

**TWENTIETH CENTURY IMAGES OF THE "ZULU": SELECTED REPRESENTATIONS
IN HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL DISCOURSE**

by

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I declare that 'Twentieth Century Images Of The "Zulu": Selected Representations In Historical And Political Discourse' is my own work and all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SUMMARY

This dissertation examines representations of the Zulu in a variety of discourses. It also examines the role of black nationalisms in the construction of Zuluist discourse. The production of images of the Zulu began with the first Anglo-Zulu encounter in the nineteenth century. In 1879, the Anglo-Zulu War set a trend for image-making which was developed further in the twentieth century. The appearance of *The Washing of the Spears* and Zulu, initiated a chapter in the study of the Zulu which gave rise to publications that created startling images of the Zulu. Despite the publication of the *James Stuart Archive*, as well as serious studies of the Zulu, authors continued to use the same popular interpretations of the Zulu.

During the early twentieth century, the 'native question' dominated South African politics, while in the 1990s, political protest, conceptualised as aggressive marches by 'warriors' and tourism have been the major representations.

Key terms:

Twentieth Century South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal, Zulu, Zulu History, Zulu Historiography, Anglo-Zulu War, Inkatha, Images, Representations, Native Question, Native Problem, Warriors, Zulu kings, Zulu Royal Family, Tourism, Media, Film

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NOTE ON THE USE OF TERMS

I have used the four geographical terms, **Natal**, **Zululand**, **KwaZulu** and **KwaZulu-Natal**, in their respective chronological contexts to describe the area between the Phongolo and Mzimkhulu Rivers.

Zulu has been defined very broadly. See the Introduction, p. 13.

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In conclusion, I would like to thank my parents for providing the opportunity for me to pursue studies at a tertiary level and to my mother for the support she has given me during the research for and the writing of this dissertation.



A beautiful young Zulu princess rises from a sea of female dancers to perform for the king.

The Nubile Savage 1997
Source: *Sunday Tribune* 28 September 1997



Marchers brandish weapons in Empangeni yesterday.

Picture by TERRY HAYWOOD

Peace-waving Zulus march through Empangeni

THOUSANDS of Inkatha supporters carrying traditional weapons marched through Empangeni yesterday in defiance of emergency regulations that prohibit carrying weapons in public. No serious incidents were reported during the march, nevertheless Lt-Gen Colin Cunniff, the SAP's regional commissioner in Natal, said

**By Chris Jenkins
Empangeni Bureau**

last night that police were investigating the march and the docket would be sent to the attorney-general for his decision.

"A group of about 20 000 Zulus marched through the streets of Empangeni to hand

over a memorandum yesterday. The police started negotiations with the organisers to persuade their supporters not to carry any weapons in contravention of the regulations.

"The police did not at the time attempt to disarm the marchers for fear of a confrontation and potential loss of life, injury and damage to pro-

perty," he said.

A huge crowd marched from the industrial area of the town to a spot near the central business district, where the memorandum was handed to the Independent Electoral Commission.

There was a massive security force presence as busloads of IFP supporters poured into

the town and gathered in Grantham Highway from about 10am. Troops were stationed on street corners and armoured police vehicles were positioned at the assembly point, while SADF troop carriers roamed the town and suburbs and along the march route.

(Report by C Jenkins, 18 Osborne Street, Durban)

The military image
Source: *Mercury* 6 April 1994.

gment reserved



INKATHA Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, overshadowed by a statue of his ancestor, Zulu chief Shaka, speaks to the Press at his headquarters in Ulundi. He said he would reserve judgment on whether the election was free and fair.

Report: Page 3

The latter-day Shaka
Source: *Daily News* 4 May 1994



Welcome, Zulu warrior

Due to public demand "the Zulu", Isaac Dlunge, absent from the Elangeni Hotel since 1989, returned to his post as doorman in full tribal regalia yesterday. Once again he will provide a traditional welcome to local and international tourists as he did for more than 17 years.

Picture by **PATRICK MTOLO**

The Zulu as tourist attraction
Source: *Mercury* 18 November 1994

AMAKHOSI

NBS

WINNING
PARTNERSHIP

(including) Rhino Pryke, Zulu Klusener, Fodale Forde, Pootie Erasmus and Holly Stewart
in Mike Johnson and Rosco Veenstra



AMAKHOSI - Royalty... leaders on the battlefield

S NATAL vs N TRANSVAAL - FRIDAY 2 FEBRUARY '96 - KINGSMEAD

A typical appropriation
Source: *Daily News* 31 January 1996.



YEBO BABA: Remember the days when it was illegal for racegoers to use cellular telephones on a racecourse and also the days when there was a strict dress code in force? This happy fellow was spotted from the parade ring by on-course photographer **Anita Akal** at last Saturday's meeting at Scottsville.

The 'ethnographic present'
Source: *Daily News* 3 October 1997.

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is concerned with representations of the Zulu in the twentieth century. It aims at contributing to an understanding of 'Zooluology', a term developed by Peter Davis in his study of cinematic representations of South Africa. He describes it as such:

*the white myth of the Zulu; the equation of the Zulus with the wild animals of Africa; the domestication of these creatures; the Zulus as the prototypical 'African tribe'; the political uses of the Zulu image.*¹

These views have in the main been authored by the West, which has fixated upon the Zulu for two centuries. Western images of the surrounding world have been brought into question by post-colonial studies, which have produced revisionist material, examining a variety of cultural forms including media and literary texts. These studies have forced a re-negotiation of the relationship between colonial discourse and power and the 'other'² and have shown that any account of history from a Western perspective is no longer as absolute as before. There has been a growing awareness, through the study of colonial discourse and post-Second World War decolonisation, that European cultural awareness is no longer a dominant centre of world affairs.³

Until the 1980s, little work of such a nature had been carried out on particular African societies. There had been studies of European representations of Africa and European reactions to African society but these were general in nature. Analysis of the manner in which representations of Africa were influenced by political and ideological imperatives began with

¹ P. Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood: Exploring the jungles of cinema's South Africa* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1996), p. 124.

² J. Singh, *Colonial Narratives: Cultural Dialogues*, (London, Routledge, 1996), p. 5.

³ R. Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London, Routledge, 1990), p. 19.

Curtin's seminal work, *The Image of Africa*. Curtin went beyond colonial policy in investigating European images of the continent, tracing the development of European colonial knowledge from the eighteenth century, as the latter's contact with Africa expanded.⁴ This was followed by inter alia *Tales of the Dark Continent* and Van Wyk Smith's 'The Origins of Some Victorian images of Africa'. *Tales of the Dark Continent* examined the experience of imperialism in Africa with its attendant symbols, motifs' and components.⁵ Van Wyk Smith assessed representations of Africa in European literature but devoted a section to H. Rider Haggard's novels about the Zulu.⁶

In 1982 Samuel Martin completed a study on 'British Images of the Zulu' between 1820 and 1879.⁷ Chronologically he followed on from Curtin in taking his study to the 1870s and more importantly he began to deconstruct the origins of images of the Zulu specifically. However, unlike Curtin's narrative approach to the colonial encounter, Martin utilized a different theoretical framework. His work was based in part, on Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Said had showed how the Western image of the Orient, constructed by generations of scholars, produced myths about the laziness, deceit and the irrationality of Orientals. His example led other scholars to apply his study to other parts of the world.⁸ Said's work in turn was inspired by the methodologies of post-structuralist enquiry, particularly the writings of Michael Foucault. In this way Said appropriated what had until that point been a largely French initiative and brought it into Anglo-American literary theory.⁹ Foucault emphasized the role of discursive structures and practices in the application of power and knowledge within society.

⁴ P. Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action, 1780-1850* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1964).

⁵ C. Allen (ed.), *Tales of the Dark Continent* (London, BBC, 1979).

⁶ M. van Wyk Smith, 'The Origins of some Victorian images of Africa' in *English in Africa* 6(1) 1979.

⁷ S. Martin, 'British Images of the Zulu c.1820-1879' (Unpl. PhD, University of Cambridge, 1982).

⁸ F. Barker (ed.), *Europe and its Others* (Colchester, Essex University Press, 1983).

⁹ Young, *White Mythologies*, p. 126.

The notion of 'invented tradition', that is to say the way the past is conceptualized and portrayed by various political, scholarly and literary agencies, began to receive wider attention after Said. Dan Wylie and Daphna Golan have examined the way the past has been used in providing a foundation for Zulu nationalism and how Zulu history has been utilized for political ends. Wylie has identified a 'self-contained genealogy of white men and women's writings on Shaka', which has been used to create the popular image of this legendary figure, while Golan observes that, although the Inkatha Freedom Party has mastered the use of the Zulu past for political gain, this ability is not unique to the organisation. Indeed Zulu history has been successfully manipulated by colonialists, the Zulu Royal family and filmmakers, amongst others.¹⁰

Images of the Zulu are part of the European concepts of Africa as a whole. Africa has been set up as a foil to Europe, its primitive nature emphasising the greatness of European civilisation.¹¹ The notion of a primitive 'other' is not however simply a nineteenth-century colonial construct. Sixteenth-century maps of Africa are indicative of the sense of mystery attached to the continent, while the African slave trade led to attitudes about Africans as primitive and inferior.¹² Furthermore the continents have always been associated with ideas. In terms of iconography, Africa was often pictured as naked and wild, Europe as crowned, holding a sceptre and orb and strongly Christian. Sinclair argues that the myth of the savage

¹⁰ D. Wylie, 'Violently Representing Shaka' *Mots pluriels* Vol. 1. No. 4. 1997, p. 2. (Available at <http://www.arts.uwa.edu.au/MotsPluriels/MP497dw.html>) and D. Golan, *Inventing Shaka: Using History in the Construction of Zulu Nationalism* (London, Lynne Rienner, 1994), p. 7. Other works which make use of the idea of 'invented tradition' are inter alia essays in D. Burness (ed.), *Shaka, king of the Zulus in African literature* (Washington, Three Continents press, 1976) and M. Malaba, 'Reconstruction of history: the case of Shaka'. (Paper presented to the Colloquium on the 'Mfecane' Aftermath, University of the Witwatersrand, 1991).

¹¹ C. Achebe, 'An Image of Africa' *Research in African Literature* 9(1) 1978.

¹² G. de la Mothe, *Reconstructing the Black Image* (London, Trentham Books Ltd, 1993), pp. 12 and 20-23.

can be located in the Middle Ages, when the 'noble savage' entered European literature serving to 'prejudge primitive men to destruction by the advance of the European settler, government and city'.¹³ Certainly from the Renaissance to the Romantic Period and even beyond this, an examination of literature, both imaginative and political, would reveal examples of the concept of the 'noble savage'.¹⁴

The nineteenth-century social sciences also contributed to such imagery. In the 1870s and 1880s, the anthropologist Edward Tylor for example produced three stages of existence: 'savage, barbaric and civilized'. Even before Social Darwinism, authors wrote of a 'war of the races' and the superiority of certain nations.¹⁵ By the beginning of the twentieth century the ideas of Social Darwinism were prevalent, influencing the world-wide English-speaking community.¹⁶ Issues of sexuality and gender are also part of this iconography. The display of topless Zulu women in film, on postcards and in the media (as the following chapters show) reflects colonial portrayals of indigenous women as objects of sexual fascination. Sturma argues that the 'nubile savage' stereotype - as he calls it - is more closely associated with the Pacific.¹⁷ However, a similar fixation has occurred with images of semi-naked Zulu women offering an avenue for sexual imagining suppressed due to censorship and Western sexual mores'. This is part of a wider Western view of the black body. If the female 'native' was an

¹³ A. Sinclair, *The Savage: A History of Misunderstanding* (London, Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1977), pp. 65-80.

