number of Workers Recruited for the Gold Mines only,
Pondoland Districts

<u>Year</u>	<u>Eastern Pondoland</u>	<u>Western Pondoland</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1923	6944		
1924	5456	6452	11,908
1925	5160	5499	10,659
1926	4339	5105	9,444
1927	4683	5262	9,945
1928	4779	5106	9,889
1929	4824	5428	10,252
1930	6249	6676	12,929
1931	4884	4852	9,736
1932	6570	6515	13,089
1933	6629	6848	13,477
1934	6554	6726	13,280
1935	7996	8003	15,999
1936	10591	7910	18,501
1937	8174	7651	15,825
1938	10836	9210	20,046
1939	10928	9116	20,044

NOTE on Table 6

Figures are taken from back files in the Mine Labour Organisation's offices in Umtata and Johannesburg. No records could be found which went back before 1923. (The Organisation claims that these records have been destroyed.) There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of these figures, and they have been regularised to show districts/^{of origin.} However, some caveats should be made. The table probably represents only the number of workers recruited by the Native Recruiting Corporation. Although the NRC dominated recruiting for the mines in the 1920s and 1930s, some other organisations, particularly Mackenzies, still had a small share of the market. These figures do not therefore reflect all the Mpondo workers who migrated to the mines. Some non-recruited migrants may also have found their way to the mines.

TABLE 7: Seasonality of Labour Migration, 1901-1909 and 1937-1945

	<u>1901 - 1909</u>		<u>1937 - 1945</u>	
	Average number of migrants	percentage of total	Average number of migrants	percentage of total
Jan.	838	8.6	1406	13.6
Feb.	859	8.8	1029	9.9
March	864	8.9	929	9.0
April	795	8.2	837	8.1
May	832	8.5	822	7.9
June	746	7.7	706	6.8
July	858	8.8	739	7.1
August	757	7.8	889	8.6
Sept.	705	7.2	868	8.4
Oct.	768	7.9	743	7.2
Nov.	774	8.0	692	6.7
Dec.	936	9.7	712	6.9

NOTE on Table 7

Figures for 1901 to 1909, for all Pondoland districts, are calculated from returns in the Cape Government Gazettes. No other monthly returns of labour passes issued could be found either in published or unpublished sources. Publication of these figures in the Government Gazettes ceased in April 1910 at the time of Union. There is some evidence to suggest that resident magistrates kept monthly records of the number of labour passes issued in their districts after Union, and that they forwarded these records, along with other documents, to the archives in Cape Town. Although no run of such returns could be located, they were occasionally used as backing paper for documents in files dealing with completely unconnected matters. (Many of the documents forwarded to Cape Town were on flimsy copy paper and the archivists have adopted the policy of gumming these to more substantial sheets. They felt, no doubt, that the monthly labour returns were not worth preserving and, by using them as backing paper, saved on stationery.) It is therefore possible to obtain occasional monthly figures after 1910 although these are too irregular to permit tabular presentation. Figures for 1937 to 1945 were found in the Mine Labour Organisation Back files in Johannesburg and reflect only workers

recruited by the Native Recruiting Corporation from Eastern Pondoland for the gold mines. The two sets of figures are not strictly comparable.

The notes appended to Tables 5 and 6 apply to the 1901 to 1909 figures and the 1937-1945 figures respectively. A number of figures for individual years are missing from the 1901-1909 series, as monthly tables were occasionally absent from the Government Gazettes. The difficulties created by these omissions have been overcome by the simple expedient of adding up all the available figures for any one month and dividing by the total number of figures available. If the missing figures had been available, the pattern revealed in this table may have been marginally different. Two figures, those for January and December 1905, which do appear in the Government Gazette have been omitted from the calculations. The December 1905 figure is abnormally high, and is probably due to a misprint or miscount by officials. The January 1905 figure is also very much higher than usual, but not as ridiculous as the December figure. It may be the result of a misprint or miscount, but could be correct. If the latter is the case, the explanation is probably not related so much to the fact that people were leaving after ploughing, but to the sudden availability of very large advances under the WNLA scheme in that month. (See chapter 3, section 2) If the figure is included in the calculation, the percentage of the work force leaving in January in these years would increase to about 9.6.

One remark should be made in connection with the 1937-1945 figures. The seasonality of migration from the Transkeian Territories was of considerable concern to the mining industry for it could be faced with an oversupply of labour in certain months and an undersupply in others. When the labour supply for the industry was, as a whole, adequate, it enforced a quota system on recruiters in the Territories. Only a certain number of workers were accepted from each district in particular months and some effort was made to spread recruiting more evenly through the year. Quota systems were vigorously applied in the 1930s. In fact, some figures for 1934-1936 which were found in the Mine Labour Organisation files, suggest that the pattern of migration for the Territories as a whole did not have a marked seasonal characteristic in these three years. During the late 1930s and early 1940s, quota systems were relaxed, though not abolished and as the table illustrates, a more marked seasonal pattern emerged. It is possible that if workers had been completely free to choose the date of their departure, the pattern of migration would have been even more seasonal. No quota systems were applied in the first decade of the century.

TABLE 8: Percentage of Men Absent

	Pondoland	East Griqualand	Thembuland	Transkei	Transkeian Territories (Total)
1896	2.5	11.4	16.5	21.9	13.4
1904	10.1	13.8	14.7	20.1	14.5
1911	9.6	14.7	16.1	23.4	16.5
1921	13.5	18.7	17.3	18.9	17.0
1936	17.1	24.7	24.4	25.7	22.8

NOTES on Table 8

The percentages tabulated are calculated from labour migrancy and population statistics. (See Tables 5 and 9) In view of the reservations made about both sets of figures, this table should be regarded with a great deal of caution. The percentages given in each year are not always calculated on strictly comparable data. However, the table probably has some value in indicating, very roughly, the comparative rate of labour migrancy in various parts of the Territories over time. On the basis of age breakdowns of the population in the 1911, 1921 and 1936 census returns, it is possible to calculate the percentage of men between say fifteen and forty-five years of age. It can be presumed that most migrants were between these ages, although there are no returns which indicate the age of migrants. Following from this assumption, figures could be derived for the number of 'economically active men' between fifteen and forty-five away at work in any particular year. So many inaccuracies creep into such a calculation that it is not very useful to have the results. As a rough guide, the percentages given here can be multiplied two and a half times in order to arrive at the figure of the percentage of men between fifteen and forty-five absent.

TABLE 9A: Returns of Population for Pondoland Districts

<u>District</u>	<u>1904</u>	<u>1911</u>	<u>1921</u>	<u>1936</u>	<u>1946</u>
Biz.	32,909	42,316	45,204	57,651	55,835
Flag.	25,713	27,780	31,861	43,143	43,505
Lib.	24,728	25,421	28,990	32,249	41,707
Lus.	41,691	44,015	53,670	69,795	83,114
Ngq.	37,655	36,648	40,352	46,853	53,679
PSJ	8,519	17,888	21,147	24,376	25,868
Tab.	29,294	37,509	40,243	46,280	49,961
Total	200,509	231,627	261,467	324,347	353,669

TABLE 9B: Average Annual Percentage Increase over Previous Census Year

<u>District</u>	<u>1911</u>	<u>1921</u>	<u>1936</u>	<u>1946</u>
Biz.	4.0	0.7	1.8	- 0.3
Flag.	1.1	1.5	2.4	0.1
Lib.	0.4	1.4	2.1	0.9
Lus.	0.8	2.2	2.0	1.9
Ngq.	- 0.4	1.0	1.1	1.5
PSJ	15.7	1.8	1.0	0.6
Tab.	4.0	0.7	1.0	0.8
Total	2.2	1.3	1.6	0.9

TABLE 9C: Density of Population per Square Mile

<u>District</u>	<u>1911</u>	<u>1921</u>	<u>1936</u>	<u>1946</u>	<u>Average size</u> (square) (miles)
Biz.	60	64	82	79	706
Flag.	65	75	102	102	425
Lib.	48	54	72	78	534
Lus.	48	58	76	90	920
Ngq.	83	91	106	121	442
PSJ	54	63	73	77	334
Tab.	73	78	90	97	514
Total	60	68	84	91	3875

NOTE on Table 9

All the census figures from 1904 onwards were based on very detailed enumeration in each location. In general, officials reported that they received co-operation from the headmen and people in Pondoland during census counts. However, a whole host of factors could have affected the accuracy of the figures. Unfortunately, it seems that the archives of the Department of Statistics are not available, thus making any critique of the returns highly speculative. Most of the figures are likely to be under-enumerations but the extent of error in any one year cannot, on the material available, be specified. Some of the more glaring anomalies, such as the decline in population in Ngqeleni between 1904 and 1911, and the vast increase in Port St Johns over the same period, can be explained by changes in district boundaries. An analysis of annual percentage increases by district between census years shows that these varied very considerably. The variation is unlikely to be the result of markedly different patterns of natural increase in these districts where social conditions were broadly similar. They are probably best explained by inaccuracy in enumeration on the one hand, and patterns of migration on the other. Some districts received more immigrants from outside Pondoland and there were movements between districts as well. The levelling off of population between 1936 and 1946 in Bizana, Flagstaff and Port St Johns, while it may be due to inaccuracies, may also be the result of permanent outmigration of families to the cities, or possibly to other districts such as Lusikisiki.

TABLE 10: Cattle Holdings, Pondoland Districts

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>
1895	130,000
1896	175,000
1898	76,981
1899	83,300
1904	134,967
1911	279,591
1914	75,848
1915	54,238
1918	102,028
1919	123,290
1920	146,011
1921	186,333
1922	221,451
1923	262,881
1924	295,204
1925	330,416
1926	368,178
1927	414,210
1928	447,124
1929	476,918
1930	511,407
1931	509,347
1932	521,467
1933	502,555
1934	475,663
1935	501,466
1936	504,329
1937	489,301
1938	484,537
1939	501,310

NOTE on Table 10

Figures for 1895 to 1899 are taken from Cape Statistical Registers. They are estimates made by magistrates in the various Pondoland districts. The returns for the pre-Rinderpest years (1895 and 1896) are almost certainly gross underestimates. If indeed the Mpondo lost 80 per cent of the cattle in Rinderpest (see chapter 3, section 1), the number in the area, on the basis of the post-Rinderpest estimate, must have been very much higher than 175,000 in 1896. The 1898 figure may, however, be an overestimate. 1904 and 1911 figures are culled from the census returns. It is not clear whether they are estimates or whether they were the result of homestead by homestead enumeration, as in the case of the population figures. The evidence seems to suggest the latter and these figures may not be wildly inaccurate. The 1914 figure is an estimate. The 1915 figure is based on a head count of cattle taken in the districts by veterinary officials and may be fairly close to the mark. Figures from 1918 onwards are based on dipping returns. As compulsory dipping was fairly rigorously enforced from about the early 1920s, these figures are probably reasonably accurate. It is true that some cattle did escape the dips and that the dipping returns themselves may not be entirely correct. But in general, the figures are probably among the most accurate of any of the general series available on the Transkeian Territories. (Source, Appendices to the TTGC, Proceedings and Agricultural Censuses.)

TABLE 11: Cattle Holdings; Percentage Increase or Decrease Over
Previous Year, All Pondoland Districts

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage Increase</u>
1919	20.8
1920	18.4
1921	27.6
1922	18.8
1923	18.7
1924	12.3
1925	11.9
1926	11.4
1927	12.5
1928	7.9
1929	6.7
1930	7.2
1931	- 0.4
1932	2.4
1933	- 3.6
1934	- 5.3
1935	5.4
1936	0.6
1937	- 3.0
1938	- 1.0
1939	3.5

TABLE 12: Cattle Holdings in August and December of Each Year

<u>Year</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Losses or gains between January and August</u>
1923	238,957	262,881	+ 17,506
1924	279,126	295,204	+ 16,245
1925	303,022	330,416	+ 7,818
1926	343,951	368,178	+ 13,535
1927	382,868	414,210	+ 14,690
1928	no figure	447,124	
1929	448,666	476,918	+ 1,542
1930	479,182	511,407	+ 2,264
1931	no figure		
1932	no figure		
1933	no figure	502,555	
1934	472,400	475,663	- 30,155
1935	472,086	501,466	- 3,577
1936	488,896	504,329	- 12,570
1937	488,548	489,301	- 15,781
1938	472,741	484,537	- 16,560
1939	477,923	501,310	- 6,614

NOTE on Table 12

From 1918 onwards, figures of the total number of stock as on the 31st December of each year were appended to the TTGC Proceedings. From 1923, additional figures giving the number of stock on 31st August of each year were included. (These are also in the Agricultural Census reports.) The December figures were collected after the spring calving and thus at a time when the cattle population was near its annual height. The August figures, taken at the height of the winter drought, were collected when the cattle population was reaching its lowest level.