¹⁴ H. White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University, 1990), p. 183.

¹⁵ Sinclair, *The Savage*, pp. 80-93.

¹⁶ A. Duminy, 'Towards Union, 1900-1910' in A. Duminy, and B. Guest (eds.), *Natal and Zululand From Earliest Times to 1910* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1989), p. 402.

¹⁷ M. Sturma, 'The Nubile Savage' *History Today* Vol. 45 (4) April 1995, pp. 7-9. Also see N. Ukadike, *Black African Cinema* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, University of California Press, 1994), p. 54. For local images, see for example 'No peeking, says king to cameramen' *Mercury* 6 January 1997 and 'Reeds and Beads' *Mercury* 22 September 1997 for examples.

object of physical desire or at least the more acceptable symbol of it, the black body in colonial discourse also came to be associated with degeneration.¹⁸

The African continent offered fertile ground for self-fulfilling imaginings, that is to say it provided a thematic space in which writers could discharge their fantasies. Africa was and is a symbolic hunting field, leading to a magical world of trials and noble achievements.¹⁹ As the following chapters show, these fantasies arose out of notions of heroic masculinity, the development of militarism in the latter nineteenth century and more simply for entertainment's sake.²⁰ The formulation of the Zulu as dangerous, savage and violent provided a pleasant, escapist sense of reality. The hyperbolic tendencies of authors and filmmakers can therefore be understood as a type of displacement. Moreover, in writing about the exploits of the imperial troops in Africa, it is not victory that establishes a soldier's greatness but the qualities he shows in confronting defeat or his demise. Only in this way, can the soldier's heroic virtue be made manifest.²¹ Thus the greater and more dangerous the foe, the greater the act of opposing him. In this way, by providing a savage enemy as the 'supporting cast', popular historians and filmmakers have been able to heroicize the British soldier.²² Furthermore the origins of black images also lie in the conflict of the past. Colonial literature in South Africa was produced in the 'heat of brute historical circumstances' - warfare and racial tension.²³ Such images become

¹⁸ J. Comaroff and J. Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination* (Boulder, Westview Press, 1992), p. 215. For more on the fascination with the 'black body', also see Y. Abrahams, 'Disempowered-Consent: Sara Bartman and Khoisan Slavery in the Nineteenth-Century Cape Colony and Britain' in *South African Historical Journal* 35 (1996).

¹⁹ J. MacKenzie, 'Heroic Myths of empire' in J. MacKenzie (ed.) *Popular Imperialism and the military 1850-1950* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1992), p. 114.

²⁰ For more on these three issues, see J. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester, Manchester University, 1984); M. Green, *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980) and A. Rutherford, *The Literature of War: Five Studies in Heroic Virtue* (London, The MacMillan Press Ltd, 1978).

²¹ Rutherford, *The Literature of War*, p. 155.

²² See for example J. Bancroft, *Rorke's Drift* (Rivonia, Ashanti Publishing, 1991), Blurb.

²³ E. Mphahlele, *The African Image* (London, Faber and Faber, 1974), pp. 133-136.

part of the consolidation of a national identity. Ethnic confrontation involves the identification of difference, as the 'other' is perceived as alien. Correspondingly, warfare fosters a sense of common identity, binding the ethnic community together. Historical narratives about such ethnic confrontation serve the same purpose.²⁴ These circumstances continue to shape literature about the Zulu.

It is of course true that concentrating on 'white images' of the Zulu, if one can categorize them so monolithically, tells only part of the story. Post-colonial studies have their limitations in that they tend to emphasize colonialism as the defining marker of the past, as well as making a sharp distinction between the colonial and post-colonial.²⁵ Moreover, they fail to take into account the role of 'indigenous capacities', that is the ability of the colonized to organise themselves outside of colonial control. Ordinary people are seen merely as victims, at the mercy of an omnipotent colonial discourse.²⁶ We must also note that studies of this discourse are also part of a discourse themselves, legitimated by and mediated in the academy. In addition Hamilton warns that to declare representations to be deliberate does not explain the construction of such texts in their entirety. They are not uniquely 'white' images, nor is it to explain why traditions, which are obviously mythical, are seen to be true.²⁷ Paul Forsythe for example, has shown how black South Africans have utilized this Zuluist discourse for their own ends²⁸ and continue to do so. Mphahlele's *The African Image* showed that Africans also

²⁴ A. Oboe, *Fiction, History and Nation in South Africa* (Padova, Supernova, 1994), pp. 89 and 163.

²⁵ Singh, *Colonial Narratives*, p. 6.

²⁶ See R. Greenstein, 'Rethinking the Colonial Process: The Role of Indigenous Capacities in Comparative Historical Inquiry' and R. Greenstein, 'History, Historiography and the Production of Knowledge' *South African Historical Journal* 32 (May 1995), pp. 115 and 221.

²⁷ C. Hamilton, 'Authoring Shaka: Models, Metaphors and Historiography', (Unpl. PhD, The Johns Hopkins University, 1993), pp. 59-77.

²⁸ P. Forsythe, 'The Past in the Service of the Present' in *The South African Historical Journal* 26 (1992), pp. 75-89.

construct representations of one another, more often than not on ethnic grounds.²⁹ Zuluist ideology for example emphasized the historical integrity of the 'tribe', which appealed to the ordinary Zulu. It gave them some measure of control over the situations in which they found themselves when in the labour centres of the country and was favoured by the Zulu petty bourgeoisie, as it enhanced their roles by defining them as interpreters of 'tribal tradition'.³⁰

The term 'image' is not used exclusively in a pejorative sense, that is I do not assume that all images are mythical constructions. Hindsight allows us to compare present society with the past, forcing a conclusion that nineteenth-century Zulu society was not without violence. Recently, Hamilton has argued for a re-examination of pre-colonial Zulu society. She suggests that the despotic nature of the Shakan state made it attractive to those in search of security.³¹ Moreover, executions, warfare and succession disputes were a reality of the society. However, in following Said, this study is more interested in the internal consistency of representations³² of the Zulu, in that firstly comparatively little, apart from executions, warfare and succession disputes, was written about the Zulu until the mid-twentieth century and secondly that these images continue to contextualize the Zulu in modern society.

I use the term in the sense of portrayal - how the Zulu have been portrayed in the variety of political and literary discourses throughout the twentieth century, mythical or otherwise. Such an analysis necessarily involves the issue of identity. However an examination of the internal image, the individual's self-concept, is avoided in favour of the externalized and at times

²⁹ Mphahlele, *The African Image*.

³⁰ L. Vail, 'Introduction: Ethnicity in Southern African History' in L. Vail (ed.), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (London, James Currey, 1989), p. 14.

³¹ C. Hamilton, "'Zoolacraticism" and "Cannibalism": A Discussion of Historical Disposition Towards the "Shakan" Model of Social Order and Political Rights' *Social Dynamics* Vol. 21 1995, p. 9.

³² E. Said, *Orientalism* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), p. 5.

contrived image or identity, that which is in the public domain. As Said observes, cultural discourse and exchange within a culture is not 'truth' as such but representations.³³ Thus a specific focus on ethnicity is not a feature of this study, since ethnicity constitutes the manner in which people think of themselves.³⁴ Ethnicity is however informed inter alia by literary and visual representations. Although self-identity is also of great value in understanding the historical development of the KwaZulu-Natal region³⁵, the persistence and dominance of Zuluist portrayals in the twentieth century requires further attention. A significant portion of these representations are associated with the Anglo-Zulu War specifically and with the perceived Zulu capacity for violence more generally. The themes of militarism and violence underlie much of the portrayals of the Zulu and it is necessary to contextualize them. As Dubow comments, the analysis of the imagery and representation of non-whites in European thought, is an effective means of understanding the structures of thought and metaphor that underlie the process of 'othering'.³⁶ The symbols and myths associated with the 'other' are not casual inventions but have a real history, derived from a specific past.³⁷

Accordingly this study will take into account white and black appropriations but with an emphasis on the former. It is Western images that have dominated the local and international setting, due simply to the sheer weight of literature and the often exaggerated interest in the Zulu. However not all of these images are part of a conspiracy by the West to subjugate Africa. Instead these images are based upon a whole series of 'interests' which, by scholarly

³³ Ibid., p. 21.

³⁴ G. Maré, *Brothers Born of Warrior Blood: Politics and Ethnicity in South Africa* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1992), p. 24.

³⁵ I. Filatova, 'Introduction' in R. Morrell (ed.), *Political Economy and Identities in KwaZulu-Natal: Historical and Social Perspectives* (Durban, Indicator Press, 1996), p. 13.

³⁶ S. Dubow, *Illicit Union: Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 7.

³⁷ B. Street, 'Reading the novels of empire: race and ideology in the classic 'tale of adventure' in D. Dabydeen, (ed.) *The black presence in English literature*, (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1985), p. 96.

discovery, investigation of language, psychological analysis, geographical and sociological description, attempted to understand, to control, to manipulate or to incorporate, what was different or unusual. It is here that this study locates its subject, concentrating on the images which have been produced by exchanges with various kinds of power, including the colonial state, intellectual power in the form of sciences such as linguistics and anatomy and cultural values.³⁸

These portrayals have been expressed in historiographical, political and commercial terms and from these I have selected three areas to investigate. At the turn of the century, the 'native question' or 'problem' was one of the issues which began to dominate the politics of South Africa. As the progress towards Union began, a uniform 'native policy' was sought. It was never found until the coming to power of the National Party in 1948. The search for a solution in the first decades of the century, provided a host of representations of the 'native' and in Natal, the Zulu.

The second area is the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879. This colonial conflict continues to fascinate the reading public and the media, resulting in a steady flow of academic and popular³⁹ literature about the War and the Zulu. Within the multiplicity of Western images of this colonial conflict, British representations play a significant role. British settlers were the first to provide detailed material about the Zulu and the War meant that the British fascination with the Zulu was assured. Thus in contextualising the enormous interest in the War, I examine the background to the military's attractiveness by means of cultural studies on the societal impact

³⁸ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 12.

³⁹ I use 'popular' in the sense of amateur or non-professional, not in terms of 'people's history'. By 'academic' I mean history produced by professionals in the academy.

of warfare from the nineteenth century. In particular, use is made of the Manchester University Press series which examines the influence of imperialism in Britain in its cultural context. However, this imperialistic-militarist ethos is not specific to Britain and I show how it influenced South Africa as well.

The third aspect is an analysis of political representations of the Zulu in the 1990s. The period from the 1970s saw shifts in political allegiances amongst the white and Zulu communities, as segments of both were drawn together in informal alliances. These altered again, after the 1994 general election which placed the African National Congress (ANC) in power. Conflict developed over who could 'control' the Zulu nation. In addition, commercial initiatives in the form of tourism are also part of these contemporary images. The Zulu as a tourist attraction will also be investigated.

In investigating these three areas, I have relied on the documents of the South African Native Affairs Commission 1903 to 1905 and the Natal Native Commission of 1906, selected works from a vast collection of primary and secondary literature about the Zulu and sources drawn from film, as well the electronic and printed media, particularly the state-owned SABC television station. In addition the English-medium publications of Natal Newspapers⁴⁰, part of the Independent Newspapers Group, will also be utilized.

This study has been presented chronologically. Naturally this does not imply that representations of the Zulu can be viewed only within certain periods. Rather the use of periods stems from the identification of certain events or processes as significant stimuli for

⁴⁰ Inter alia the *Mercury*, the *Daily News*, the *SaturdayPaper* and the *Sunday Tribune*.

portrayals of the Zulu. Chapter One examines the first half of the century, focusing on attempts to solve the 'native question'. Colonial concepts of the Zulu will be assessed as reflected in the South African Native Affairs Commission 1903 to 1905, the Natal Native Commission of 1906, the 'native experts' of the period and the contribution of contemporary anthropology. Chapters Two and Three are concerned with the Anglo-Zulu War until 1889, while Chapter Four's subject is the political usage of the Zulu image during the 1980s. This begins with the breakdown of relations between the ANC and Inkatha in 1979. The fifth chapter examines the role of the Zulu in tourism in South Africa and political developments in the decade of the 1990s, while the sixth describes the reassessment of the Zulu in both popular and academic literature.

The 'Living Image'

One of the difficulties the student of the Zulu faces is defining the subject, as any definition of the subject matter becomes a form of 'othering'. Moreover there is considerable controversy over who or what constitutes a 'Zulu'.⁴¹ A dictionary definition offers the following:

Zulu/zooloo n. & adj. •n. 1 a member of a Black South African people orig. inhabiting Zululand and Natal. 2 the language of this people. • adj. of or relating to this people or language. [native name]⁴²

This definition, though succinct, offers a less than satisfactory answer in the socio-political reality of South Africa. A brief deconstruction of this definition suggests that the term has wider ramifications. Firstly in terms of the word Zulu referring merely to 'a member of a

⁴¹ J. Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom* (London, Longman Group, 1979), p. xvii.

⁴² *The Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 1828.

Black South African people' press reports have pointed to the existence of 'white Zulus'⁴³, an 'Afrikaner Zulu'⁴⁴ and even a 'Super Zulu'.⁴⁵ Although common-sense suggests that the dictionary definition is correct, the word 'Zulu' is used with greater abandon in the media and in the political context. A further illustration of this was given by the Zulu king, Goodwill Zwelithini when he stated that his people include not only the Zulu but all those who live in 'traditional Zulu country'.⁴⁶ The issue of political allegiances has produced powerful appropriations of the name. In a television documentary in 1994, the following question was asked of a group of Zulu nationalists:

Question - *Will all Zulus regardless of their political affiliation follow the king?*

Answer - *Of course, they will do so because firstly before you belong to any political party...you are just a simple Zulu...*⁴⁷

There is evidence of this thinking even among those who eschew such characterisation of the Zulu. In 1994 ANC member Dumisane Makhaye argued that the Zulu are not the unique people they are represented as. Yet there is evidence of the concept of 'special status' for the Zulu in Makhaye's own article where, despite his awareness of such perceptions, he refers to himself at one point as a 'proud Zulu'.⁴⁸ Thus he is not only a South African or an ANC member but something more than this. Another 'definition' provided by the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) leader, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, also simultaneously negates and reinforces this status - 'We are a creation of history, a matter of culture. We do not despise other people and

⁴³ See for example 'White Zulu Clegg on the campus trail again' *Sunday Tribune* 18 September 1994 which refers-the better-known of 'white Zulus', Johnny Clegg or as he is known in France *le Zoulou Blanc*. Also see 'Simple guide to basic communication' *Mercury* 2 November 1994.

⁴⁴ See 'White African' Schalk' *Saturdaypaper* 24 September 1994, 'Arrogant and forgetful', letter to the *Daily News* 13 June 1995 and 'This Afrikaner is a true Zulu' *Mercury* 13 November 1997.

⁴⁵ 'The 'Super Zulu' back with a vengeance' *Daily News* 1 June 1995, referring to Inkatha Freedom Party advisor Mario Ambrosini.

⁴⁶ Quoted in 'The King of Zulu Kings' *Sunday Tribune* 15 May 1994.

⁴⁷ 'Zulu' Documentary, *Agenda*, February 1994.

⁴⁸ 'Zulus and the Zulu monarchy' *Mercury*, 21 January 1994.

consider ourselves special but we are proud of our heritage. We do not apologise for being Zulu'.⁴⁹

The definition that this study will concern itself with is a broad, inclusive categorisation. The history of images of the Zulu has involved the development of a discourse of 'Zuluism'. John Wright defines this as:

the notion that the African people of the Natal-Zululand region were all 'Zulus' by virtue of the fact that their forebears were once ruled by the Zulu kings'.⁵⁰

As a result of the types and nature of the material being examined, I have chosen to take this definition as the basis for this study of the Zulu, as opposed to a more nuanced and geographically sound definition. The latter would acknowledge that the area now known as KwaZulu-Natal has been settled by diverse groups since early times. It was only during the first decades of the nineteenth century that the Zulu kingdom dominated the area. Moreover the Thukela River has always provided a division between north and south, between those under the control of the Zulu kings and those under the authority of the colonial administration in Natal.⁵¹ Wright's definition however, fulfils the needs of this study.

The latter part of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century have seen an enormous output of material about the Zulu. Their way of life, their politics, society, economy, military endeavours and leaders have received enormous attention in both the popular and academic fields of study. The last forty or fifty years in particular have been characterized by a steadily increasing body of knowledge about Zulu society. These publications have sought to describe

⁴⁹ 'We do not apologise to anyone for being Zulu' *Sunday Tribune* 25 September 1995.

⁵⁰ J. Wright, Notes on the Politics of being 'Zulu', (Paper presented at the Conference on Ethnicity, Society and Conflict in Natal, University of Natal, 14-16 September 1992), p. 9.

⁵¹ J. Laband, *Rope of Sand: The Rise and Fall of the Zulu Kingdom in the Nineteenth Century* (Johannesburg, Jonathan Ball Publishers, 1995), p. 3.

and explain the pre-colonial origins of Zulu society, subsequent interaction with white society and finally the amalgamation of the Zulu people into the wider South Africa, with the political repercussions which followed. However, Jeff Guy has alerted us to the fact that paradoxically perhaps, to be best-known does not mean to be best-understood.⁵² The very fact that the Zulu past has attracted a multitude of researchers, writers and interested parties should serve to alert one to the interest in the Zulu and therefore the motives for this interest. Furthermore the fact that these images may be flawed indicates how important it is to analyse and understand the images which this multitude has presented.

Another point worth examining is Wylie's suggestion that until recent times Zulu historiography had failed to examine earlier historians' lives and personal predilections and the influence these had on their historical accounts.⁵³ This is another important factor in the development of images about the Zulu. As Wylie points out, Ritter is widely read, used inter alia by Donald Morris in his *The Washing of the Spears*, Wilson and Thompson's *The Oxford History of South Africa*⁵⁴ and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. In addition, writers such as Fynn were not trained historians or even researchers. They were young adventurers, probably easily influenced by what they saw and heard. They were not trained in historiographical methods nor was there a contemporary body of information to negate what they stated. It is perhaps remarkable that later writers should have relied on them to such an extent without some sort of evaluation. Nevertheless, this is perhaps related to the commercial and sensational driven market which feeds on these sorts of 'adventures'.

⁵² J. Guy, 'The British Invasion of Zululand: Some thoughts for the Centenary Year' *Reality*, 11, 1, 1979, p. 8.

⁵³ D. Wylie, 'A Dangerous Admiration: E.A.Ritter's *Shaka Zulu*' *South African Historical Journal* 28 1993, pp. 99-100 and Wylie, 'Violently Representing Shaka', p. 4.

⁵⁴ D. Morris, *The Washing of the Spears: The Rise and Fall of the Great Zulu Nation* (London, Abacus, 1992) and M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.), *The Oxford History of South Africa*, 2 volumes (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1969-1971).

Extending from the nineteenth century's first texts about the Zulu, is a vast and still expanding collection of literature and film about this 'famous, infamous tribe'.⁵⁵ To say that much has been written about the Zulu is to be guilty of an understatement. Indeed, their 'reputation' since the 1820s has meant a sense of fame few nations can match.

*...Zulus are the most famous of all African peoples and are known all over the world as proud people and brave warriors. Nobody outside of South Africa has ever heard of Tswanas, Vendas, etc...*⁵⁶

This comment seems difficult to disagree with. In literature, in film, in countless documentaries and even on postcards one finds such a portrayal of Zulu society. The image of the 'proud' and 'brave warrior' is a familiar one both in South Africa and overseas. One need look no further than literature concerned with the Zulu. Emotive titles such as *The Washing of the Spears: The Rise and Fall of the Great Zulu Nation*, *Zulu Battle Piece: Isandlwana* and *Proud Zulu*⁵⁷ all suggest extraordinary characteristics for the Zulu. They are 'great', 'famed', 'proud', 'courageous' and accordingly as the above extract suggests, they rise above the other 'tribes' of Southern Africa to become a remarkable entity.

A publication analysing race relations and the media in Britain, suggested that the existence of colonial stereotypes may be determined to some extent by the prevalence of traditions of cartoon jokes. They describe a newspaper cartoon which referred to illegal immigration. It showed two people on a beach

...one of whom was saying 'I thought you said this was a quiet beach' while the beach was being overrun by illegal immigrants in turbans, including a man riding an elephant, a snake - charmer complete with snake, and a man carrying a bed of nails.

⁵⁵ H. Tracey, *Zulu Paradox* (Johannesburg, Silver Leaf Books, 1948), p. 104.

⁵⁶ 'Klaaste accused', letter to the *Daily News* 27 April 1994.

⁵⁷ R. Coupland, *Zulu Battle Piece: Isandlwana* (London, Collins, 1948) and O. Walker *Proud Zulu* (London, Werner Laurie, 1949).

Depending on one's point of view, these cartoons may or may not be amusing. Certainly the authors believe that the repetition of such images promote an outlook incompatible with good race relations and are likely to influence views of current matters.⁵⁸ It is significant for the purposes of this study, that Hartman and Husband use the term 'image'. It is their assertion that these cartoon images have a greater import than the superficial humour they are meant to portray and accordingly images are more complex than they appear to be.