TABLE 13: Sheep and Goat Holdings: Pondoland Districts

<u>Year</u>	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Goats</u>
1895	34,500	62,500
1896	37,750	67,800
1898	48,550	112,140
1899	62,000	120,250
1903	183,404	250,104
1904	168,223	276,621
1907	193,048	241,974
1908	218,757	243,016
1909	228,179	209,091
1911	193,046	154,065
1922	287,197	
1923	313,456	297,135
1924	370,354	323,450
1925	386,449	321,700
1926	456,476	346,929
1927	505,202	378,635
1929	504,225	372,682
1930	570,979	347,697
1934	405,337	236,624
1935	420,778	245,643
1936	485,202	287,714
1937	485,422	274,367
1938	446,847	234,804
1939	475,612	231,610

NOTE on Table 13:

Figures for 1895 to 1899 are from the Cape Statistical Registers. They are estimates, and probably underestimates. Those for 1903, and 1907 to 1909, are from Reports of the Chief Inspector of Sheep in the Cape. In this decade the state attempted to enforce compulsory dipping of sheep and these figures may be reasonably accurate. The increase between 1899 and 1903 may be partly attributable to the inaccuracy of the earlier figures. However, documentary evidence suggests that a very large number of woolled sheep were brought into Pondoland after Rinderpest and during the South

African war. (chapter 3, section 1) The number of woolled sheep, as against the non-woolled fat-tailed sheep, certainly increased very rapidly, if not the total number of sheep. Figures for 1904 and 1911 are taken from census returns. (See note on Table 10) Figures from 1922 onwards are included both in appendices to the TTGC Proceedings and the Agricultural Census reports. Compulsory dipping of all sheep had been abolished by this time; only those herds with scab had to be dipped. However, the sheep inspectors of the Department of Agriculture made regular inspections of the flocks in their districts and must have been in a reasonable position to estimate, or perhaps even enumerate, the number of animals. The returns are probably not as accurate as the cattle returns.

TABLE 14: Grain Output: Pondoland Districts

<u>Year</u>	<u>Bags or Muids (200lbs.)</u>	
	<u>Maize</u>	<u>Sorghum</u>
1895	121,500	78,000
1896	128,000	79,000
1898	148,000	105,500
1901	227,545	
1904	274,230	101,625
1911	351,285	81,715
1920	307,730	16,872
1923	588,668	25,700
1924	506,000	17,250
1925	498,549	16,828
1926	517,564	18,961
1927	564,809	27,652
1929	741,107	71,502
1930	590,732	70,165
1933	724,041	35,729
1934	320,425	16,549
1935	139,532	8,023
1936	631,395	22,189
1937	592,000	26,484
1938	810,000	26,950

NOTE on Table 14:

Figures are drawn from the Cape Statistical Registers, census returns, Agricultural Census returns and appendices to the TTGC Proceedings. They are all estimates. (See chapter 4, section 4 for some comments on the basis of estimation.) They probably do indicate, roughly, the good and bad years. There is no reliable means by which to assess whether the tendency was to overestimate or underestimate the amount of crops produced in any one year or whether the changing method of assessment led to significant variations in these tendencies over the years. The figures on sorghum production are likely to be very wild estimates.

APPENDIX 1

A Note on Sources1: Documentary Sources

Some of the works dealing with the peasantry in southern Africa have been mentioned in the introduction. This note will describe the sources available on Pondoland itself, and discuss some gaps in the material. It should be stressed at the outset that the quantity of documentary evidence relevant to the area between about 1830 and 1930 is such that only a limited number of sources could be covered in detail. Further, though the secondary literature on developments outside Pondoland which affected processes of change within the area are not always adequate, it was not usually possible to make extensive archival investigations of such developments for this would have entailed the use of documentary series which were of peripheral importance to the thrust of the thesis. In general, the time available was spent on extensive reading of a limited number of official and private papers, and the nature of these archives has shaped the thesis. Where possible, particularly in chapters four and six, gaps were filled by oral evidence. But the issues on which the text is focussed are largely those for which an adequate documentary base was available.

Three works dealing with Mpondo history and society have been of great value: Hunter's Reaction to Conquest, an ethnography of the Mpondo; Poto's vernacular history, Ama-Mpondo. Ibali ne-Ntlalo and Cragg's detailed study of relations between the Mpondo and the Cape from 1830 to 1886. Hunter's book must rank among the best and most detailed anthropological studies so far undertaken in the Transkeian area. As is clear from the footnotes in the text it has provided information on a wide variety of issues. Yet, like other anthropological studies written in the 1930s, informed by the theory of culture contact, her work does not always lend itself to historical analysis. In general her technique was to construct a picture of 'the past'

and contrast it with the society which she found on her visit in 1931. She is seldom concerned to differentiate the past or to locate processes of change in a chronological framework. The past society she describes is that which she distilled from her informants, probably a combination of their experience and the traditions they received from their ancestors. But it was not the practice, in anthropological studies of the period, to reveal the identity and position of informants, or to assess how this affected their information. Certain issues, such as labour migrancy and the chieftaincy, are treated very briefly. There is nothing like the detail on migrancy that is to be found in the work of her near contemporary, Schapera, on the Tswana, nor can her treatment of chieftaincy be compared with that in Gluckman's work on the Zulu or Kuper's study of the Swazi.¹ Lastly, the bulk of her fieldwork was conducted in Ngqeleni district, on the periphery of Western Pondoland, among people who were, historically, relatively independent from even the Western Mpondo chieftaincy. This thesis has concentrated on Eastern Pondoland, more especially on the areas dominated by the Eastern Mpondo paramountcy, and it was found that her material did not always ring true. Although she did spend some time in Eastern Pondoland, and mentions some of the differences between this area and the Ngqeleni district, it was her brief to generalise about custom rather than analyse regional processes of change. However, in spite of these reservations, her powers of observation, and eye for detail are such that her work was always indispensable and it provided, on such issues as family structure, ceremonies, and the position of women, material that was not available in other sources.

1. I. Schapera, Migrant Labour and Tribal Life (London, 1947); H. Kuper, An African Aristocracy: Rank among the Swazi (London, 1947); M. Gluckman, 'The Kingdom of the Zulu of South Africa' in M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard, African Political Systems (Oxford, 1940, 1970).

Only sources not mentioned in the text are footnoted here. All other references can be found in the bibliography.

Poto's vernacular history is divided into separate sections dealing with oral history and customs. The section on oral history is thin before the time of Faku and, as the book was written as a synthesis of traditions by the Western Mpondo paramount, it concentrates on the exploits of Ndamase and his descendents after the latter's removal from Eastern Pondoland. The material on Faku's reign adds a number of interesting details, especially on battles and the question of succession, which are not available elsewhere. From about the 1870s, however, the oral material covers episodes which are for the most part well-documented and this section of the book is most useful in providing some idea of a Mpondo chief's perception of history, rather than any new material. The section on the period after annexation is very brief and reflects the view of a paramount who was both a Christian and had, by the time he supervised the writing of the book, accepted a colonial role for the chieftaincy. The chapters on customs provide confirmation of a number of topics discussed by Hunter (she also used Poto's book) and some new detail on, for example, army organisation. Particularly valuable are the genealogical tables and the renderings of praise poems. The latter, which were not used in this thesis, are accompanied by explanatory notes which make some of the more obscure references in the poems more understandable to present day historians. In all, however, the book does not have the depth of Soga's work on the Xhosa (he deals only briefly with the Mpondo) nor Bryant's and Stuart's collections of Zulu oral history.¹ Some of the surviving Bhaca and Xesibe traditions are also more detailed on the early nineteenth century.²

Cragg's thesis, based on Methodist papers, official archives and

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1. J.H. Soga, The South-Eastern Bantu (Johannesburg, 1930); Bryant, Olden Times; J. Stuart papers.
 2. See, for example, Notes by W.P. Leary on Bhaca and Xesibe Traditions in the McLoughlin papers.

published parliamentary papers, has provided an invaluable background to Mpondo diplomatic history in the nineteenth century. In broad terms, his analysis is supportable. The Mpondo, isolated from the major thrusts of colonial expansion, were useful allies to the Cape for a considerable portion of the nineteenth century. When the colonial powers began to expand into the areas around Pondoland relationships gradually deteriorated. He is, however, hardly concerned with the changing nature of Mpondo society itself. In fact, the history of the Mpondo and neighbouring chiefdoms in the nineteenth century remains to be rewritten in detail for it has only been treated schematically in this thesis. As Faku welded together one of the largest, if not the largest, polity on the east coast of Africa south of the Zulu, this task seems to be justified. The Mpondo have constantly been overlooked in more general histories, partly because of the lack of detailed monographs and partly because of the fact that they did not become involved in direct confrontation with the colonial powers for most of the century. Their experience was very different from that of the Xhosa, yet it was arguably just as important in shaping the relations between black and white, between capital and labour, in South Africa.

As Cragg's study was an insufficient base for a reassessment of Mpondo history in the nineteenth century, archival material and traveller's records had to be re-examined for the first chapter of the thesis. Such sources are by no means as dense as those, for example, on the Zulu and Xhosa who, by reason of their power, or their proximity to colonial settlements, attracted more visitors and were of more interest to colonial officials. The travellers who visited Pondoland in the first half of the nineteenth century, and left a written record of their experiences, can be counted on the fingers of one hand. And, in general, their reports were brief. None left a book to rival those of Alberti, Lichtenstein, Moodie or Thompson,

to mention but a few, on the Xhosa chiefdoms.¹ None recorded Mpondo society in the vivid detail that Fynn and Isaacs reserved for the Zulu.² (Fynn's material on Pondoland, while helpful, is disappointing. This is not surprising in view of the superior attractions of Shaka's kingdom.) By the 1860s, when Pondoland was more accessible, visitors had lost the excitement of discovery in describing African societies in southern Africa.

Government archives, mainly those in the Public Records office, were used sparingly for the period before annexation. While there was little doubt that a great deal more could have been gleaned from the Cape and Natal records, the thesis was not planned to cover the nineteenth century in detail. The colonial documentation was written largely by officials outside Pondoland; except for brief and disastrous attempts to station British residents in the area in the 1850s and from 1878-1883, no official stayed in the area permanently before annexation. The records of the Methodist Missionary Society in London seemed to offer a far more hopeful hunting ground. The missionaries were the only literate men who lived in Pondoland before the arrival of settled traders and the colonial governments often relied on them for information. Indeed, the missionaries did send back regular reports to the secretaries of the WMMS and these are an incomparable source for the 1820s and 1830s. Unfortunately, the letters for the period ca. 1837-1858, the very years in which Thomas Jenkins was establishing himself in Pondoland, are missing. By the time that regular reports are again available, Jenkins left much of the drudgery of writing home to his subordinates who were neither as knowledgeable nor as concerned

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1. Fehr, Ludwig Alberti's Account of the Xhosa; H. Lichtenstein, Travels in Southern Africa in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, 2 vols. (Cape Town, 1928, 1930); J.W.D. Moodie, Ten Years in South Africa, 2 vols. (London, 1835); G. Thompson, Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa, 2 vols. (London, 1827).
 2. Stuart and Malcolm, Diary of Henry Francis Fynn; L. Hermann (ed.), The Travels and Adventures of Nathaniel Isaacs, 2 vols. (Cape Town, 1936, 1937).

about Mpondo society as himself. A collection of letters sent and received by Jenkins and his wife has been assembled from other sources but Jenkins's personal papers were destroyed by his wife soon after his death. All that seems to remain is a short section of his diary, covering the years between 1848 and 1854, which deals largely with mission affairs. It was only by using snippets from all the above sources that a basic, though uneven, picture of the processes of change in the nineteenth century could be constructed. There is little doubt, however, that more extensive work in the government archives and a deeper investigation of oral traditions could provide the basis for a reworking of the nineteenth century history of Pondoland.

The sources on the last two decades of the century, which have underpinned parts of chapter 1 and the whole of chapter 2, are richer and more varied. In fact, they could also sustain a separate thesis. As the Mpondo were involved in constant disputes with the colonial governments there is a considerable bulk of official documentation, much of it published in British and Cape Parliamentary Papers. The British resident in Pondoland produced valuable reports on the country during his stay (1878-1883) and even though his own interests heavily influence his picture of Mpondo politics and diplomatic strategy, he recorded less dubious information on production and trade. (The Cape was interested in the future of St Johns as a colonial port.) The Chief Magistrates at Umtata and Kokstad, with whom the paramounts wished to deal direct rather than through a resident, were constantly concerned about developments in Pondoland, especially when they affected the newly annexed chiefdoms surrounding the area. Walter Stanford, Chief Magistrate in East Griqualand from 1885, left a book of reminiscences and his private papers include correspondence with his political ally, Peter Hargreaves, the Methodist missionary at Emfundisweni. There are a number of other missionary collections in Grahamstown, Cape Town and London which add detail to the colonial documentation.