An important consideration here is that once the image is presented, it is perceived in a certain manner. It is both an optical and mental phenomenon.⁵⁹ The optical part of the process is not important. What is vital is the perception of these images, which involves the brain interpreting sensations in order to make them meaningful. An assegai serves as a useful illustration of this process. Certainly in South Africa such an object would be instantly recognisable as a 'traditional' Zulu weapon. This however is merely one way in which the image of an assegai could be meaningfully interpreted. Connotatively, it might be suggestive of Zulu power, Shaka, the Inkatha Freedom Party, barbarism, savagery or it may even invoke fear. The former KwaZulu Government's coat of arms for example, consisted of inter alia a lion and a leopard holding the *iklwa* or short stabbing spear. Together this was meant to represent bravery, dignity, beauty and grace.⁶⁰ Thus the image moves far beyond its denotative significance, becoming an effective source of symbolism. Another example of the use of the assegai in symbolism is to be found at the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria. Here the gate is made up of assegais, which officially represents the power of Dingane, who attempted to

⁵⁸ P. Hartman and C. Husband, *Racism and the Mass Media* (London, Davis-Poynter Ltd, 1974).

⁵⁹ J. Monaco, *How to read a film: the art, technology, language, history and theory of film and the media* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 144.

⁶⁰ 'The seat of power rests on the past' *'Sunday magazine' Sunday Tribune* 28 August 1994.

block the path of civilization.⁶¹ Thus the context of the assegai and the meaning visitors may obtain in this case, is that of conflict: civilization - as represented by the Trekkers - versus barbarism - the Zulu - or more simply 'good versus evil'. The image is not merely meant to enhance the Monument aesthetically but there was a definite motivation for including it. The purpose of such an image is to evoke

*...a similar set of associations and meanings in virtually all members of the society to which it is directed [enabling] a complex point to be crystallized unambiguously and memorably...*⁶²

Consequently, the belief that the Trekkers brought civilization into the interior of the country (the purpose of the monument as a whole⁶³), will be relayed to a visitor. If this occurs, then insofar as the creators of the image are concerned, it will have acted in an appropriate manner. There are of course problems with this. They lie both with the image and the way in which the recipient receives it. This becomes apparent when one considers the concept that the Voortrekker Monument is an example of history being utilized for ideological purposes.⁶⁴ This is a warning that its images may not be as innocent as they might appear. Such a use would not be problematic if the Trekkers and the Zulu were fictitious characters. The individuals portrayed at the Monument however, are most definitely part of reality. Their existence is considerably more complex than merely the concept of civilization versus barbarism.

This is of concern since the reception of images from the surrounding world is a source of education and socialization. It is fair to suggest that learning 'may be coterminous with

⁶¹ *Voortrekker Monument Brochure* (Pretoria, Promedia Publications, 1986), p. 6.

⁶² Hartman and Husband, *Racism and the Mass Media*, p. 31.

⁶³ *Voortrekker Monument Brochure*, p. 6.

⁶⁴ 'The 'big lie' on the hill' *Sunday Times* 10 April 1994.

conscious living'.⁶⁵ Thus the mind is constantly processing data and consequently images become part of the socialization process. Socialization imports certain values, beliefs and attitudes of a particular society, in short its culture - in which images play a very important role. To the member of society, this culture appears to be objective⁶⁶ and accordingly its images may also appear to be objective. As noted above in the reference to the Voortrekker Monument, this is not always the case. The danger here is that the integrity of the learning process becomes compromised. Learning involves an individual developing ideas, preferences and specific personality characteristics.⁶⁷ It is therefore possible that while developing these aspects, the individual will obtain a sense of reality which is flawed in one way or another. In the example of the Voortrekker Monument, Zulu society is portrayed as and could be perceived as uncivilized, savage, excessively cruel and an anachronism in twentieth-century society. Once an image is attached to a particular group, it is pervasive and profoundly affects behaviour.⁶⁸ In addition, it is not necessary to have direct access to institutionalized avenues of information about the subject of the stereotype or image. Popular prejudice need not rely on theoretical expositions, but it is sustained by knowledge of their availability.⁶⁹

The power of images is further enhanced by their portrayal in audio-visual media, such as film and television. Information has been forced into more and more standardized molds, reinforcing stereotypes and intensifying the hold of nineteenth-century representations.⁷⁰ Fiction for example can very easily assume the guise of reality, when transferred to the

⁶⁵ P. Jarvis, *Adult Learning in the Social Context* (Sydney, Croom Helm Ltd, 1987), p. 128.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁶⁷ T. Harris and W. Schwahn, *The Learning Process* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 11.

⁶⁸ Ukadike, *Black African Cinema*, p. 39.

⁶⁹ Dubow, *Illicit Union*, p. 9.

⁷⁰ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 26.

screen.⁷¹ Recently in Japan, concerns were raised over computer games which alter the outcome of the Second World War in Japan's favour.⁷² Film is believable, even when one knows the facts to be different.⁷³ Society's devotion to the cinema (and one could add television) can be regarded as something akin to a religion. The cinema has become to the modern world the collective cathedral of primitive 'participation mystique': the tribal dream house of modern civilization.⁷⁴ Films are an expression of dreams. All people dream and thus they have an affinity for a visual representation of the workings of the inner conscious. The images presented by film become a means for analysing behaviour and to make sense of experience. Moreover it is also important to note that in a country such as South Africa, literacy has not been accessible to all. This gives visual images unprecedented power.⁷⁵ In large communities, symbols become important and make them (the communities) visible. An example of this is military prowess, which is a powerful signifier of the Zulu.⁷⁶ In addition, Golan's comments about the influence of written history on the oral, could be expanded to include visual images. As she observes, the role of a Western-orientated education system and the close contact between the Zulu and whites is difficult to determine in respect of oral history.⁷⁷ James Stuart, assistant magistrate of Durban in the early years of the twentieth century, authored a series of vernacular histories of the Zulu. Marks commented that their popularity among the Zulu may have been partly the result of their legitimization of ethnic

⁷¹ See for example 'The power of fiction' *Timeout Supplement Daily News* 23 May 1995. Also see 'Television link threatens St Helena's innocence' *Sunday Tribune* 12 June 1994.

⁷² 'Japan at war again in search of heroes' *Daily News* 30 June 1994.

⁷³ J. Richards, 'Boy's Own Empire: Feature Films and Imperialism in the 1930s' in J. MacKenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1986), p. 144.

⁷⁴ G. Hill, *Illuminating Shadows. The Mythic Power of Film* (London, McGraw-Hill, 1992), p. 4.

⁷⁵ L. Callinicos, 'Popular History in the Eighties' in *Radical History Review* 46/7 1990, p. 292.

⁷⁶ Maré, *Brothers Born of Warrior Blood*, p. 12.

⁷⁷ D. Golan, 'The Life Story of King Shaka and Gender Tensions in the Zulu State' *History in Africa* Vol. 17 (1990).

nationalism for the Zulu intelligentsia.⁷⁸ The extent to which these images have become self-fulfilling is further cause for an understanding of the images of 'Zuluism'.

Samuel Martin identified four major phases of the Zulu entry into the popular consciousness during the nineteenth century. The first involved the initial British encounter from the 1820s, until the establishment of the Colony of Natal in 1843. He considers that this began with a mention of the Zulu in the journals of a group of Royal Naval officers. Captain W.F.W. Owen had been commissioned to conduct a hydrographic survey of the southern and eastern coast of Africa in 1822. He was also instructed to collect ethnographic information about the inhabitants of these areas. Their collected writings were published in the 1833 *Narrative of voyages to explore the shores of Africa*.⁷⁹ The arrival of the first permanent European settlement in Natal in 1824 however, saw the first real attempts to write about the Zulu. Four of the first settlers - Francis Farewell, James King, Nathaniel Isaacs and Henry Fynn - wrote material about the Zulu and their relationship with them. An account of Shaka apparently by Farewell, appeared in the *Narrative of voyages to explore the shores of Africa*, while King contributed two articles to the *South African Commercial Advertiser*. These were later published in *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa* (1827). More significant than these were Isaacs' *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa* (1836) and the writings of Fynn, appearing in 1950 in an organised form but reproduced in inter alia Colenso's *Ten weeks in Natal* (1855) and Bird's *Annals of Natal* (1888).⁸⁰

⁷⁸ S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth-Century Natal* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1986), p. 112.

⁷⁹ W. Owen, *Narrative of voyages to explore the shores of Africa, Arabia, and Madagascar* (London, Bentley, 1833).

⁸⁰ G. Thompson, *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa*, ed., V. Forbes, vols. I and II (Cape Town, Van Riebeeck Society, 1967-1968), N. Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa*, ed., L. Herman, vols. I and II (Cape Town, Van Riebeeck Society, 1936), J. Colenso, *Ten Weeks in Natal: A Journal of a First Tour of Visitation among the Colonists and Zulu Kafirs of Natal* (Cambridge, MacMillan, 1855). J. Bird, *Annals of Natal: 1495 to 1845*, 2 volumes (Pietermaritzburg, P. Davis, 1888).

Although there was some contemporary criticism of the way the Zulu were portrayed in these accounts, this set of early images shaped the perceptions of Natal settlers and the British public throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. Their emphasis on the Zulu penchant for violence, their antiquated nature and descriptions of their physicality, set a powerful precedent. Sir Bartle Frere, Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner, who manufactured the causes of the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, was amongst those who read Isaacs' work. His negative and exaggerated portrayal of Zulu society drew inspiration from Isaacs.⁸¹

The motives for the productions of these early 'histories' lie less in the desire to make the Zulu known, than in selfish needs. King, Isaacs and Fynn utilized their writings to bolster their own positions within the colonial framework of South Africa. All were interested in commercial gain in Natal and saw an expanded British settlement as a means to this end. The Zulu were portrayed in an appropriate manner. Fynn had left Natal in 1834 and in 1835 had received a position in the Cape Colonial Government. Financial problems and unstable employment led him back to Natal, where he was given a colonial post in 1852. Facing similar problems, he spent the next decade attempting to obtain a land grant on the basis of his relationship with Shaka and the 'grant' of land which Shaka was supposed to have given Farewell and company. As a result, by the 1850s, Fynn's place within the historiography of the region was well-established.⁸²

⁸¹ Martin, 'British Images of the Zulu', pp. 57-58.

⁸² J. Pridmore, 'Henry Francis Fynn: An Assessment of his Career and An Analysis of the Written and Visual Portrayals of His Role in the History of the Natal Region' (Unpl. PhD, University of Natal, 1996), pp. 34-88. For more on Isaacs, see D. Wylie, 'Autobiography as Alibi: History and Projection in Nathaniel Isaacs' *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa* (1836)' *Current Writing*, 3 (1991); D. Wylie, 'Textual Incest: Nathaniel Isaacs and the Development of the Shaka Myth' *History in Africa*, 19 (1992) and D. Wylie, 'Language and Assassination:

The second phase of the Zulu entry into the popular consciousness occurred from 1843 to 1878 as the Colony of Natal expanded and developed. During this period their images became more differentiated as a result of the expanding European settlement in Natal, together with an influx of missionaries. isiZulu as a language began to receive attention as several dictionaries and books of grammar were produced, while who exactly could be defined as Zulu also attracted comment. Knowledge of the Zulu was also brought home by numerous tours of Britain by black performers, by means of pictures and paintings as well as lectures and talks given by colonists and colonial officials. Much of this, particularly missionary contributions, represented the Zulu as backward, inferior and resistant to change. There were exceptions and Bishop Colenso was most notable here⁸³ but by the 1870s, the rhetoric surrounding the Zulu began to take on a more aggressive character. For by now, the Zulu kingdom had been identified as an obstacle to British political and economic plans in South Africa.