In 1882, the Kokstad Advertiser was launched to serve the growing European population in the town and its environs. As this border farming and trading community was vitally affected by political and economic affairs in Pondoland, the last remaining independent African chiefdom between the Cape and Natal, the newspaper carried reports in almost every (weekly) issue. It also provides, through advertisements and news, a rich source on trading establishments in the town, many of which had interests in Pondoland. It was through this newspaper that Mhlangaso made his proclamations known to the outside world; MacNicholas was an occasional correspondent. It is not always easy to discover who was behind particular reports on Pondoland, but the density of reporting is unrivalled in any other colonial newspaper. By the late 1880s, when many of the issues in dispute between the Mpondo paramountcy and the Cape had been settled, and when the settler community had become more established, the newspaper turned inwards to report mostly on settler affairs. Interest in Pondoland revived only during the civil war and annexation years. After this date, the newspaper, and other colonial newspapers, are of limited value for analysing the internal position in Pondoland. The Umtata Herald, started shortly after the Kokstad Advertiser, provided material on Western Pondoland for a similar period; as this section of the thesis deals mainly with Eastern Pondoland, only occasional issues of the Herald were used.

Aside from this wide range of sources, a variety of private papers provided additional material. By far the most important of these were the O'Donnell papers housed in the Cape Town archives depot. They were deposited by O'Donnell's nephew, Gallagher, who took over the Emagusheni trading station in 1915, and have not been previously used. In fact, their existence was only discovered after an interview with Gallagher's son. The collection contains over fifty numbered volumes of diaries and letter books covering the period between 1882, before O'Donnell's arrival, and 1915. There are also a large number of unsorted daily balance books. Much of

the archive consists of the detailed daily correspondence produced in the course of running a fairly substantial business. The letter books to the firm's suppliers in Natal, first Adler Bros., then, from 1886, Randle Brothers and Hudson, provide the most interesting material. As each book contains up to 1000 pages of often illegible pressed copies, detailed studies of the accounts could only be made for a few years. O'Donnell and his partners seldom stopped to assess their overall trading position and an analysis of the papers involved working through their correspondence on the quantity of goods forwarded and bought through a whole year. This exercise did, however, provide the basis for some assessment of the volume and nature of trade in Pondoland, although O'Donnell was never the only wholesaler operating even in the Eastern part of the country and his business cannot be taken as representing the total extent of trade.

The diaries are in general disappointing. But they contain one item of great importance - a daily record of the number of cattle on hand. For much of the period 1886-1895 there are also detailed records of the source of cattle bought and number exported. As O'Donnell worked largely in the wholesale trade, he bought most of his cattle from other traders rather than direct from the African population. When stock was bought direct from the surrounding population, the sellers were usually called only 'natives', although a few chiefs, such as Mhlangaso and Nonkonyana of the Bala, are mentioned by name. Some of the daily balance books, which record over the counter trade, provide more detailed information on, for example, daily grain purchases through the months after harvest. No very clear picture of the relationship between traders and rural producers emerges from the papers but they provide a full record of the business operations of the leading wholesaler in Eastern Pondoland, and his connections with trading firms in the colonial ports and traders in the interior of Pondoland.

The O'Donnell papers in the Cape Archives ^{contain} provide little information on the political involvement of the traders, nor do they deal at all with the

firearms trade. Such information had to be extracted from colonial documents and newspapers. However, other papers from the Emagusheni Trading station provide deeper insight into the political network which grew around the Bouveries, MacNicholas and O'Donnell. When Gallagher's son left Emagusheni in 1970, he discovered a sack full of papers in the cellar of the store which he took with him to Durban. These include some of the private correspondence between the traders and the Mpondo secretary, and such items as cuttings from newspapers dealing with O'Donnell's trial, records of his visits to Natal, and occasional copies of a news-sheet produced in the 1880s for circulation within Pondoland itself. Most of the letters are in very bad condition and the whole collection is unsorted but it served as a valuable addition to the rather dry collection of business correspondence in the archives.

Various other traders, such as Sydney Turner, left papers. Unfortunately his letters mostly cover the period of his stay in Natal and Port Shepstone, before he had the capital to develop his interests in Pondoland. In the last few years, many of the trading families who have had stations in the Transkeian Territories over three or more generations have now departed. It has been the policy of the Transkei government to buy out European and Coloured traders in order to provide scope for African commerce in the homelands. James MacGowan, for example, mentioned in an interview that there had, until recently, been records from the store at Mzinthlavana, Lusikisiki. These went back to the time of R. MacGowan, one of the first settled traders in Eastern Pondoland, who had been granted his site by Faku in the 1860s. When the family vacated the store, the old books were all destroyed. Where records do survive, their potential commercial value is sometimes recognised by their keepers and access is not always easy. A more global view of merchant involvement in the Transkeian Territories could no doubt be gained from newspapers in the major colonial ports and the private papers of the large coastal merchant houses, but these were not investigated.

The sources available on the post-annexation period are less varied. Newspapers, both African and European, were marginally interested in Pondoland. Missionary documentation is sparse and, as missionaries had lost their political role, is more concerned with the missions than the wider society. Although twentieth century trading papers undoubtedly exist, they could not be located and sorted in time for a thorough perusal. However, the lack of variety in source material is compensated, to a considerable degree, by the wealth of official documentation which has hardly been exploited for the Transkeian Territories as a whole, let alone Pondoland. It is on the collections of various officials concerned with administering the Territories that the bulk of chapters 3, 4 and 5 are based. Although the archives contain many letters from non-official sources and from Europeans with interests in the area, the view which comes through these collections, and has necessarily shaped these chapters, is that of the society seen through the official eye.

After a few years in which Pondoland Affairs were the special concern of the Prime Minister's department, magisterial rule was imposed. The bulk of documentation on Pondoland before Union is to be found in the two separate series of the Native Affairs Department and Chief Magistrates. Much of the day to day administrative work in the magistrate's offices dealing, for example, with sorting out administrative boundaries, hut-tax registrations, small pox vaccination and court procedure is recorded only in the Chief Magistrate's papers. But all important issues were brought to the attention of the Department in Cape Town. As Pondoland had only recently come under the control of the Cape, the Secretary of Native Affairs kept a closer watch on the area than on other parts of the Territories. It was therefore decided to concentrate on the Native Affairs rather than the Chief Magistrate's papers for the years before Union. Only a small number of CMT files, dealing with matters not brought to the SNA's attention, were looked at in detail.

The over-riding concern of the administration in the years after

annexation was to mobilise a labour force from Pondoland and regulate recruiting. The effort left behind it many boxes of correspondence dealing with labour agents, advance contracts and complaints by workers, which have formed the basis for the analysis of early migrancy. (Chapter 3) The weight of documentation covers questions that were of interest to officials, especially irregularities in recruiting, rather than those of interest to the historian. There is little information, for example, on the experience of migrants, their position in Mpondo society and the specific nature of the work they performed outside Pondoland. However, some of these issues could be approached at a tangent, and material in the Chamber of Mines files and in the Native Affairs papers of the Transvaal (1902-1910) filled a few gaps in the Cape archives.

As the state did not intervene radically in rural production or rural social life during the fifteen or so years after annexation, there is remarkably little archival documentation on production, land questions, family structure and social change for this period. Only efforts to control the chiefs, levy the hut tax, and deal with the rural crisis sparked by the arrival of Rinderpest produced much magisterial correspondence. It is from the detailed published annual reports of the magistrate's which were not preserved in the archives, rather than from the archives themselves, that most of the information about production and exchange had to be drawn. These reports gave a general assessment of conditions in each district and they contain little detail about differentiation in African society or the identity of those Africans actually producing for the market. The analysis of production from 1895-1910 had therefore to be generalised. Only the oral material could provide a little information on differential responses to the market.

After Union, the Department of Native Affairs was moved from Cape Town to Pretoria. The SNA papers for the Union as a whole are disappointing except on such episodes as the drought of 1912. For the period 1910 to 1930, therefore, most attention was devoted to the CMT's collection which

continued to be housed in the Cape archives. As a comparison between the transfer lists drawn up in Umtata and the inventory in Cape Town confirmed, a good deal of this series has been destroyed. However, there are still over 300 boxes of correspondence dealing with all aspects of administration. In fact, the archives dealing with rural production after Union are more detailed than the earlier Cape archives, for the state began to intervene more radically in rural life. Each of the topics discussed in Chapter 4, the drought of 1912, East Coast Fever regulations and dipping, cash cropping and rural industrialisation, is fairly well covered. However, no annual magisterial reports are available after 1911. Publications of such reports ceased and they could not be located in any of the open archival series. (It is possible that a section of the Native Affairs papers after Union remains undiscovered in the depths of the Union Buildings, Pretoria.) The result has been that while there is greater documentation on rural crises after 1910, there is less material on which to base a year by year assessment of rural economic conditions. The gap can partly be filled by material resulting from the beginnings of more systematic collection of rural production statistics. This effort has not only left figures, but illuminating discussion of how best to estimate Transkeian production. In the analysis of changes in the organisation of rural production and family structure, however, oral and anthropological material were the only useful sources (chapter 4, section 4).

Material on labour migrancy after Union is, by contrast, less rich. As mentioned in Table 5, it is impossible even to quantify the number of migrants leaving Pondoland every year. The SNA papers in Pretoria hardly touch on migrancy, for labour matters were given over to a subdepartment under a Director of Native Labour. The Director's papers were still being sorted when archival research was done in 1976 and access to them was denied. (They are now open.) The CMT papers contain some material on labour, especially on recruiting irregularities and the enforcement of government proclamations up to the early 1920s, but this official no longer played so

important a role in organising and regulating migrancy. Even if all the state papers were available, however, they are unlikely to contain the detail of earlier collections. For by the second decade of the century migrancy was institutionalised. The basic laws governing recruiting had been passed and the Native Recruiting Corporation gradually took control of recruiting for the gold mines. It operated a system which was approved by the state and officials seldom intervened in the day to day running of the Corporation. Access was granted to the NRC back files - the Mine Labour Organisation is apparently not welcoming researchers at the moment - but these stretched back only to the 1930s. Aside from statistical records in the Umtata office dealing with the 1920s, the earlier material seems to have been destroyed. A closer look at the archives of some sugar companies would certainly have provided more material on Mpondo workers on the estates, but there was no opportunity to follow up this lead. Some of the smaller independent recruiting firms may also have left papers; these could not be located in the time available.

The other issue which is covered in most detail by the state archives, especially those of CMT, is the position of chiefs and headmen. As the Mpondo paramount was probably the **most** powerful chief in the Territories after annexation, and as the paramountcy was increasingly incorporated into the administrative system, there is considerably more archival material on the Mpondo chiefs than on others in the Territories. Of particular value were the sometimes verbatim minutes of long meetings between the paramounts and Chief Magistrate which were held regularly from the time of the introduction of dipping till the 1920s. (See chapter 5, sections 1 and 2) These records, which arose directly out of the special relationship between officials and the Mpondo chiefs, provide an unrivalled opportunity to hear spokesmen for the chiefs presenting their complaints and concerns in their own words (translated into English for the benefit of unilingual officials). Almost as rewarding are the documents which arose out of disputes over

headmanships. (See chapter 5, section 2.) Not only did the magistrates delve into genealogies and pre-colonial political relationships, but they allowed the various contenders involved, whether representatives of the paramount or the subchiefs, to put their cases direct. Verbatim minutes of the General Council debates, available for Western Pondoland from 1911 and Eastern Pondoland from 1927, are also available. Again, these reflect the concerns of the chiefs and their nominees rather than the mass of the people in Pondoland, but the debates deal with a number of questions, such as employment, pass laws, sugar recruiting, families and land, which do not receive much coverage in official correspondence. Private papers of officials, such as those of McLoughlin and Hammond-Tooke, have provided some material not available in the archives.