Thus emerged the third phase, the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879. The Zulu now had to be dealt with 'militarily, politically and imaginatively'. The representations of the official discourse of the British government were involved here, together with the popular images generated by the War.⁸⁴ This included the press, which for the first time played a major role in Zulu image-production. The ennoblement of the Zulu in 1879, drew upon the earlier images propagated during the first two phases mentioned above, as well as Victorian notions of romantic adventure. The romance form enabled the reading public to vicariously experience the raw colonial power that their government was able to bring to bear on the Zulu. Victorian fiction

Aspects of white writers' portrayal of Shaka and the Zulus' (Paper delivered at The 'Mfecane' Aftermath': towards a new paradigm, University of the Witwatersrand, 1991), p. 12 and footnote 14.

⁸³ See for example J. Colenso, 'A Sermon of 1879' *Reality*.

⁸⁴ Martin, 'British Images of the Zulu', pp. 80-236 and Ch 6.

involved fantasies about power, played out in fictionalized confrontations with the colonial 'other'.⁸⁵ The Zulu were firmly projected into the forefront of public attention.

The fourth phase involved the work of H. Rider Haggard further popularising the Zulu.⁸⁶ Haggard's first and most significant novel was the 1885 *King Solomon's Mines*⁸⁷. An adventure novel, it achieved immediate success. The years 1958 to 1983 for example, saw Puffin Books reprint *King Solomon's Mines* nineteen times and its story has been filmed five times, one of which was a South African production. The theme of the novel represents a strong continuity in the representation of 'black Africa' and specifically the Zulu and each of its cinematic incarnations is indicative of the prevailing mindset of the period in which it appeared. The images of black people in Haggard's novels gave rise to an element of the Zuluist discourse with which this study is concerned. In *King Solomon's Mines*, Haggard's black characters are portrayed as creatures of antiquity but also in grand terms, in the context of empire and power. Although superficially his primary black characters are fictitious - the Kukuanas - they are drawn from the Zulu. Haggard makes this clear when he states that the Kukuanas are a branch of the Zulu and throughout the book, he links them together.⁸⁸ He was very familiar with the Zulu and South Africa having worked in Natal in the 1870s, eventually leaving in 1881. Two visits followed in 1914 and 1916. Moreover the story of three white men journeying to the land of the Kukuanas parallels the arrival of Fynn and Farewell in Natal and the concept of the rightful heir returning to claim his throne (while obviously inspired by the story of King Richard the Lionheart reclaiming his throne from the evil Prince John - as told

⁸⁵ W. Katz, *Rider Haggard and the Fiction of Empire: A Critical Study of British Imperial Fiction* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 32-33.

⁸⁶ Martin, 'British Images of the Zulu', p. 336.

⁸⁷ H. Rider Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines* (Middlesex, Puffin Books, 1983).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 59 and 201.

in inter alia Scott's 1819 *Ivanhoe*), is also similar to Shaka returning to claim his throne from his half-brother. The character of Umbopa/Ignosi strongly resembles Shaka.

The 1880s were a time of setbacks for the Zulu, as territory, status and influence were lost.⁸⁹ Accordingly the Kukuanas are 'upgraded', these fictitious Zulu are devoid of the problems of a colonial existence. Instead they become 'super-Zulus': an 'imagined purer breed of the same stock'.⁹⁰ Haggard improves or 'civilizes' their customs. The Kukuana's huts have proper doorways and they sit on stools, unlike the Zulu who squat. Myths about the Zulu way of life are transposed, thus allowing Haggard's imagination free rein. The Kukuanas take on a popular Zulu identity of militarism, blind obedience to a tyrannical king, superstitious belief and mass collective action.

Haggard followed *King Solomon's Mines* with *Alan Quartermain*, utilising the same white characters from the former book. In *Alan Quartermain*, the reader is introduced to the epitome of the Zulu warrior, Umslopogaas, who is 'the grand old warrior'⁹¹. His greatness is further enhanced by Haggard's portrayal of Umslopogaas as Shaka's son.⁹² From 1912, Haggard published a trilogy of fictional stories about the Zulu - *Marie*, *Child of Storm* and *Finished*.

The popularity of these novels is best understood in terms of an enhanced interest in the Zulu as a result of the Anglo-Zulu War and then Cetshwayo's visit to England in 1882. Furthermore

⁸⁹ N. Cope, *To Bind the Nation: Solomon kaDinuzulu and Zulu Nationalism 1913 - 1933* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1993), p. 4.

⁹⁰ F. Mannsaker, 'The dog that didn't bark: the subject races in imperial fiction at the turn of the century' in Dabydeen, *The black presence in English literature*, p. 119. Also see D. Bunn, 'Embodying Africa: Description, Ideology, Imperialism, and the Colonial Romance', (Unpl. PhD, Northwestern University, 1987), pp. 170-205.

⁹¹ H. Rider Haggard, *Alan Quartermain* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 260.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 24.

by means of symbolic journeys into Africa and a legendary past, Haggard gave expression to latter nineteenth century and early twentieth century ideas of evolution, race, psychology and sexuality.⁹³ It is not clear whether Haggard created the Victorian image of Africa, or whether the latter created him but his texts became a major source for fiction about Africa. Serious fiction writers such as Joseph Conrad and more popular authors like J.R. Tolkien have drawn upon his imagery, as have films such as the Star Wars trilogy.⁹⁴ In addition, fictional films set in Africa, of which there have been some four-hundred, have also relied on Haggard - together with Edgar Rice Burrough's Tarzan - for their characters and settings:

*Weird settings, erupting volcanoes, valuable treasures, unflappable hunter-heroes, demonic black witches, lost white civilizations, warrior tribes, white goddesses - all poured from Haggard as from a spring, watering blockbusters and serials alike, wetting the edges even of documentaries, and in our own time splashing into science fiction.*⁹⁵

The themes of these novels transcend myth, entering reality because of their deliberate association with the Zulu. Elements of this can be found in much of the literature and film about the Zulu specifically. As later chapters note, the 1952 EA Ritter novel *Shaka Zulu* and the 1980s television series Shaka Zulu drew ideas directly from *King Solomon's Mines*.

Various film versions of his novels further popularized his writings. King Solomon's Mines (1918) and Allan Quartermain (1919) were both local productions, produced by African Film Productions. African Film Productions Ltd, founded in the early part of the twentieth century to compete with American productions as well as to provide films for the years of the First World War, began to produce fiction films on an ever expanding scale. Its King Solomon's Mines was a lavish production with elaborate scenes and decor and every attempt was made to

⁹³ D. Butts, 'Introduction' in *ibid.*, p. xiii.

⁹⁴ N. Etherington, *Rider Haggard* (Boston, Twayne Publishers, 1984), pp. 112-117.

⁹⁵ K. Cameron, *Africa on Film: Beyond Black and White* (New York, Continuum, 1994), pp. 17-18.

do justice to the novel. It had a successful overseas distribution.⁹⁶ The 1937 British version - with the sexual imagery of bare-breasted women - also remained close to the original story, while the 1950 Hollywood production reformulated *King Solomon's Mines* as a romance story and little else. One of the male characters is replaced by a female lead, while the black characters are relegated to the background. This allows the plot to focus in on the sexual tension between the lead actors - Stewart Granger and Deborah Kerr - the film being an adaptation of *King Solomon's Mines* in name only. This was in keeping with the type of films being produced at the time. 1987 brought King Solomon's Mines and Allan Quartermain and the City of Lost Gold. These were both light-hearted action adventure films, produced by the Golan-Globus partnership which produced many such films in the 1980s. Finance was provided by South African investors for both of them and as Chapter Four notes the motivation for this can be located within the South African political climate of the 1980s.

The film 'spin-offs' allowed Haggard's images to persist outside the constraints of the written page, into a fictionalized audio-visual reality. His works are classified as light adventure stories or classics, yet the events of *King Solomon's Mines* become enhanced metaphors for the understanding of African society - witchcraft, violence, the power of Western technology and African apathy towards minerals, thereby justifying colonial conquest.⁹⁷ Moreover, they allowed the adventure tradition to gain a new lease of life long after it had lost respectability among serious writers.⁹⁸ The development of the motion picture had coincided with the height of imperialism. Western filmmakers took advantage of the beauty of the landscape and Africa's customs. In short the African countryside offered natural scenery for fiction,

⁹⁶ T. Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa* (Cape Town, Howard Timms, 1972), p. 319.

⁹⁷ Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, pp. 146-147.

⁹⁸ MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p. 89.

providing a flawed perspective through which the continent was viewed. Films made in the 1930s and 1950s such as King Solomon's Mines made full use of colour, sound and technology, utilising areas of the world which were unfamiliar, sensational and exciting.⁹⁹ The images of Haggard's adventures and the subsequent film adaptations offer therefore, as both fiction and film do, escapist fantasy - the opportunity to transform one's self into another and vicariously experience their 'world'.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, Haggard's fiction is an example of another aspect of western representation which this study will examine. An ambiguity has existed and continues to exist. On the one hand Haggard was familiar with Africa, he had been a resident as noted above, yet his work still perpetuated stereotypes.¹⁰¹ This contradiction, of 'knowing' the Zulu and yet 'not knowing' them is common to images of the Zulu. Martin considers that

*The heroic warriors of 1879 had become in Haggard's terms the faithful bearers of the white man. The Zulu were no longer objects on the frontiers of the British Empire and imagination, but subjects incorporated within Britain's own enlarged world. The domestication of the Zulu, which this study has traced throughout the British encounter in the nineteenth century, had advanced one critical stage further.*¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Ukadike, *Black African Cinema*, pp. 35-36.

¹⁰⁰ J. Boyum, *Double Exposure: Fiction and Film* (New York, Mentor Books, 1985), p. 46.

¹⁰¹ Street, 'Reading the novels of empire' in Dabydeen, *The black presence in English literature*, p. 100.

¹⁰² Martin, 'British Images of the Zulu', p. 336.

CHAPTER ONE THE 'NATIVE QUESTION'

Depicting the Zulu visually was a well-established tradition by the end of the nineteenth century. During this time the theatre was a source of popular entertainment, particularly in Britain. The end of the Anglo-Zulu War was commemorated with two productions The War in Zululand and The Kaffir War, both in 1879. Cetshwayo's visit to Britain was portrayed by The Zulu Chief and Cetewayo at Last in 1882.¹ In 1899, Frank Fillis' 'Savage South Africa' show was staged at Earl's Court in London. Fundamental to the production was the role of a contingent of Zulu.² Such concepts continued to be represented in the metropole during the early part of the twentieth century. In 1914, James Stuart was an adviser on Zulu habits and customs for a stage version of Haggard's *Child of Storm*³ and in 1924 he directed the Zulu part of the Wembley Exhibition, even taking part in it as a Zulu. His notes also detail his ideas for the 1925 Exhibition, which involved selling curios, arranging lectures and displaying photographs.⁴ Such displays and stage shows showed the Zulu in the usual stereotypical manner as warriors, dancers and violent individuals.⁵

It is not surprising, considering the 'fame' of the Zulu even at the turn of the century, that one of the film industry's earliest productions concerned them. A Zulu's Heart was produced in 1908 by the American director D.W. Griffith, the first film to have the Zulu as its subject. The plot involved a Zulu chief and his men (all played by white actors) attacking a Boer wagon, executing the husband and capturing the wife and child. The chief then undergoes a transformation from the 'savage other' to the faithful servant and rescues the two from his

¹ MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, pp. 47-48.

² 'Filistines for London: A Hitch with the Zulus' *Natal Mercury* 1 March 1899.

³ Hamilton, 'Authoring Shaka', p. 468.

⁴ Stuart Papers (hereafter SP), Killie Campbell Africana Library (hereafter KCAL), File 10 #7 and File 9 #24.

⁵ MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, pp. 47-48.

men. Davis points out that Griffith produced many films of this nature but in the seven-minute long A Zulu's Heart, he utilized images which would continue to be used well into the twentieth century.⁶ Naturally, such images would not only signify the Zulu but also the American Indian. A Zulu's Heart's American audiences would have been familiar with the film's scenario. It could have been set in the Western United States. Indeed the wagon and the use of bows and arrows⁷ by Griffith's 'Zulu' situate the film in a familiar pioneering context. Yet such was the standing of the Zulu, that they were chosen as the film's characters. This choice also reflects the reality of the state of the American Indian at the turn of the century. Increasing landlessness meant extreme poverty⁸, tarnishing the image of the fearsome 'Red Indian'. In addition Griffith was not unfamiliar with South Africa as his films were popular in the country.⁹

A Zulu's Heart was followed by Rastus in Zululand (1910), Zululand (1911), A Wild Ride (1913) and The Zulu King (1913). All of these were American productions, featuring the Zulu either as cannibals, people with repulsive behaviours or merely savages. Thus the 'Zulu mystique' was well-established in the United States, not only in South Africa and Britain.¹⁰ The most significant early film to feature the Zulu, was De Voortrekkers, also known as Winning A Continent, produced in 1916. The film re-enacted the Great Trek, including the Battle of Ncome (Blood) River. The Zulu were portrayed as the attacking hordes, with one exception. One of the Zulu becomes the faithful servant to a Trekker family. Having witnessed

⁶ Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, pp. 8 and 124.

⁷ K. Tomaselli, 'Colouring It In': Films in 'Black' or 'White' - Reassessing Authorship' in *Critical Arts* Vol 7 No 1 and 2 1993, pp. 69 and 76.

⁸ R. Hull, 'Native Reserves and Indian reservations: what the South Africans learned from the Americans on dealing with land and indigenous populations', (Sixteenth Biennial Conference of the South African Historical Society, July 1997).

⁹ Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance*, p. 140.

¹⁰ For further comments on these films, see Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, pp. 125-128.

the murder of the Retief Party, he later kills Dingane in combat. This faithful Zulu defeats the savage 'other'.¹¹ The appropriation of nineteenth century images and their reconstruction in a new form, namely film, impacted dramatically on segments of South African society. The original motivation for the film was primarily commercial. The local film company which produced it, African Film Productions Ltd, had been a recent initiative by the South African film industry. Its aim was to produce 'South African films for South African audiences' which could also be sold on the overseas market. In addition there was also a propaganda element to the company's activities.¹² The company had already produced a fiction film utilising the theme of the faithful Zulu servant. The 1916 A Zulu's Devotion had the devoted servant rescuing his mistress from stock thieves.¹³ A major film however, focusing on a source of nationalistic and patriotic pride, provided the commercial boost the company would have needed. De Voortrekkers' first public showing was on 16 December 1916, to an audience of 40 000. This included the Prime Minister, Louis Botha. African Film Production's action in ensuring their project intersected with the celebration of the anniversary of the Great Trek had the desired effect. The film was shown throughout the country to large audiences, was shown in Britain to government officials and continued to be shown on 16 December for many years.¹⁴ The script for De Voortrekkers was co-written by an American and is said to have inspired an American counterpart *The Covered Wagon* (1923). *The Covered Wagon* was the first epic Western film.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 134.

¹² Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance*, pp. 311-312.

¹³ See Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, p. 15 and *ibid.*, p. 312.

¹⁴ For further comment on this film see Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, pp. 128-135, Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance*, pp. 313-316 and I. Knight and I. Castle, *The Zulu War Then and Now* (London, Battle of Britain Prints International, 1993), p. 253.

These rudimentary cinematic or stage images of the Zulu people persisted, without reservation or modification. The notion of the uncivilized black inhabitants of South Africa selfishly liquidating white settlers and therefore Western and Christian civilisation, undoubtedly contributed to feelings of antagonism towards black South Africans. Indeed De Voortrekkers' role in the formation of the apartheid mindset in the 1940s and 1950s for example is worthy of consideration. Its script was co-authored by Gustav Preller, an author whose role in moulding Afrikaner mythology was fundamental.¹⁵ The murders of Retief, his fellow Trekkers and the Battle of Ncome River were all part of the film, to which architects of apartheid would have been exposed in their youth. The psychological implications this might have had for them is considerable. Note the advertising at the time of its first showing:

*The showing of De Voortrekkers with its saga of optimism, courage, endurance and tragedy culminating in the final establishment of a harried people, was superlatively apposite at this annual celebration of their memory.*¹⁶

If these particular images were a cause for celebration, then reality was not. During the decades when these films were made, Zulu socio-political structures and activities underwent further transformation. In 1898, Cetshwayo's son Dinuzulu kaCetshwayo returned to Zululand from exile, recognized by colonial authorities as chief of the Usuthu people and not as king. Moreover the Royal Usuthu faction had lost much of its status and influence, a consequence of the actions of the authorities and the civil wars in Zululand during the preceding decade.¹⁷

¹⁵ L. Thompson, *The Political Mythology of Apartheid* (London, Yale University Press, 1985), p. 36. For more on Preller, see K. Smith, *The Changing Past: Trends in Historical Writing* (Johannesburg, Southern Book Publishers, 1988), pp. 65-69.

¹⁶ Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance*, p. 315.

¹⁷ See inter alia J. Laband, and N. Etherington, 'The reduction of Zululand, 1878-1904' and J. Lambert, 'From independence-rebellion: African society in crisis, c. 1880-1910' in Duminy and Guest *Natal and Zululand* and Laband, *Rope of Sand*, pp. 355-440.

Cope refers to the years between 1879 and 1913 as dark years for the ideals of union, nationhood and sovereignty that the Zulu monarchy had symbolized.¹⁸

The 'tribal' and 'warrior' images displayed in the above films were becoming less authentic in the face of the development of capitalism in South Africa. Large numbers of Zulu males were being drawn into this system as a labour force. This impacted upon traditional relations of power and economy within the rural areas, resulting in adaptation and restructuring.¹⁹ It was a natural and logical reaction to a dominant and dominating economic system. Moreover the pressures of the colonial system led to the outbreak of the 1906 Bambatha Rebellion. Thus even while A Zulu's Heart was entertaining its audiences, its subject was joining the evolving migrant labour contingent or taking up arms against the Natal government. Nevertheless, this opened the way for Dinuzulu to be perceived as the symbolic manifestation of Zulu pride and sentiment.²⁰ The 1906 Rebellion reflected the extent to which this identification of Dinuzulu had progressed, his name - with or without his official sanction - serving to boost morale.²¹

This is one interpretation of the role of Dinuzulu. James Stuart offered another. In a lecture given in 1918, he offered the opinion that the role of Dinuzulu in 1906 reflected the desire of the Zulu to remain within their traditional political and legal structures. The lecture was endorsed by a member of the audience, Maurice Evans.²² This view was part of a source of particular images of the Zulu. The foundation of these images was the so-called 'Native Question', otherwise known as the 'Native Problem'. The concept of the 'Native Question'

¹⁸ N. Cope, *To Bind the Nation: Solomon kaDinuzulu and Zulu Nationalism 1913 - 1933* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1993), pp. 4-5.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-33.

²⁰ J. Lambert, and R. Morrell, 'Domination and Subordination in Natal, 1890-1920' in Morrell, *Political Economy and Identities*, pp. 86-87.

²¹ Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, pp. 4-5.

²² See SP File 2 #1 and File 4 #7b.

did not only concern the Zulu but all black South Africans. However, in Natal it also translated into a Zulu 'question'. During the Natal sittings of the 1903 to 1905 South African Native Affairs Commission, the words 'native' and Zulu were used interchangeably.²³

'Like a vast and dark cloud'²⁴

The black population of South Africa - this 'vast and dark cloud', constituted 67.4% of the population in 1904. By 1921, this figure had risen to 67.8%, some 4,7 million people.²⁵ The 'problem' for the country's administrators was how to 'deal with' this rapidly growing percentage of the population. The Native 'Question' had been an issue in Natal in 1845 when the British had officially assumed power. It was however elevated in significance by the coming of responsible government in 1893. After 1910, the 'problem' became a national one. The issue of Native Policy had been part of the process of negotiation about responsible government, the imperial authorities having attempted to restrict the control of the colonists over blacks. A Native Affairs Department was established, together with a Secretary for Native Affairs (known as the Minister for Native Affairs after 1905) and an Under-Secretary.²⁶ Yet despite the creation of a specific department to manage 'native affairs', the 'problem' remained.

²³ *South African Native Affairs Commission 1903-5* [hereafter SANAC] (Cape Town, Government Printers, 1904-1905), Volume III, KCAL.

²⁴ James Stuart's description of the 'Native Question'. SP File 2 #1.

²⁵ W. Beinart, *Twentieth-century South Africa* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 261.

²⁶ U. Duphelia, 'Frederick Robert Moor and Native Affairs in the Colony of Natal 1893-1903' (Unpl. MA thesis, University of Durban-Westville, 1980), pp. 2-7.

To some the answer seemed obvious. Frederick Moor, Secretary for Native Affairs for twelve years altogether, considered that in nine out of ten people's minds, the 'Native Question' was seen in terms of labour.²⁷ A cheap and constant labour force was seen as integral to the development of Natal, as a means of controlling the Zulu and ultimately solving the 'Native Question'.²⁸ Thus the image of the Zulu as labourer was prevalent.

The concept of the labour force had its difficulties however. The thought of large numbers of black workers congregating together in labour centres led to fears of 'seditious' activities being planned.²⁹ There were concerns over the problems inherent in a properly developed proletariat, such as class conflict.³⁰ Furthermore the black proletariat was small up to the 1920s, as Durban for example had a small industrial base. Thus there were no labour-intensive facilities to draw labour *en masse*. Moreover, the desire to create a black proletariat was further complicated by the apparent lack of 'knowledge' about black South Africans. In November 1903 in the *Natal Mercury's* letter page, James Stuart was requested to 'advise others less familiar with the Zulu than himself on the proper way of treating this fine race'. Even Haggard sought similar assistance from Stuart.³¹ There existed then, a highly ambiguous concept of the Zulu or the 'native'. On the one hand, the common view suggested the opportunity for their development as an effective labour force, that such an occupation was suitable for blacks, while on the other there was a perceived inability to bring this idea to fruition since the 'native' remained a mystery. The early part of the twentieth century therefore saw numerous attempts to assemble a body of knowledge about the 'native'. Understanding

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

²⁸ SANAC Volume III, Evidence of J Chadwick.