The final part of chapter 5 deals with land distribution. For reasons that are not entirely clear this question received less coverage in the archives than its importance would seem to merit. As remarked in the text, land distribution was largely left in the hands of the chiefs and headmen in communal tenure areas. While there is very extensive documentation in the archives on Glen Grey and the Fingoland Districts in which individual tenure, regulated by the state, was introduced, there is very little on the communal tenure districts. Further, while land distribution became a major issue in some of the overcrowded communal tenure districts of the southern Transkei and East Griqualand, the magistrates were seldom called on to intervene in land matters in Pondoland in the early decades of the century. Most disputes appear to have been settled locally and are thus not recorded in the archives. Only when major proclamations were introduced, or when issues such as grants of title to traders surfaced, did land matters come to the centre of the stage in the archives, and discussion was often generalised for the Territories as a whole. No records could be found of the district land registers which were kept by each magistrate. These may still be in local offices, but they have probably been updated and may not

be of much use to historians.

It was not only information on land disputes, but on all the less visible aspects of rural life, such as changing family structure, new settlement patterns, the organisation of production, control over labour and produce in the homesteads and changing 'customs' that was lacking throughout the archives. These issues may be more fruitfully addressed by the use of court material. Extensive records of the civil cases dealt with by the magistrates in each district survive. After skimming some of these, it was decided that only by systematic investigation of cases over a long period would useful material be provided, and time was not available for such an exercise. The cases heard in the magistrate's courts were brought by a limited group of people in Pondoland and their identity, their position in society and the type of cases which they felt it necessary to bring before officials would have to be analysed. Only a few criminal case records have been preserved. The archives apparently destroy the bulk of criminal cases heard in the magistrate's courts as the judgements given are not considered to set precedents. This is an unfortunately narrow view of the historical value of court material recorded in what might seem relatively minor criminal cases. A few surviving case records (1/LSK series) some dealing with illegal advances in the 1920s and one with an alleged molestation of a four year old European girl by an African servant which reveals some of the social tensions in a small magisterial town, suggest that these cases could have been a rewarding hunting ground for social historians. Much evidence on 'faction fights', the most common and least understood form of rural violence, on the changing nature of stock theft, on dagga growing and marketing, has probably been destroyed forever. It can only be hoped that the archives will change their policy before further damage is done.

It was hoped that material from the chiefs' courts, or at the least correspondence of the Great Place, would be available to supplement the

state archives. The Mpondo paramounts have, after all, employed literate secretaries since the 1870s and they used missionary scribes well before this time. Hargreaves mentioned in a letter in 1883 that the 'Mpondo archives' had been placed in his hands but no papers of this description could be located in missionary collections.¹ Gordon Dana, secretary to the Eastern Mpondo paramountcy in the 1920s, remembered that he had seen a trunk full of old papers, dating back to the time of Sigcau, at the Great Place. They no longer seem to be there, but they may still exist. When Nelson Sigcau's followers raided the Great Place after Mandlonke's death in 1937 (see chapter 6, section 3) they apparently took some of the royal guns, the insignia of chieftaincy and, it seems, the papers. After losing the Supreme Court case over succession in 1942, Nelson was no longer legally entitled to keep the property of the Great Place. He gave no indication as to the whereabouts of the papers when the subject was broached. They may, of course, have been destroyed. No other significant collections of documents were discovered in African hands during fieldwork. The Western Mpondo paramountcy, whose history after Poto's accession was attended by less conflict, may have private papers.

In 1976, the government archives were open only up till 1925. In May 1977, however, shortly before research was completed, a further five years were opened. In general, the documentation in the CMT archives for the period after about 1922, when the filing system was changed, was far less dense than in earlier years. It seems that more material has been destroyed, a fact that bodes ill for those trying to come to terms with developments in the Territories in the inter-war years. This period is, however, the time when the mines, the state, and academics, became more concerned about the social and economic position in the Territories. Their interest, brought on both by the threat of the declining rural economy to the future of the migrant labour system, and by a wider acceptance of, and desire to understand

1. Cragg, 'Amampondo', 403.

African societies in a segregationist era produced a number of valuable surveys, in addition to such books as Hunter's ethnography. The Native Economic Commission set the ball rolling in 1930-32 when it investigated economic conditions throughout the country in great detail. The report, though valuable, is general. Minutes of evidence were not published and fall within the closed archival period. Although some sections of the evidence are available in private papers in Johannesburg and Cape Town, no records of the Transkeian evidence could be found. Howard Pim, who was associated with the mining industry and liberal intellectuals in South Africa, recorded the impact of the Great Depression in the Territories. (This period was not dealt with in the thesis.) In 1937, two doctors, Fox and Back, were employed by the Chamber of Mines to investigate the effects of economic and social conditions on the health of migrants. They produced what must rank as the most valuable report on the Territories in the 1930s. They were highly concerned about what they identified as increasing differentiation in the Territories, feeling that this led to greater impoverishment for the bulk of the people. In particular, they felt that the TTGC agricultural policy of encouraging sheep-keeping accentuated the division between rich and poor. They advocated instead an increase in cattle numbers and a more equal distribution of stock so that poorer families would have the resources to continue production on their fields. Their views coincided nicely with the interests of the mining industry. They also presented a comprehensive scheme for the rehabilitation of the Territories which closely resembled that developed by the state in the next couple of decades. (Their ideas were probably influenced by local officials who had already begun to devise a development plan for reserves.) Jokl (1943) conducted a survey of the man-power potential of the Territories during the 1930s and early 1940s and also presented a scheme for development and rehabilitation. These sources, coupled with the archival material on demonstration schemes, with unpublished government reports such as

the 1951 committee on stock-culling (found in private papers), and the material being produced by the Transkeian Department of Agriculture, provide a substantial source on rural conditions and the development of rural planning from the early 1930s.

2: Oral Material

Two periods of research were devoted to intensive interviewing. In the first spell (May and June, 1976), with which the search for documentary material in the Eastern Cape, Transkei and Natal was combined, the subjects were largely European traders and officials. A further spell of three months (January to March, 1977) was spent in Lusikisiki, the largest district in Eastern Pondoland and seat of the Mpondo paramountcy. Some interviews were held in Flagstaff (now Sipaqeni) and Port St Johns (now Mzimvubu), but much of Pondoland was not covered. The tapes with about thirty interviews recorded in the first spell were stolen and could not be recovered. Only the few which could be redone, or which had been noted separately, could be used in writing the thesis. Most of the interviews conducted in the second spell were recorded. The informants now on tape can be categorised roughly as follows: European and Coloured traders and officials (17); chiefs and headmen (8); educated, usually Christian, men who have been employed in Pondoland (20); long term migrants now retired in Pondoland (15).

Many of the traders and officials who worked in Pondoland in the first half of the century have now left the area. (This applies less to the Coloured trading families.) Although there are concentrations of such people in some Eastern Cape and Natal towns, it was necessary to travel widely for the first series of interviews. It was hoped that interviews with traders who had kept stations in different parts of Pondoland would

reveal the nature of relationships between them and the African population. Some traders - their experience went back to the second decade of the century - could indeed remember the quantities of produce they had bought and type of goods they had sold through the years. As traders often had a virtual monopoly of the business around their stations, regional variations in patterns of production and consumption could be discovered with some success. A detailed treatment of consumption has, however, been omitted from the text as too many of the relevant tapes were lost. Of all outsiders, the traders, especially the Coloured descendants of the early European traders (see chapter 2, section 3), probably had the closest appreciation of the society in which they lived. Some of the informants, particularly James MacGowan, could recount stories of chiefs and traders before the turn of the century which, when placed against the documentation, do not seem apocryphal.

Interviews with magistrates and agricultural officials were designed to tap reminiscences of Pondoland districts and to find out how the policies pursued by the state were implemented in practice. As a magistrate who served in a district which supplied labour to the sugar fields suggested, regulations were not always narrowly interpreted. (See chapter 6, section 2) These interviews also gave some sense of the milieu of the magisterial towns, the informal relationships between officials, local Europeans, and the African population. Sessions with agricultural officials proved valuable. It was essentially they who shaped the demonstration schemes and also the programme of rural rehabilitation which has deeply affected rural society in the last forty years. Though their understanding was clouded by colonial attitudes, and by a failure to appreciate the structural position of rural producers, they were among the few that could comment on Transkeian agriculture from the point of view of specialists. The retired officials of today are the intellectual heirs, and sometimes the sons, of the men who wrote much of the archives. An understanding of the Transkeian brand of

colonial sub-culture can only help in making sense of the documents.

Preparations for a longer period of fieldwork were made during the first spell of interviewing when some trial sessions were held in Pondoland itself. Interviewing in Lusikisiki began soon after Transkei was granted its independence by Pretoria and at a time when the mood in South Africa was far from relaxed. Government officials, particularly the magistrate of Lusikisiki, were nevertheless co-operative and little difficulty was experienced in obtaining permission for research. A highly competent and knowledgeable guide and interpreter, Mr. F. Deyi, was suggested by the magistrate. Although Mr. Deyi was a retired policeman, later a government information officer, and closely identified with the authorities, I accepted his services with alacrity. I have no doubt that his associations affected both the nature of informants interviewed and the kind of information that was offered. However, it seemed romantic to try and work on any other basis. Few people actually refused to be interviewed and Mr. Deyi opened many doors that may otherwise have been closed for people knew from his presence that there would be no danger, as far as the authorities were concerned, in talking to me. Aside from these indirect controls on my activities, remarkably few barriers were encountered. The paramount, after granting an audience and a letter of introduction, took no further interest in the research.

The aim of fieldwork was to interview a wide cross-section of the community in Pondoland in order to obtain some material on differing life experiences. Some informants who were known to be authorities on history, or who had held important positions, were sought out, but any man who was old enough to have some memory of the early decades of the century was potentially interesting. No attempt was made to take a 'sample' of people in any area; contacts were built up through those who had been interviewed, from Mr. Deyi and from the people who lived around Palmerton, the base for fieldwork. Because most of my early contacts were with educated, Christian,

locally employed men, a disproportionate amount of time was spent in interviews with members of this group. It was hoped that a period of work could be devoted entirely to the interviewing of migrants and their womenfolk in a few locations, but the time was not available. A number of the educated informants spoke English and some interviews could therefore be held without the aid of an interpreter. Most informants, however, felt more at home in Xhosa. Although I made an effort to learn Xhosa in language laboratories and conversation classes before moving to Pondoland, and although my familiarity with the language increased during the three-month stay, I was never sufficiently competent to converse in the vernacular. In general, questions were asked in English, translated by Mr. Deyi and the replies immediately translated into English. I was sometimes able to follow the conversation before receiving the translation. Even if I had been more fluent, it would have been necessary to have a guide, for many homesteads visited were well away from the major roads.

Although it was not the intention to collect 'oral tradition', interviews often began with questions about genealogy, migration histories and stories of chiefs. As these issues were central to many of the informants' concept of history, they served as a useful starting point. The answers to such questions often provided valuable material about an informant's background. Both Mr. Deyi and myself would usually explain in some detail what kind of topics we hoped to discuss before the interview started. Nevertheless, the approach adopted in the interviews, especially after basic information about clan history and genealogy had been obtained, necessitated a good deal of direct questioning, except when an unusually locquacious informant was found. As a result, the material collected sometimes illustrates the connections being made in the interviewer's rather than the interviewee's mind. A less interventionist method of interviewing may have produced rather different information. In most interviews, an attempt was made to build up a life history of the informant and place it

in chronological context. Those men who had received formal school education could, of course, date significant events in their lives. Those without tended to locate their experiences around significant external events such as natural disasters or deaths of chiefs. It was usually possible to construct a chronology on the basis of such references. However, the very fact that informants tended to cluster their experiences around such external events suggest that a great deal of caution is necessary in attaching dates to their experiences.

Once a basic life history had been assembled, the questions asked depended to a great degree on the experience of the interviewee. When informants clearly knew a great deal about the distant past (for example, Laqwela, Mathandabuzo, Vulizibhaya, Xinwa) much of the interview was taken up with discussion of a time prior to their own lives. In general, however, questions tended to concentrate on revealing the quality of life in the informant's youth. Discussion would revolve around life 'in my father's time'. (The latter concept was by no means always clear.) Questions were directed particularly to relationships within the homestead, the organisation of production, the nature of crops grown and stock kept, and the quantity bought and sold. The information obtained on such issues was sufficient to build up a model of changes in family structure and cropping patterns during the early decades of the century, although more systematic interviewing of traditionalist families would be necessary before the very general processes suggested in chapter 4, section 4, could be elaborated.