²⁹ Duphelia, 'Frederick Robert Moor and Native Affairs', pp. 74-75.

³⁰ S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness' in Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism*, p. 220.

³¹ SP File 4 #14 *Natal Mercury* 20 November 1903 and SP File 4 #6a *Natal Witness* 25 February 1922.

the 'native mind' was in fact a compelling and long-standing feature of racial science.³² The ultimate aim was to redefine the 'native' in a manner appropriate to the creation of a proletariat. Two significant processes during the colonial period in this regard, were the South African Native Affairs Commission between 1903 and 1905 and the Natal Native Affairs Commission, 1906 to 1907. The 1903 to 1905 Commission was the first attempt of the state to examine the 'natives' and their role in the future Union of South Africa.³³

In the official discourse of the South African Native Affairs Commission's report, its task was to gather information on certain matters relating to the Natives and Native Administration and to provide recommendations for a common understanding on Native policy. The Commission represented more than this however. In order to provide adequate labour for the burgeoning capitalist state, black society had to be reorganized. A proletariat had to be 'made'. The basis of such an endeavour was reliable knowledge.³⁴ Maurice Evans encapsulated this desire when he wrote:

*We want to know all possible regarding the feelings, wishes, aspirations, difficulties of these people, accurate knowledge is what we most lack...*³⁵

Such a comment seems questionable in that permanent white or western contact with Zulu in Natal extended back one century. Yet there was a perceived lack of knowledge and accordingly a set of images which failed to measure up to the complexity of early twentieth-century African life.³⁶ Instead images of the Zulu translated into the crudity of the films mentioned above. The Natal Native Affairs Commission had similar aims, although its

³² Dubow, *Illicit Union*, p. 197.

³³ B. Schmidt, *Creating Order: Culture as Politics in 19th and 20th Century South Africa* (Catholic University of Nijmegen, Third World Centre, 1996), p. 148.

³⁴ A. Ashforth, *The Politics of Official Discourse in twentieth century South Africa* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 23-24.

³⁵ M. Evans, *The Native Problem in Natal* (Durban, P Davis and Sons, 1906), p. 18.

³⁶ Lambert, *Betrayed Trust*, p. 186.

immediate context was that of the 1906 disturbances in Natal.³⁷ The establishment of the two Commissions can be viewed as reflecting the formation of Foucault's disciplinary society. The institutionalisation of knowledge and expertise within modern states attempts to make real and objective, social relationships. This process presupposes that the latter is reducible to observable laws. Thus results can be achieved - 'problems' can be 'solved' and those whose lives are under examination become subjects of power.³⁸ Although Foucault locates the formation of his disciplinary society before the nineteenth century³⁹, his ideas offer valuable insight into white-black relations in early twentieth-century South Africa.

The twentieth-century colonial state has been called a state of texts⁴⁰, yet the Commission chose not to rely on a discipline of texts initially but a discipline of orality. Spoken testimony was utilized before codifying it and constructing a multi-volume text. The Commission's phonocentrism required reliable witnesses and for this purpose the Commission chose the 'Native expert/specialist' to provide answers to the types of information sought. It is to these individuals that the Commission journeyed to see or hear the 'facts' through personal observation.⁴¹ It was an attempt to find a scientific solution to the 'Native Problem'.⁴² The role of the expert was fundamental since he or she was perceived as having legitimate and legitimating access to the 'Native'. These specialists by and large were not professional scholars but their occupations or amateur interest brought them into daily contact with the other. For those employed in such structures as the Native Affairs Department, knowledge of

³⁷ *Report of the Native Affairs Commission 1906-1907* [hereafter NAC] (Pietermaritzburg, Government Printers, 1907), KCAL.

³⁸ Ashforth, *The Politics of Official Discourse*, p. 5.

³⁹ R. Chartier, 'The Chimera of Origin' in J. Goldstein (ed.), *Foucault and the Writing of History* (Massachusetts, Blackwell Publishers, 1994), p. 179.

⁴⁰ K. Breckenridge, 'The Powers and Perils of Letters on the Witwatersrand Gold Mines, 1900-1930'. (Paper presented at the History and African Studies Seminar Series, University of Natal, Durban, 19 March 1997).

⁴¹ Ashforth, *The Politics of Official Discourse*, p. 31.

⁴² Dubow, *Illicit Union*, p. 130.

the Zulu was essential.⁴³ The issues making up the 'Native Question' were almost exclusively been spoken of by the South African state's ruling class, as 'technical matters of administration, problems requiring rational solution'.⁴⁴

The South African Native Affairs Commission's Natal witnesses included a mixture of lawyers, local government officials and Zulu sympathisers.⁴⁵ Many of them were also called to give evidence in 1906.⁴⁶ Both Commissions interviewed black witnesses, more Zulu informants were however questioned in the 1906 Commission, a direct result of the Bambatha uprising. Although they were questioned at length, in light of subsequent events and legislation⁴⁷, the lawyers, local government officials and Zulu sympathisers must be seen as constituting a domain of power, responsible for the discursive construction of a schema of images of the Zulu. The probings of the Commissions took into account the status and conditions of blacks, how natural advancement should proceed, education, land tenure, Native Law and administration, use of alcohol and the extent of polygamy.⁴⁸ Apparently knowledge of such totalizing issues was restricted to the 'native expert', for as Stuart commented in a lecture about Zulu rural life

*So different from what we see in Durban is the account I have prepared, that to many I fear it will appear abstract and consequently difficult to follow.*⁴⁹

Thus outside the metropole the 'other' was also the 'unknown'⁵⁰. Accordingly it is to the 'experts' that citizens turned for guidance in how to treat the Zulu. This need was a common

⁴³ Pridmore, 'Henry Francis Fynn', p. 153.

⁴⁴ Ashforth, *The Politics of Official Discourse*, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁵ SANAC Volume I, Annexure no. 6.

⁴⁶ Report of NAC.

⁴⁷ See Schmidt, *Creating Order*, p. 149.

⁴⁸ SANAC Volume I, Annexure no. 1 and Report of NAC.

⁴⁹ SP File 2 #3 'Studies in Zulu Law and Custom' (Printed as a pamphlet).

⁵⁰ See for example Evans, *The Native Problem in Natal*, p. 5.

phenomenon throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Experts responded with numerous publications and the following chapters will assess these. They read like manuals or early 'do-it-yourself' guides. In this sense Stuart and his peers become 'handlers', producing texts on how to handle these 'wild animals'. Stuart epitomizes this group.

James Stuart, assistant magistrate of Durban in the early years of twentieth century, collected oral information from a large number of Zulu between 1897 and 1924.⁵¹ The letters and newspaper clippings in Stuart's collected papers reveal the respect he commanded. His lectures, articles and publications were treated as solutions to the 'Native Problem', 'no one was a better authority on the natives than Stuart'⁵² and the *Westminster Gazette* of August 1913, in commenting on Stuart's *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, commended the book to South African leaders and home government officials:

*The book, dealing with the particular case of the Zulus, becomes by his careful treatment and restrained passion a [note] manual of reference for all those who believe that when Evolution placed in our hands the means to overwhelm and rule races not so competent to struggle, we were in no way absolved from considering by what method we could lead the ruled to the highest realization of the divine powers latent in them.*⁵³

Of all the 'Native experts', Stuart's views - although conservative - were more nuanced⁵⁴ and Hamilton's positive view of Stuart as a mediator between cultures and reformer of 'native policy'⁵⁵ reflects his ideological position. Yet in practice however, he too was given to dramatic utterances about the 'native problem' as seen above. He considered that blacks were not ready for European life⁵⁶, even though many were very much a part of 'European life' in the latter's labour centres. Stuart's domain of power, along with Bryant, Harriet Colenso and

⁵¹ J. Wright, 'Making the James Stuart Archive' *History in Africa* 23 (1996), pp. 335-337.

⁵² SP File 4 #24a.

⁵³ SP File 4 #12a.

⁵⁴ See Hamilton, 'Authoring Shaka', p. 479 for comments here.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 478-479.

⁵⁶ SP File 4 #9.

several of the Zulu 'elite', extended to language. The September 1905 Orthography Conference they arranged, can be seen as part of the 'Native Question'. Although of course, it grew out of a necessary and useful desire to standardize isiZulu, the latter's appropriation and transformation into the written word also opened an avenue for further control. Lacan has argued that language constitutes the individual as a subject and thus effective knowledge of the 'other's' means of communication provides for enhanced methods of control.⁵⁷ The Orthography Conference was not without precedence. There was an established tradition of philology in South Africa which had been utilized to search for the origins of the black inhabitants of the country⁵⁸ and in turn a means of control.

Stuart was not averse to making a 'case' for himself as an 'expert'. By the end of the 1920s, he still maintained that whites had no experience of black life and therefore could not govern them.⁵⁹ To 'introduce' blacks to European culture and to act as guardians, he called for the formation of a council in his testimony to the 1903 to 1905 Commission and continued to argue for this into the 1920s.⁶⁰ He would have been an obvious choice for a position on the Council. As it was, he served on the 1906 to 1907 Natal Native Affairs Commission, moving from witness in 1903 to 1905 to an official capacity in the second Commission. Many of Stuart's peers, with the exception of Bryant and Harriet Colenso, did not share the love of his subject to the same degree. Yet they felt justified in testifying and writing about the Zulu. The beginning of the twentieth century had seen an increase in racialism among Durban's white inhabitants. This was not unique but was a feature of the world-wide influence of Social Darwinism.⁶¹ In the aftermath of the South African War, efforts were made to define the

⁵⁷ Bunn, 'Embodying Africa', pp. 51-52.

⁵⁸ Dubow, *Illicit Union*, pp. 76-82.

⁵⁹ SP File 2 #5 and #15.

⁶⁰ See SANAC Volume III, Evidence of J Stuart and SP File 2 #5.

⁶¹ A. Duminy, 'Towards Union, 1900-1910' Duminy and Guest, *Natal and Zululand*, p. 402.

significance of race.⁶² James McCord, an American doctor who practised particularly among the Zulu community at the turn of the century, wrote of the petty discrimination of the white city dwellers when his attempts to build a hospital for blacks were obstructed. His idea of a 'native medical school', as he puts it, was regarded as 'mildly insane'.⁶³ A number of the Commissions' experts fell into this category of looking upon the Zulu as primitive beings. Robert Plant, the Senior Inspector of Native Schools, provides one such example.

The Commissions' questions directed to Plant dealt, of course, with the impact of education on blacks - did education make them more intelligent or did it make them political, were among the questions he had to answer.⁶⁴ Stimulated perhaps by the Commission, Plant published his *The Zulu in Three Tenses*⁶⁵, allowing him to disseminate his views to a wider audience. Indeed such is the level of expertise that Plant accords himself, that the aim of the book was to suggest a policy for the 'Native Question'. This sense of authority, of being in a position of 'knowing what to do with the native' was shared by the Commission's informants⁶⁶ and publications of the period. Such paternalism can be found in Maurice Evan's contribution *The Native Problem in Natal* and the pseudonymous *The Native Question*. As the latter puts it, the noble policy of sympathy was necessary in approaching the 'Question'.⁶⁷

More extreme than paternalistic attitudes, are the vagaries of nineteenth and early twentieth-century ethnography. Features of this can be found in the writings of Plant, Evans and another

⁶² Dubow, *Illicit Union*, p. 129.