Some of the interviews with members of the educated Christian community have been used in chapter 6. Through their family histories, a picture of a separate social group, differentiated from the bulk of the Mpondo population, began to emerge. It was they as much as the European magistrates, traders and missionaries who ran the institutions and spread the ideas of the dominant colonial culture in South Africa. (They had, of course, their own version of that culture.) The interviews with these informants revealed

the link between the progressive immigrant rural producers of the turn of the century, and the locally employed salaried Christians of the 1920s and 1930s. Their comments on the traditionalist population were sometimes clouded by assumptions similar to those of the European traders and officials. Yet they were clearly more immediately involved in the society around them than the European population. Interviews with retired agricultural demonstrators (Mpateni, Nkonya, Magazi, Sigwili) were particularly rewarding, for they had worked in a wide variety of locations in Pondoland and had a far clearer perception of the problems encountered by the rural population than the European officials. Gordon Dana, formerly secretary to Marelane and Mswakeli, has an almost unrivalled knowledge of chiefly politics. However, if caution is the mark of a good politician, he has not, even at ninety years of age, lost his skill. The interviews with him were important but disappointing in that he was clearly prepared to say very little. Some of the Mpondo informants, who had received education and become Christians although not from Christian backgrounds, were the most knowledgeable about, and interested in, traditional history. Poto's vernacular history is widely read but Laqwela and Xinwa, for example, could add many more details on the history of their own clans and areas.

Interviews with men who had migrated to work outside Pondoland did not greatly help to clarify the reasons for migrancy. As migrancy has become institutionalised, the informants did not usually feel the need to delve deeply into the pressures that had pushed them onto the labour market. What may appear as a dramatic change to the historian, is, at least at present, an accepted way of life to most rural dwellers. While some informants specifically associated their early trips with shortages of grain, cash or cattle, some did not relate their experience to an ability to survive on the land. (Indeed, not all the homesteads from which migrants came were chronically short of grain and stock.) But the interviews provided glimpses of differential rates of migrancy within the family, of differing

patterns of migration, and of the interconnections between wages and rural production. It is misleading to generalise from the experiences of a limited number of men who have long been settled back into rural life, but the impression gained from these interviews was that wages were invested into stock wherever possible and that rural connections were of great importance to the migrants.

In general it proved difficult to obtain material about the political history of the twentieth century. In view of the type of interviewing done - most informants were visited only once or twice for a day or less - and the circumstances in which the interviews took place, this was not surprising. When informants knew Mr. Deyi and shared his outlook, they could be forthcoming on such issues as resistance to the early improvement schemes, the rural ICU, rehabilitation, the Pondoland revolt, and even the relationship between chiefs, headmen and people. But, in general, informants were very reluctant to dwell on the latter topic. While some suggestions about the political attitudes of the informant came through in every interview, it is dangerous to project these back to earlier decades.

Although oral material was obtained on many issues dealt with in the text, the interviews have not been incorporated into the analysis except where documentary evidence was sorely lacking. (Chapter 4, section 4 and chapter 6.) It proved difficult to integrate oral evidence into chapters which were essentially based on documentary sources. At the same time, the quantity and quality of oral material was insufficient to merit more extensive treatment of the issues which it best served to illustrate. The period of fieldwork, however, had an indirect influence on the way in which documentary sources were interpreted. By living in Pondoland a great deal was learnt about the geography, ecology, settlement patterns and transport routes of the area which would not have been easily deduced from documents. The interviews, and not least informal discussions that took place before the tape recorder was switched on, gave glimpses of the nature of social

networks in Pondoland. Impressions of the character of magisterial rule, of the relationships between traders and people, of the composition of the Christian community, and of social organisations among the mass of the people rest to a considerable degree on this kind of information. The interpretation of the relationship between migrancy and rural production, while it has been extensively documented in the text, grew essentially out of the experience of fieldwork.

The interviews still left many issues untouched. It was hoped that a considerable amount of information could be obtained about relationships between homesteads and patterns of exchange which were not mediated through the trading stores. Changes in cattle loaning practices, in communal labour organisation and in the nature of reciprocity between homesteads undoubtedly took place. However, informants tended to describe these practices in customary terms and it proved difficult to identify or periodise major transitions. It did become clear, however, that the wealthier producers of the 1920s and 1930s avoided the trading stores and that exchange through the medium of traders was only one aspect of the penetration of market relationships. It was also difficult to assess whether or not some families were becoming employers of labour for the ideology of mutual help remains strong. The position of women in the society has been greatly neglected, as almost all the interviews were with men. I would invariably be introduced to the male head of the homestead and found that most women kept politely in the background even if an attempt was made to incorporate them into the interview. With different techniques of fieldwork, however, it should not be impossible to establish independent contacts with women. Changing patterns of marriage and bridewealth have been neglected in the thesis, although they are undoubtedly critical in understanding social transformations in the society. A good deal more oral evidence could have been collected on such issues; however, I only became more sensitive to their importance towards the end of the period of fieldwork. Lastly, the thesis

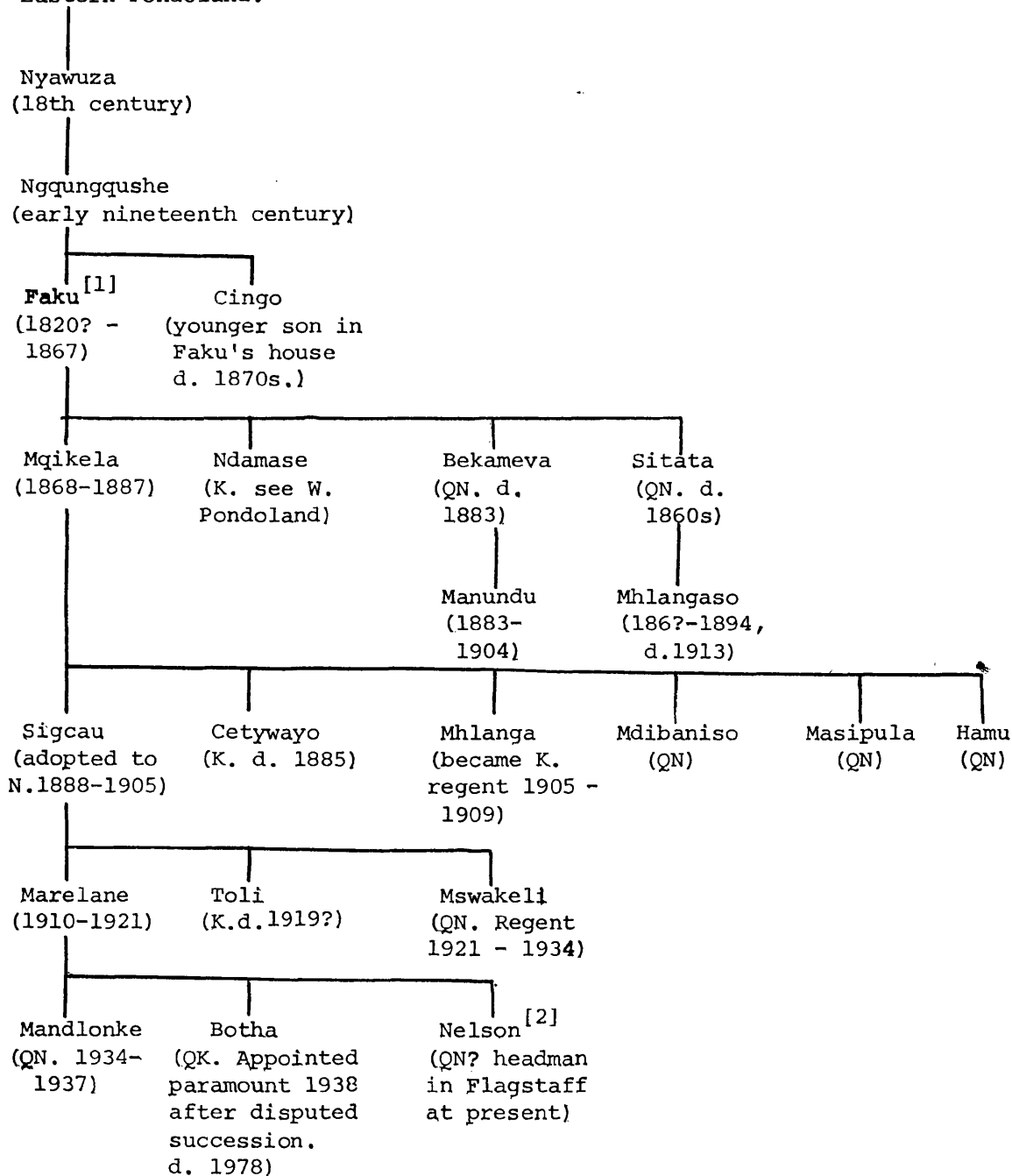
has not attempted to deal in any detail with the ideology of the mass of the rural community. Such questions cannot easily be approached directly and it is even more risky to deduce changes in the early twentieth century from statements collected in the 1970s, except where they related to the ideology of specific rural movements such as the ICU. There are possibly, however, means to overcome the problems of identifying ideological change. Court cases may provide clues to the nature of witchcraft and a deeper study of rural political movements, and new forms of social organisation could reveal, at least in specific circumstances, the responses of the mass of the people to the transformations which they were experiencing.

Appendix 2

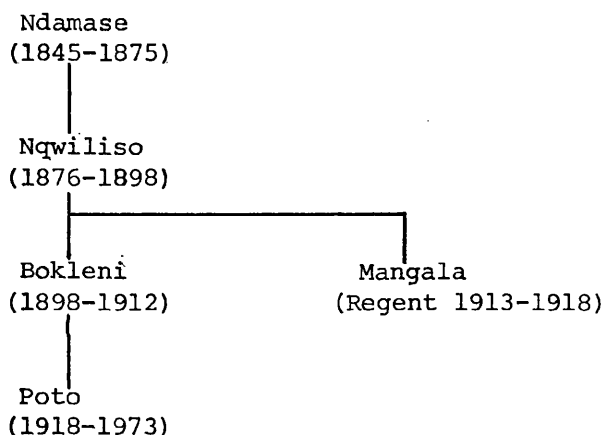
Genealogical Connections of Chiefs of the Mpondo Royal Lineage mentioned in text

Paramount chiefs in left hand column. N = Great House; K = Kunene House (usually first wife married, sometimes called Right Hand House in Xhosa chiefdoms); Q = Support House. Rankings taken from Poto, Ama-Mpondo, 136-142 unless noted otherwise.

(i) Eastern Pondoland.



(ii) Nyandeni (Western Pondoland)



1. In Poto's book, Faku is given as the son of the Great House. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, mentions a tradition which suggests that Faku was not son of the Great House.
2. The status of Nelson's house was disputed. His supporters claimed he was son of a gadi to the Great House.
3. In Western Pondoland, the Great House was that of the first wife married as in all homesteads aside from the paramount's. The fact that this rule of succession was maintained indicates that the Qaukeni (Eastern Pondoland) lineage was recognised as senior.

Sources: Poto, Ama-Mpondo; Hunter, Reaction to Conquest; District Record Books. Dates taken from a wide range of sources.

Appendix 3.Extracts from Oral Material

These extracts are not intended to support in detail any particular argument made in the text. Nor are they necessarily representative of the oral material as a whole. They are included merely to give some indication of the type of material that was collected. The material has been taken out of the sequence in which it was recorded and rearranged to make it more understandable. None of the extracts represents a full interview.

1. Mgeyana, Msikaba AA, Lusikisiki, 14.1.1977. Interview in Xhosa, Mr. Deyi's translation. Informant from Ncangwule clan of which there are branches in Port St Johns.

I do not know much about my grandfather because I never saw him. My father died after Mswakeli [1934], I think it was in the time of Mandlonke [1934-7]. I took a wife when my father was still alive; when Marelane died [1921] I was already working on the sugar plantations. I was an adult when we were told not to use red ochre after the death of Marelane. I lived with my father till he died; I was his heir. My mother was the second wife. The first wife gave birth to many children, but they all died. Eight children died during the influenza [1918]. One daughter from the first wife survived; myself and my sister survived in the second house.

[Mgeyana's father was not an heir, he had an elder brother.] My father's eldest brother, Mnyebe was told by their father, "I am leaving this child [informant's father] in your care. You must get him a wife". Eight head of cattle were paid as bridewealth for my father's first wife. These were the only cattle that he got from his elder brother. My father received three head from his mother's family. He paid these as bridewealth for the second wife. I was already born. [In other words the relationship with the second wife was only formalised by payment of bridewealth after the wife had borne

children.] A fourth beast was paid by me for my father when I came back from the sugar estates.

My father's eldest brother was a wealthy man at that time. None of the Ncwangule clan here were equal to him. He received many cattle from his father. He had sheep too. He never went to the mines. His sisters married and he received cattle as bridewealth for them. His father asked him to look after the homestead when he died. This was the custom, the eldest son took over the homestead. The eldest brother had a lot of cattle. He had a plough and two or three lands, but he could have had more if he had wished to. My father had no oxen and no plough. The three he received from his mother's family had been increase from one animal that he had loaned, but these were paid as bridewealth [for second wife]. We had to ask for assistance from the son of his elder brother. [It seems that Sinkwenkwe, the son of the eldest brother, took over the eldest brother's homestead although at what stage is unclear.] We used to grind maize and take it to his eldest brother to get milk. I heard that my father went to work in Natal, but he came back with no money. He did not loan from the headman. There were people who did so but my father told me I should not form such a relationship with headmen and chiefs because if anything of their's dies, you still have to pay for it. You will be held responsible. Many people did not have cattle because they had died from East Coast Fever. They were getting cattle by migrating to work. They were also buying cattle from Mr. Strachan and from other homesteads. I joined at Carter's place and received a heifer.

I was a herd before I went away to work. I was herding cattle belonging to my father's brother's sons. They did not pay me a tickey. In those days you used to get paid a goat for herding but there were no goats there so I got nothing. They had come to ask me to help them during the East Coast Fever. I do not know when I was born but I was about that age [pointing

to a boy of about ten] at the time of East Coast Fever. I cannot remember much about East Coast Fever, but I do remember that all the cattle were dying. Some cattle were eaten; some were left and they rotted when they died. They took the hides and sold them to the traders. The people used hoes after East Coast Fever. There were very few with oxen - they used only two oxen for ploughing.

I never put my foot in a school. I never saw a school here in Msikaba in those days. The church was not here. None of my sisters went to school. Many people were going to the mines at the time I went to Mobeni [the sugar estates]. They were going on cattle advances at that time. You used to get a beast from Mr. Strachan [Hancorn Strachan] and then go forward.

These are the cattle we got after East Coast Fever. I went to the sugar fields before getting married. I learnt from neighbours that there were cattle at Carter's place and that I could join and get a beast. When Marelane died, I was at the sugar estates for the second time; I was recruited by Mr. Carter and received money this time. I had to work six months for the beast, a young heifer, which I received on my first contract.

I went to the sugar fields because I wanted a beast. I went with kin and friends from here - we all went up together on foot and caught the train from Izingolweni [southern Natal]. We left early in the morning, slept at Amadiba location [Bizana] and reached Izingolweni the following day. I can't remember the name of the homestead we slept at. We were given 10/- by Mr. Carter. We had to pay 7/- for the train fare and we had our own provisions. The place we went to was known as Flidi, and the compound was called Emzumayi. It was a big compound; there were many Zulu as well. It was this side of Durban. We were hoeing sugar cane. An Indian foreman was in charge of us and he beat us. That was how it was. My intention was to get that beast; I was not concerned about what happened to me.

I went twice to the sugar fields on contract and three times on my own. If you contract and fall ill, you are not allowed to come home. I did not like that. When I went on my own I stayed eight or nine months. I used to go up in April after ploughing and hoeing and stayed eight months or so. I did not go every year. The pay was 1/- a day. The people who went to the gold mines used to get more, but I did not want to go there. I was involved in working the land with my father and could not leave him to do it alone. [Mgeyana implied that the contracts on the mines were too long and would interfere with cultivation.]

I think it was in Mswakeli's time that I went to the sugar fields. I only went away five times. I bought cattle with the money I earned. I used to pay £1/10/-, sometimes up to £2/10/- or £3. I bought nine and also received cattle from the bridewealth of my sisters. I bought clothes for my sisters, blankets for my father, saddles and bridles, and a plough. I was wearing blankets myself. I took a wife but was working on my father's fields at first.

My father's first wife had two fields and so did his second wife. He planted maize, sorghum, pumpkins and beans. He also grew and smoked tobacco. We were not short. My father did not like to sell maize; we used to keep maize in pits. They were in the cattle kraal; there were no tanks in those days. He had five pits and would fill all of them. They were not all the same size but he told me there was a pit which could hold twelve bags. One pit would last a whole year. We would enclose the pits with dung and grass which would become hard when the cattle trampled it. If no water came in, the maize would last three years. My father did not buy maize. When I came back from work, I asked if we had enough and had to buy two bags. That was the last time I bought. He did grow sorghum; half a field was planted. After he died I never grew it myself. I have not got anybody to guard against birds. My father did that job himself

and we did it when we were old enough. My father left me with his lands; I have three. [Each is in a different place.]

On returning from the sugar estates I was employed by Mr. Goss to keep his cattle by the sea [at Lambasi]. Msolongile [Merbe, the butcher at Lusikisiki] had a land grant down there. A civil case [for bankruptcy] was brought against him and it was attached by lawyers. I was told by Mr. Stanford [Claude Stanford, the lawyer at Lusikisiki by whom a number of local businessmen were financed] to look after the place and he paid me £1/15/- a month for a number of years. I took the sheep - I told you I had received ten sheep as bridewealth for my sister - to the sea. I loaned a cow and it increased - I got four oxen out of it. I sold milk down there and used the four oxen for ploughing. My father was still alive when I was living down there. I told him not to sell maize as I had to provide my own food when I was down at the sea. He agreed; I was paying his taxes for him. Money came from the jobs and the milk. I was putting £1/2/- in the Post Office whenever I got my pay.

There were cattle from all over Pondoland at the coast. I remember a European from Tabankulu used to bring down two hundred head of cattle and horses. The Mpondo also brought down cattle from as far as Tabankulu. They used to bring their own herds and put up a temporary shelter [pembe]. They brought them in the winter and when the grass began to grow again [inland] would drive them back. Mr. Goss bought fifty head of cattle. After only three months they were fat. They were taken away to Durban and new ones brought in. He used to give me £1 as a basela, saying that I was herding his cattle well. The grass was long at the coast. It was gunde and mtala grass, there was no Ngongoni - this is a recent thing. People used to burn grass in those days, leaving only portions for thatch. They burnt to destroy the ticks. They also burnt because the grass became too long and they wanted fresh grass for the cattle to graze on. They were

burning especially to provide grazing for sheep as sheep do not like to eat long grass.

I never had lands at Lambasi. I was getting grain from home. I used to inspan four oxen and fetch a bag of maize on a sledge. There were two of us down there - a son of my father's brother's son was with me. A bag lasted three months.

2. Vulizibhaya, Bomvini AA, Lusikisiki, 18.1.1977. Interview in Xhosa, translated by Mr. Deyi. This was the first of three interviews. It dealt largely with Vulizibhaya's personal history. The others were concerned with traditions and customs. This informant was probably the oldest man interviewed aside from Gordon Dana. His memory is often confused, he is pre-occupied with death (the subject was a recurring feature in the interviews) and tended to claim participation in events which he probably did not experience himself. Nevertheless, he clearly remembered episodes going back to the turn of the century and, as he served as an induna at the Great Place, was familiar with traditional history. Extracts deal only with informant's personal history.

My name is Vulizibhaya. Nata was my father. He was the son of Dhliwakho. Dhliwakho was the son of Mahlumba, the son of Chief Ngqungqushe, son of Nyawuza, son of Ndayeni, son of Tahle. Tahle comes from Citwayo. That is as far back as I know. All were buried from Pondoland.

I was born when Mqikela was paramount chief. It was before Rinderpest when Mqikela took over. I was a boy herding cattle at the time of Rinderpest. I remember when they were making the road from Umtata to Port St Johns and then to here [Lusikisiki]. The oxen which they used died from Rinderpest. The people lost many cattle. The cattle I was herding died. The people used their own medicines, I don't remember what. We did not know anything about inoculation.

In those days the people had small hoes. A person would kneel down with that hoe and plant mealies - it was heavy work. There was a lot of starvation when they had to use those small hoes for ploughing.

After Rinderpest, the Europeans brought huge cattle with big humps. We used those cattle for some time. These cattle ran with those that were left after Rinderpest and started breeding. Before Rinderpest there were just ordinary cattle, but when these came, they became big. These [big cattle] were not very good for working with but they had a little milk. When the sun was too hot, they became powerless. My father had a lot of cattle before Rinderpest; there were fifty cows being milked at my place. When I was herding these cattle I used to go to a cow and milk into my mouth; fill up my stomach. My father lived with his father and brothers; it was one big homestead. There were many people in that homestead. There used to be twenty to thirty huts in one homestead; today there are no homesteads.

The ploughs came with the Europeans. There was a European called Stoffels who went to Lutshaya. His son started the Lutshaya trading station. His name [the son] was Kwabana. He had very small eyes. He built this shop here at Sihlito and then he went to Lutshaya. He was the son of Stoffels. Stoffels [the son] was a man when he came here; his sons were younger than myself. They brought shirts for us and we used to buy blankets; we paid pennies for these things when they first came.

The people went to the mines after the Boer War. There was a big rain [blizzard] known as Holweni [1902]. That was when they started going to the gold mines. When this started, they worked six months for one beast. It didn't matter if you were getting £30 there - you only got one beast after working for six months. Young men went forward; they were walking from here to Pietermaritzburg, walking for four or five days. They carried ground roast maize. [Ntshongo - the food carried by fighting men]. If my wife gave me that food, I would feel satisfied for a whole month. The Europeans

came here as runners and they were begging the young men to go forward. There was enough food here, but they wanted to teach us the work.

I went to work in Johannesburg on nine occasions. Sometimes I went for two years, sometimes for eight months. I was earning £1/10/- for thirty days. I will not be able to tell you the year [when I first went] because we did not take any notice of it in those days. When East Coast Fever came [1912] I had four cattle, buying them from the money I earned on the mines. I used to go to the mines through the Europeans but not on cattle advances. I first received a cattle advance in 1918 during the influenza. There were many people going. Stoffels was recruiting here as was Willie Strachan. I bought cattle with my money from the mines. We were not washing our bodies then, we were not eating our money in that way and we were satisfied with the food we got in the compounds. We used to go forward in a group. When we were going forward in the train we were packed into the places where goats and sheep were kept. Now things have changed. The recruits go in compartments and they sleep all the way to Umtata. I bought a plough with my money from the mines. They were not so usual then, but in places to which Europeans had come there were ploughs. They cost £2/10/-. We didn't pay much in those days.

On Mqikela:

When Europeans thanked Mqikela after buying cattle, they took money, put it to their mouths, put sugar on a plate, took Mqikela's hand and kissed it. That is why they said in Mqikela's praises 'You kiss the money, you kiss the sugar, you kiss the biscuits'. Those were his praises. It became a custom that if a man gives [sells?] another a beast, you must kiss his hand. They still do it today. [The tradition confirmed by Mr. Deyi.]

3. James MacGowan, Mzinthlavana, Lusikisiki, 20.1.1977. Interview in English. MacGowan's grandfather, R. MacGowan, was one of the earliest traders in Eastern Pondoland.

My grandfather came in - well I wouldn't know. There is a diary with Frank MacGowan. [It has been destroyed.] He landed at Cape Town, went elephant hunting, hunting in the Knysna forest. From there he drifted right through to Natal. That's where he met my grandmother, Majuja, and married her. She was a Zulu princess; he had to pay ten head of cattle. Where he got the cattle I wouldn't know. Ten black heifers and a black bull. That's the dowry that was given. I can verify it from her brother - he died when I was quite big. Then he [R. MacGowan] drifted to Brooks Nek [now in Mount Ayliff]. It didn't suit him. He came here to Mzinthlava. Mdlovula was the subheadman. He took him to Qaukeni. The chief, Faku, gave him the same site, Mzinthlava. He put up his place, a shop. Well at that time there were no shops, it was just barter really. He brought up a family. Mrs. Ball was the eldest, [then] Mrs. Morrison, then it was my father, Uncle Tom, Mrs. Wardle.¹ The date of his death is in the bible. Anyway he died when he was over eighty. [He was still alive at annexation.]

[James MacGowan proceeded to relate the history of the family's business interests and then told stories about the old traders. The following story is about one Calvey, who used to buy cattle for O'Donnell in the 1880s before he set up his own station. All MacGowan's stories are tinged with romantic hyperbole. But if the details are not strictly accurate, the documentary evidence suggests that his stories are not beyond the bounds of possibility.]

"Now old Calvey, he used to stay at Qaukeni. In the old days you could stay in the chief's kraal until you died, you were buried there and

1. All names mentioned are those of well-known trading families in Pondoland. The trading families, especially those of European traders who had married Africans, tended to intermarry among themselves.

nothing was said. He got Enkundzimbini site. It was given to him by Sigcau. Calvey had a horse [which] he lost from horse sickness. One day the chief gets there, he says "Liu, we haven't seen you for over six months". Calvey says "No chief, my horse died and I can't get away". Well, he was a big man you know. I knew Calvey when I was small, and he was as wide as he was tall. Calvey said "I can't get to Qaukeni, I'm so big". The Chief slept there, they killed him an ox. The next morning the chief left and on the third day [afterwards], Calvey gets up; there is a horse, saddle, bridle and sjambok alongside the shop. He knows the man that has brought this horse, so he greets him.

[The man says] "Molo Liu, the chief says I must bring you this horse - you must have no excuse for not coming to visit him".

So Liu says: "Kiss the chief's arm for me, I'll be there myself Saturday". Saturday he saddled up, six bottles of brandy - I think brandy was about five bob a bottle, it wasn't expensive, it was very cheap - in his saddle bags and he rides over. Well the procedure is still the same there at Qaukeni, you can't just march in there. No, you have to sit until you are called. Well, Calvey gets there [and] there are a whole lot of men sitting by the cattle kraal. He has off-saddled the horse, and is sitting alongside it, when the chief happens to walk out of one of the huts. "Molo" [Calvey] says, "Molo Liu" he says. So he worked, he gave the salute, he kissed the arm. The chief said, "Come inside. Is there anything you have brought for me"? Liu says: "I have brought six bottles". They sat down. Sigcau says: "Liu, I want you to count some money of mine. [When] I count it I get muddled up. Bring down a hide". You know the chief used to sit on a hide, ox hide. "Put it down here. Just open one or two bottles, we'll have a drink before you start your counting".

Well, you know how the chiefs pour out their drinks....even in these days.

Liu had a drink, he had another one. Sigcau gave him the keys.

He said: "Open that box. Bring the red bag into this corner and start counting".

There were a lot of other bags, I suppose they had silver and all that. [But] when he brought out the red bag, Calvey said he nearly fell on his back. There were no half sovereigns there, [it was] all sovereigns. They were stacked. He started counting out; he couldn't count fast sitting on the ground. It is not like counting at a table. He was making hundreds. When he had counted out 400, the chief says, "We'll have another drink". That was the end of the first bottle. Imagine what state they are in. He went on counting; another bottle was opened....800....

Calvey [eventually] says: "I've finished chief".

Sigcau: "How much is it?"

Calvey: "This is a hundred, hundred, hundred...." It was one thousand, one hundred and eighty five. Calvey says: "The little calves, I'll look after them for you chief". Liu swept the 185 into his pocket. The chief laughed. He says: "Liu, you are a very silly man....Put it back again". He put it back [but] he got away with 100. The chief just laughed. He said: "You are full of fun". He didn't care. I always used to say: "No wonder these chaps used to hang about [the Great Place]. They know what they got".

4. Alexander Soji, Hombe AA, Lusikisiki, 23.3.1977. Interview in English, not taped but noted in detail. The extract is drawn from answers to questions about the 'ICU' in Pondoland. Mr. Deyi intervened on occasion to add details.

The ICU came to Pondoland in about 1929 or 1930. [Soji was working as a forest guard in the coastal locations of Lusikisiki at the time.] It came from Cape Town. The Griquas in Cape Town formed a plan to found an Industrial and Commercial Union.¹ They said they must make a bag to collect money. They sent people to Pondoland to say that a big war was coming and the people must pay 3s.6d, and get a receipt. The Americans would come to destroy the whole area but if they could show this receipt they would not be touched. They said that there would be freedom and the people would not have to pay

taxes. The Pondos [sic] always join these lies. Some stopped paying taxes and they showed the ICU receipts to the Magistrate.

They said the Americans would come to Hlabati² on a certain day and everybody must be there with their receipts and they would not be touched. The people who collected money made a lot of money; the Griquas too. Local people were also taking money. It was a blue receipt. One local man was Mlotywa Nlololo at Mateko. He was a runner who issued receipts to other people. He was just illiterate; I knew him and his father. Nlololo was preaching things about the ICU. He was not a headman, he was uneducated, he was a non-believer - he had no church. But he believed what he was saying; he couldn't preach nicely if he does not believe. He may have gone to Johannesburg and got the ideas there, but he was just a raw Pondo. He became very influential and he was the man who really started it around here. He would hold meetings all over.

Headman Dindi [of Goso Forest location] had a lot of people there with him on the appointed day at Hlabati. He supported the idea and all his people went and later killed pigs. Some people came from Mantusini³ but I don't know if the headman was involved or any other headmen. They were told that they must kill their pigs for everything would get burnt by the Americans and the pig's fat would make all the huts burn down. There was pig meat everywhere. One man offered me a big pig for 15/-. I refused as I didn't eat pork. I told the people they were stupid. It was all the same with the Congo business, the Pondos always believe lies.⁴ Many were trying to sell their pigs instead of killing. They said the fat from the pigs would burn everything. Even the amafute [lard] was thrown into the forest. Nlololo was preaching all of this.

Hlabati was chosen because it was flat for the aeroplanes to land. The people said black Americans were coming - as black as they were - and they would support them because of this. They must just wave their blue tickets

to keep safe. I asked some of them how the Americans would see the small blue ticket from the aeroplanes, but they wouldn't listen to the truth. Many went to Hlabati on horseback. At about three in the afternoon the leaders said the Americans were not coming on that day and the people should go away and they would be called again. Meanwhile they must keep their blue tickets and kill their pigs.

It was the Griquas from Cape Town who started it. The Pondos always believe lies. It did spread but was mainly on the coast. It was in other parts of Lusikisiki and even perhaps Flagstaff. Some believed in it and some did not.. They kept away from the villages.

Deyi: The people were talking about it everywhere, but at Palmerton, nobody killed pigs.⁵ They did not join the Congo in 1960. If we have anything [i.e. trouble] then we just go to church and pray hard.

Soji: The ICU was not so bad. Nobody was killed like in the Congo. Only the pigs suffered.

[In reply to further questions, Soji insisted that he had never heard of Wellington Buthelezi or the Wellington movement. The ICU was not associated with any church and Nololo was not a member of any church.]

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1. No other source dealing with the ICU or the Wellington movement suggests that the 'Griquas' played a part. However, if Soji was in error, his confusion has some grounds. After the Griqua lost most of their land to European settlers in East Griqualand in the nineteenth century, the Le Fleur family, in particular, initiated a movement to regain their land. The ideology they articulated had millennial overtones, and they attempted to win African support for their cause. The two major upsurges of the Griqua 'Forty Years money' movement were in 1897 and 1917.
 2. All the place names mentioned are coastal locations in Lusikisiki. See map of locations in Lusikisiki.
 3. Mantusini is the place of the Ntusi clan, Mtambalala location, Lusikisiki.
 4. The 'Congo' was the Pondoland revolt of 1960.
 5. Palmerton location, or Zalu, surrounds Palmerton mission station.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- A. Government Archives and Private Papers
 - 1. Official papers (grouped by archival location and series)
 - 2. Non-official papers (grouped in alphabetical order of organisation and individual)

- B. Published and Secondary Material
 - 1. Published government papers (grouped by government and department)
 - 2. Newspapers and periodicals
 - 3. Books, pamphlets and articles published before ca. 1940
 - 4. Books and articles published since ca. 1940
 - 5. Unpublished theses and papers
 - 6. Unpublished reports

- C. Oral Material
 - 1. Interviews on tape
 - 2. Interviews and discussions not on tape.

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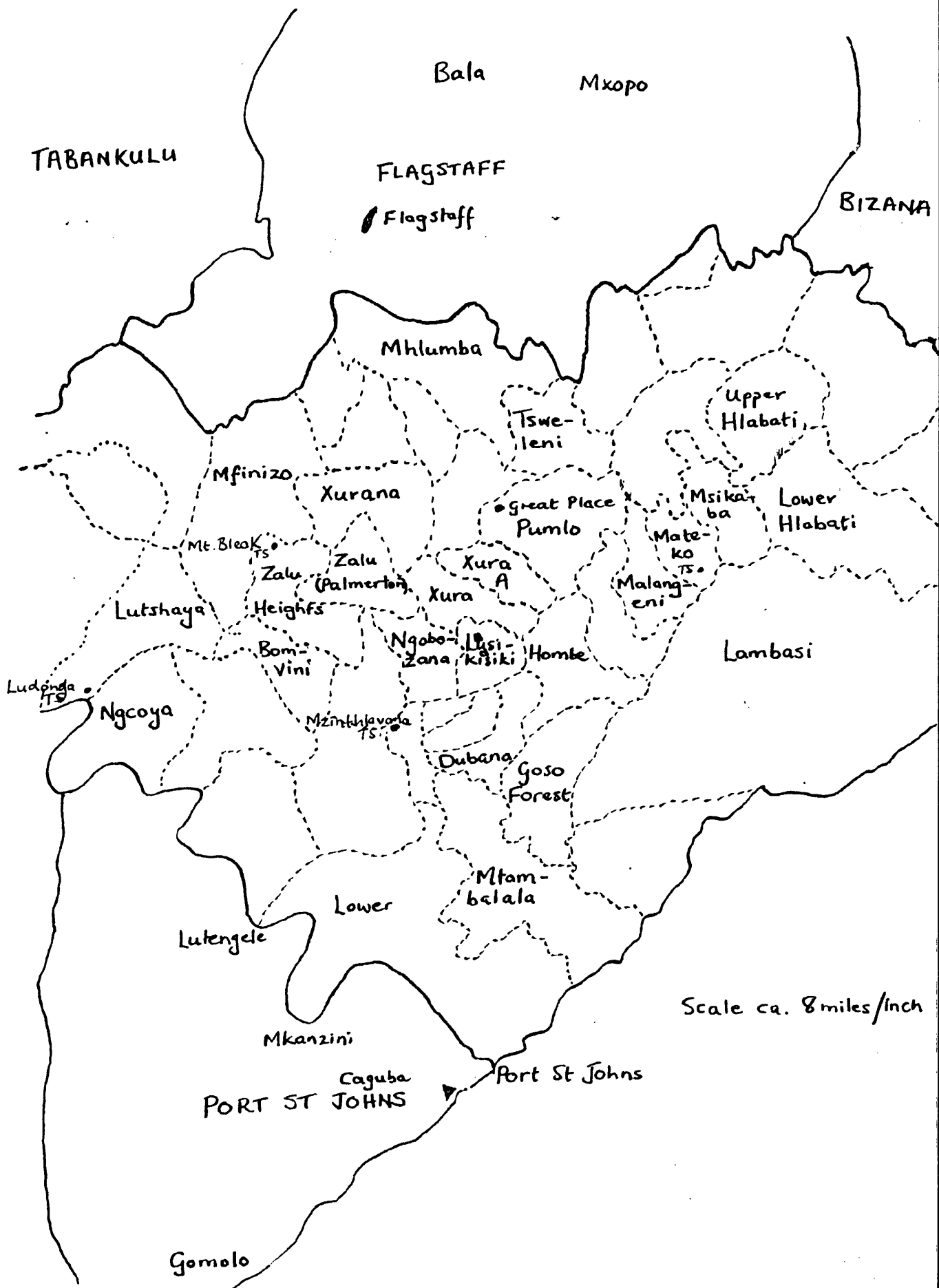
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MAP 5: LOCATIONS in LUSIKISIKI DISTRICT (1976) for IDENTIFICATION of PLACE of RESIDENCE of ORAL INFORMANTS



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C. ORAL MATERIAL (mentioned in text).

1. Interviews and discussions on tape

Frank and Stanley Allison, Ludonga Trading Store, Lusikisiki, 16.2.1977, English, two hours. Frank, a seller of medicine and potions, labour recruiter; Stanley, a trader. Father from England, a book-keeper, who joined the Cape Mounted Riflemen, took over the station at Ludonga in about 1906 and married an African woman. Informants born soon after father's arrival. Information about old traders, general comments on trade, recruiting, dagga (not on tape) and surrounding highly traditionalist population.

Daisy Ball, Lusikisiki, 12.2.1977, English, 90 minutes. Youngest daughter of Eli Tom Ball, an Englishman who came to Eastern Pondoland in the 1880s, married a daughter of R. MacGowan (see J. MacGowan), received a trading station and land grant from Sigcau and later ran a small sawmill. Family has been involved with the paramountcy since the 1880s. Information on agriculture, trading and family history.

Girlie Carter, Mateko Trading Store, Lusikisiki, 11.2.1977, English, 90 minutes. Father a trader and gun-maker who received a site from Sigcau and worked with the Dorkin family. Information on family history and trading.

Xatsha Cingo, Ngobozana Administrative Authority (AA), Lusikisiki, 8.2.1977, Xhosa, 90 minutes. Born about 1904. Migrant to the gold-mines. Information on family history, rural production and migrancy.

Gordon Dana, Tsweleni AA, Lusikisiki, 22.6.1976, 7.1.1977, 4.2.1977, 17.3.1977, English and Xhosa, four hours. Born 1886. Father a Christian peasant farmer in Qumbu. Gordon Dana educated in the U.S.A. and became secretary to the Eastern Mpondo paramount in 1921. Served on and off for over a decade. Deeply involved in the politics of the paramountcy even after his services were dispensed with. Became a representative for Eastern Pondoland in the United Transkeian Territories General Council. Information on personal history, the paramountcy, and chiefly politics.

Calvin Fono, Caguba AA, Port St Johns, 26.2.1977, Xhosa, 90 minutes.
Hereditary headman. Information on clan history and rural production.

I. Godlwana, Flagstaff, 21.1.1977, English, 150 minutes. Born turn of the century in a Mpondo family. Brought up on Emfundisweni mission station. Went into government service and eventually rose to position of Bantu Information Officer in the 1950s and 1960s. Key figure in the imposition of Bantu Authorities in the 1950s, deeply involved in chiefly politics, authority on chiefly history and advisor at the Great Place.

Ggambuleni, Gqude and others, Ngcoya AA, Lusikisiki, 25.3.1977, Xhosa, 150 minutes. Migrants. Information on production, history and migrancy.

Sydney Gregory, Mount Bleak Trading Station, Lusikisiki, 9.2.1977, English, 90 minutes. Trader. Family were traders in Port St Johns and Lusikisiki. Information on trading since the 1930s.

C.E. Hall-Green, Kenton on Sea, 10.12.1976, English, 180 minutes. Agricultural officer involved in supervising demonstration work in 1920s; lecturer at Flagstaff Agricultural school in 1930s. Became senior agricultural officer in the Territories. Information on demonstration work, agricultural schools and betterment schemes.

I.M. Heathcote, Port St Johns, 3.1.1977, 15.1.1977, English, 150 minutes. Transport rider, bus-driver, trader and recruiter for the sugar fields. Father a trader in Libode at the turn of the century; mother from MacAllister family who traded in Western Pondoland from the 1860s. Authority on Mpondo language, customs and history. Has been involved with the paramountcy, and claims to have taught Poto to drive. Information on family history, trading and Mpondo history and customs.

W. Hedding, Gonubie, 16.12.1976, English, 90 minutes. Former employee of the Native Recruiting Corporation who became head of Umtata district office. Keen compiler of statistics and was responsible for historical records on migrancy now in the Umtata Mine Labour Organisation Office. (vide) Information on recruiting.

Elliot Jamjam, Zalu AA, Lusikisiki, 6.1.1977, 17.1.1977, Xhosa, 180 minutes. Born about 1904. From Christian family. Brought up on Palmerton mission. Became migrant to the gold-mines and Kynoch explosives factory, Natal. Information on the mission, agriculture and migrant labour.

Kohlabantu ka Mduduma, Zalu Heights AA, Lusikisiki, 9.2.1977, Xhosa, 150 minutes. From Tunzi, Xesibe, clan but in Eastern Pondoland since at least mid-19th century. Born about 1902. Uneducated migrant to the gold-mines from about 1920-1942. Information on family history, rural production and migrancy.

Lanyazima, Lutengele AA, Port St Johns, 26.2.1977, Xhosa, 60 minutes. From chiefly family. Born before the turn of the century. Served in Native Labour Contingent in First World War and became headman. Information on family, clan and chiefly history and production.

Merriman Laqwela, Lusikisiki, 21.2.1977, 7.3.1977, Xhosa, four hours. Now dipping supervisor in Agriculture Department. From Ntusi clan, Mtambalala AA. Authority on clan and chiefly history and customs. Has read and been influenced by Poto's book but can add many more details.

? Magazi, Dubana AA, Lusikisiki, 18.1.1977, English, 90 minutes. Agricultural demonstrator from the 1930s. Christian immigrant. Information on agriculture and demonstration work.

Headmen Mathanda of Mateko AA and Thandekhaya of Zura AA, Lusikisiki, 22.2.1977, Xhosa, 90 minutes. Both from Kwetshube clan. Information on Kwetshube history and, from Mathanda, general reminiscences of his youth and his father's time in the early decades of the century.

Lionel Mathandabuzo, Mfinizo AA, Lusikisiki, 17.2.1977, 23.2.1977, 18.3.1977, Xhosa, three hours. From Mpondo family. Became a progressive farmer in the 1920s, a large producer of maize and a Methodist. Information on Mpondo history and customs, production and personal history.

James MacGowan, Mzinthlavana, Lusikisiki, 20.1.1977, English, three hours. Grandfather, R. MacGowan, was one of the first settled traders in Eastern Pondoland. He was granted a trading site on the main wagon route from Port St Johns to the interior of Pondoland by Faku in the 1860s, and married or lived with a 'Zulu princess'. His sons continued to trade and one of his daughters married Eli Tom Ball. James MacGowan was a trader himself until his retirement, the third generation of his family in Pondoland. Rich information on the traders and the paramountcy in the late nineteenth century and on trading and politics since.

Mgeyana, Msikaba AA, Lusikisiki, 14.1.1977, Xhosa, 150 minutes. From the Cele clan which immigrated into Eastern Pondoland in the mid-nineteenth century. His father was poor and informant had to migrate a number of times to the sugar fields in the 1920s. He then worked as a paid herd for a lawyer in Lusikisiki, spending his time on the coastal grazing grounds. He was eventually able to accumulate sufficient to become a considerable stock owner, and bought a rural trading station. Information on clan history, customs, migration to the sugar estates and rural production.

Nkwakwa ka Mgibe and Mbokoma ka Nompentshu, Mtambalala AA, Lusikisiki, 11.3.1977, Xhosa, 150 minutes. Both born in the first decade of the century. Both from immigrant clans but traditionalists who became migrant labourers. Information on production and labour migrancy.

E. Mhatu, Xurana AA, Lusikisiki, 21.1.1977, Xhosa, 90 minutes. Father a Christian immigrant from Gcalekaland and progressive agriculturalist in the early decades of the century. Informant was educated at Palmerton, apprenticed as a printer, and then had a varied career as a migrant to Durban, Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth, from ca. 1924-1942. Information on father, on production and migrant labour.

J. Mhatu, Malengeni AA, Lusikisiki, 13.1.1977, English, 90 minutes. Younger brother of Elijah Mhatu. Became a teacher in the early 1930s. Information on father, on production and education.

D. Moncur, Tabankulu, 8.3.1977, English, 90 minutes. Trader in Tabankulu since the 1930s. Information on trading, particularly on wool-buying and stock.

E. Mpateni, Flagstaff and Mhlumba AA, Lusikisiki, 12.1.1977 and 17.1.1977, English, 2 hours. Grandfather immigrated from Ciskei to East Griqualand, then Tabankulu and eventually Lusikisiki before East Coast Fever. Informant born 1910. Father a Christian who migrated to work in the 1920s and then became a large grain producer. Informant became an agricultural demonstrator in Libode in 1934 and then worked in Flagstaff and Tabankulu. Became supervisor in Dept. of Agriculture. Information on family history, demonstration work and agriculture from the 1930s.

James Mvunelo, Matambalala AA, Lusikisiki, 13.3.1977, English, 90 minutes. Immigrant who started teaching in location in the 1920s. Wagon owner. Information on family and personal history, the ICU, teaching and production.

Ben Siposo Ndabeni, Mkanzini AA, Port St Johns, 25.2.1977, Xhosa, 60 minutes. Born before turn of century in a chiefly family. Became clerk in the Native Affairs Department in Port St Johns. Clan and chiefly history and reminiscences.

Bartwell Nkonya, Zalu AA, Lusikisiki, 10.1.1977, English, 150 minutes. From Christian family in Tsomo district. First agricultural demonstrator in Eastern Pondoland (1923). Became a supervisor in the Department of Agriculture. Information on demonstration work and production.

Chief David Nonkonyana, Bala AA, Flagstaff, 6.3.1977, Xhosa, 90 minutes. Born of Great House of Bala chiefly lineage, one of the major sub-chieftaincies in Eastern Pondoland. Information on chiefly history, settlement and production.

J. Norton, Gonubie, 1.2.1977, English, 75 minutes. Son of a leading Transkeian official, T.W.C. Norton. Informant served as an agricultural official in Zululand and Transkei from the 1930s. Information on agricultural policy and production.

Moses Ntobe, Intsimbini AA, Port St Johns, 12.3.1977, English, 90 minutes. Immigrant teacher in location since 1930s. Information on education and production.

Chief Nelson Sigcau, Mxopo AA, Flagstaff, 4.3.1977, Xhosa, two hours. Son of Marelane. Unsuccessful claimant to the paramountcy after Mandlonke's death in 1937; his branch of the chieftaincy remains important in Mpondo politics although he has not been highly involved with the paramountcy since his failure to secure appointment in the 1930s. Information on Mpondo history, succession and chieftaincy. (A keen historian).

Sigwili, Malengeni AA, Lusikisiki, 13.1.1977, Xhosa, 90 minutes. Agricultural demonstrator in Lusikisiki since the 1930s. Information on demonstration work and production.

Sihlobo, Zalu Heights AA, Lusikisiki, 3.2.1977, Xhosa, two hours. Christian and migrant. Information on production, migrancy and family history.

Alexander Soji, Hombe AA, Lusikisiki, 21.3.1977, English, two hours and untaped interview, 23.3.1977. From immigrant family; became forestry officer. Information on forestry, production and especially the ICU and pig-killing in the 1920s.

R. Thompson, Lusikisiki, 14.1.1977, English, 90 minutes. (Home, Kokstad.) Father was a Scottish medical missionary in West Africa before the turn of the century who came to South Africa for health reasons and became doctor and district surgeon at Bizana immediately after annexation. Informant became Methodist minister and head of Emfundisweni mission. Information on early history of Bizana town and Emfundisweni.

Vulizibhaya, Bomvini AA, Lusikisiki, 18.1.1977, 10.2.1977, Xhosa, three hours and another interview not on tape. Born probably about early 1890s. Worked on gold mines before East Coast Fever, on trading station (Ntafufu) and became induna at the Great Place in 1930s. Has some knowledge of traditions and history, much of it apparently confused, but little influenced by written versions. Information on history, the paramountcy, Mpondo customs and his working experience.

Ned Xinwa, Gomolo AA, Port St Johns, 27.2.1977 and 13.3.1977, Xhosa, three hours. From wealthy Mpondo commoner family. Became dipping foreman in 1925; progressive farmer. Well-informed about clan and general history in the nineteenth century. Information on clan histories, Port St Johns, production and general reminiscences.

2. Interviews and Discussions (not on tape)

R. Bennie, Howick, 8.7.1976. Retired agricultural official who began work in 1926. Information about demonstration schemes, co-operatives and rehabilitation.

Mrs. M. Birkett, Port St Johns, 16.1.1976. Daughter of trader, Wardlaw, who ran trading stations at Big Umgazi and experimented with cotton in 1910s.

H.W. Clarke, Port St Johns, 12.5.1976. Trader in Port St Johns district from 1920s. Information especially on tobacco trade.

G. Deutschmann, Port St Johns, 8.5.1976. Trader in Libode district from 1931. General information on trading.

F. Deyi. Former police sergeant stationed in Port St Johns and Lusikisiki. Later became information officer in Bantu Administration Department. Mr. Deyi acted as interpreter throughout the stay in Pondoland and provided a very considerable amount of information including background on informants. He is descended from an immigrant family which came to Pondoland in the mid-nineteenth century.

B. Gallagher, Durban, 7.7.1976. Trader at Emagusheni until 1970. Father, Henry Gallagher, was a nephew of O'Donnell who took over the store in 1915.

M. Heathcote, Port St Johns, May and June 1976. (See taped interviews.) A number of interviews were held with Mr. Heathcote, some of them taped and lost, and some noted. Of particular value was a conversation with him and Calvin Fono (see taped interviews) on the Mpondo system of loaning cattle.

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, Mzintlavana Store, Lusikisiki, 25.1.1977. Lawrence's father traded in Pondoland and married into a Pondoland coloured family. Informant began to 'speculate' in cattle in the 1930s.

J. Mgoduka, Ngobozana AA, Lusikisiki, February and March, 1977. Mr. Mgoduka translated Poto's book in full and produced information on a number of points of history and custom. He is principal of Ngobozana school, descended from the Nyati (Mpondo) clan, and very well informed about traditional history.

A.J. Norton, Gonubie, 3.5.1976. A son of T.W.C. Norton, Transkeian official. Informant a magistrate in Bizana in 1930s. Information on labour recruiting for the sugar fields.