⁶³ J. McCord, *My Patients Were Zulus* (London, Frederick Muller Limited, 1951), pp. 145-157 and 201.

⁶⁴ SANAC Vol. III. Evidence of R Plant and Evidence of the Native Affairs Commission 1906-1907: Evidence of R Plant.

⁶⁵ R. Plant, *The Zulu in Three Tenses: being a forecast of the Zulu's future in the light of his past and present* (Pietermaritzburg, P Davis and Sons, 1905).

⁶⁶ See SANAC Volume III Evidence of JY Gibson, FR Moor, F Addison amongst others.

⁶⁷ Evans, *The Native Problem in Natal* and 'Cavaet Natalia', *The Native Question* (No other details, 1908), p. 38.

witness, James Chadwick, at that time Durban's Acting Chief Magistrate. The Comaroffs have shown the way in which nineteenth and early twentieth-century ethnographers identified African physiology as primitive or savage.⁶⁸ Physiognomy was a powerful way of registering 'otherness', particularly since anatomy seemed to confirm the inferiority of black physiology.⁶⁹ The image of the black body was also a source of puzzlement. Bryant for example had difficulties in comparing the Zulu he knew, with the image portrayed in nineteenth-century literature. Early writers emphasized the perfect physique of the Zulu, yet Bryant comments that 'nowadays we notice nothing extraordinarily arresting therein...'. He even suggests, albeit obliquely, that the Zulu physique may have declined.⁷⁰ Indeed, much of Chapter Four of Bryant's *The Zulu People as they were before the White Man came*, is devoted to Zulu physicality. Their colour, hair and even their feet are discussed at length. Bryant does not recognise that his image of the Zulu does not tally with the portrayals of nineteenth-century literature, since the latter were exaggerations.

Both Plant and Evans likened blacks to animals, for Plant particularly, the Zulu was a 'Splendid Animal'.⁷¹ His concept of black education is limited to psychological engineering: 'but just as we breed a particular strain into cattle, so here school teaching for three or four consecutive generations will accomplish much'.⁷² Yet in the same book, he states that one cannot think of blacks as animals.⁷³ This is a further indication of the ambiguous image of the 'other'. For the Natal Native Affairs Commission, animal-like qualities - fecundity and virility

⁶⁸ Comaroff and Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, p. 217.

⁶⁹ Dubow, *Illicit Union*, p. 23.

⁷⁰ A. Bryant, *The Zulu People as they were before the White Man came* (Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, 1967), p. 93.

⁷¹ See SP File 4 #24b for Chadwick's comments and Plant, *The Zulu in Three Tenses*, p. 61. Also see Evidence of the NAC: Evidence of WR Gordon (Where he defines 'native').

⁷² Plant, *The Zulu in Three Tenses*, p. 104.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

- meant that the black population would not disappear, nor could it be destroyed.⁷⁴ Even Stuart does not escape entirely from this evolutionist racial paradigm. In assessing black development he uses the word metamorphosis.⁷⁵ This is a particularly biological or evolutionary term.

These activities were not isolated. The South African colonies' attempts to provide a solution to the 'native question' also received international recognition. In 1905, the year the SANAC completed its task, the British Association (a scientific body) held its annual meeting together with the recently established SAAAS (the South African Association for the Advancement of Science) in South Africa. The Colonial Office encouraged such scientific links as a means by which links between imperial motherland and colony could be sustained.⁷⁶ The influence of imperialistic sentiment on South Africa will be discussed in the next chapter.

Thus during the first two decades of the twentieth century, there existed an established set of images of the Zulu. None had any real bearing on reality, except where the issue of labour intersected with them. On screen, the Zulu was the warrior and source of entertainment, while in everyday life, they were the unknown. Hostility to the 'native' fully embracing Western 'civilization' was further complicated by virtue of the fact that 'uncivilized' behaviour such as alcoholism was profitable for the colonial state. Marks argued in her important *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa*, that segregation was a collaborative process. As a result of structurally dependent positions within the political economy and the state, black intellectuals such as the kholwa, chiefs and the Zulu royal family found themselves co-

⁷⁴ Report of the NAC, pp. 4-5.

⁷⁵ SP File 4 #26.

⁷⁶ Dubow, *Illicit Union*, p. 35.

operating with government officials. There were therefore ambiguities of ideology and behaviour.⁷⁷ At the same time however, white officials, 'native experts' and interested parties were themselves caught in this position. They too were dependent upon black labour for economic growth, trapped within the paradigms of the ambiguity. Chadwick bemoans the access of blacks to Durban but on the other hand admits that the removal of fines for certain transgressions of the law would have meant a reduction in Borough revenue.⁷⁸ These sentiments were shared by R.C. Alexander (at that time Durban Police Superintendent) in his testimony to the Commission. In 1903 revenue collected from fines, together with black registration fees, paid for Durban's police force.⁷⁹ The image was therefore a complex one.

Quite paradoxically, colonial officials' knowledge about the Zulu did not fail them when dealing with the blacks politically. The Union government was not slow in utilising themes of militarism and Zulu masculinity and a poem was specially composed by R.C.A. Samuelson to recruit Zulu soldiers for service during the First World War. It used words such as 'Bayede' (the Zulu Royal salute) and emphasized Zulu militarism, masculinity and bravery (see Appendix A).⁸⁰ Indeed, the Zulu role or more generally the role of blacks in both World Wars resulted in the usual paranoia and debate, as the principles of the 'Question' were necessarily involved. During the First World War, the Union government recruited a Native Labour Contingent, while during the Second World War, a Native Military Corps was established. The formation of these and the participation of blacks raised questions about their readiness for war, how it would affect them and whether they should be armed or not. When the decision was taken in September 1916 to raise the Native Labour Contingent, it was regarded

⁷⁷ Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence*, pp. 1-5.

⁷⁸ SP File 4 #26.

⁷⁹ SANAC Volume III, Evidence of RC Alexander.

⁸⁰ Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, pp. 75-77.

as something of an experiment, one which as it turned out, proved 'so entirely satisfactory'.⁸¹ Serving in a non-combatant role only, by the time of the Contingent's disbandment in January 1918, 21 000 men had left for the Western Front⁸². During the Second World War, the decision was also taken not to arm them, although some were provided with assegais and knobkerries, resulting in an outcry. Some arming of black soldiers did occur in East and North Africa however, for the purpose of guarding prisoners and stores and in another 'experiment', Zulu from 21 Field Regiment were trained in artillery. Despite 'progressing well', they were replaced by white artillerymen before the regiment was posted to North Africa.⁸³

As noted above, the participation of blacks in the Wars led to varying opinions. For example, involvement in the First World War was considered by some as a mistake. Deploying Social Darwinist thinking, critics cited the European climate as detrimental to the black physique, since it was not their 'natural environment', the different social conditions - in other words, the different attitude to race (particularly of concern were sexual liaisons with Frenchwomen) - and the fact that Durban could not afford to have its labour force weakened.⁸⁴ To avoid difficulties with the prevailing social conditions in France, black labourers were kept isolated as much as possible and officers were drawn from the Native Affairs Department and from the mines - men who 'knew' blacks and were familiar with the racial laws. Stuart was one of these.⁸⁵ On the other hand, Sir Godfrey Lagden, who chaired the South African Native Affairs Commission, considered that blacks should be allowed to fight but only against 'coloured

⁸¹ S. Bennet Ncwana, *Souvenir of the Mendi Disaster February 21, 1917 and Roll of Honour* (No other details), p. 26.

⁸² A. Grundlingh, 'Black Men in a White Man's War: The Impact of the First World War on South African Blacks'. (African Studies Seminar Paper, University of the Witwatersrand, August 1982), p. 2.

⁸³ D. Friend, 'The Non-European Army Services' in J. Keene, (ed.) *South Africa in World War II: A Pictorial History* (Cape Town, Human & Rousseau, 1995), p. 161.

⁸⁴ J.S. Marwick Papers (hereafter MP), Newscutting Book, KCM 3196, editorial from the *Natal Mercury* 12 September 1916.

⁸⁵ Grundlingh, 'Black Men in a White Man's War', p. 2 and Wright, 'Making the James Stuart Archive', p. 334.

people more or less of their own status'. On their return, they would feel the benefits of having fought for and lived under Imperial rule. Moreover, they would see it as a great adventure.⁸⁶

The role of the Zulu in these activities led to familiar notions of militarism. A *Natal Mercury* editorial considered that since the Zulu were a 'fighting race', better use could have been made of them in East Africa during World War One had a proper military contingent been raised. Another observer, although opposed to blacks as combatants, imagined the following:

*...the vision of a Zulu impi in crescent formation swinging down upon a German trench is worthy of the most brilliant pages of a Rider Haggard.*⁸⁷

Recruiting from among the Zulu during the First World War became an aspect of the relations between the Zulu Royal Family and the government. Since the government refused to accommodate Dinuzulu's successor, Solomon kaDinuzulu, he attempted to obstruct the recruitment. To facilitate recruitment, he was recognized as Chief of the Usuthu.⁸⁸ There was some Zulu response to the recruitment campaign. Up to June 1917, 629 men from Natal enrolled and a journalist for the *Newcastle Daily Journal* wrote in March 1917 that he had no doubt that the Allies would win the War, after seeing 'splendid-looking Zulu' labourers.⁸⁹ In the early part of World War Two, when the Native Military Guards were formed, the 1st Battalion was made up of Zulu soldiers.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ MP, Newscutting Book, from *The Bloemfontein Post and Sunday Times* 10 September 1916.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, pp. 75-77.

⁸⁹ H. Johnston, *The Black Man's Part in the War* (London, Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton Kent & Co. Ltd., 1917), p. 79.

⁹⁰ S. Horwitz, 'The Non-European War Record in South Africa' in E. Hellman (ed.), *Handbook on Race Relations in South Africa* (Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1949), p. 539.

However, the Zulu, from whom the government expected a mass of recruits - as they were the martial race *par excellence* - provided proportionately few.⁹¹ The situation was the same with the Second World War. When proportionally few Zulu volunteered to fight in the Union Defence Force during the Second World War, Tracey attributed this to the loss of the regimental system ergo the Zulu military tradition.⁹² He did not consider that there were not many incentives to join. In 1916, the Natal authorities had hoped to raise 2000 Zulu and thus they renewed their efforts, recognising Solomon and involving John Dube in their attempts. Dube wrote a letter in *Ilanga lase Natal*, later published in the *Natal Mercury* in English. It was entitled 'Arise, Ye Zulus' and was a piece of propaganda calling on the Zulu not to embarrass their kholwa leaders but to serve the British monarch.⁹³

Despite these actions, Zulu recruitment was not a success, particularly during the First World War. Reasons for this included the preventative actions of white farmers, who did not want to lose labourers and a poor wage of £3 per month, not commensurate with the danger.⁹⁴ In addition, the accusation was levelled against the authorities that 'our children are being taken so that they may be drowned in the sea'.⁹⁵ This was a reference to the sinking of the SS *Mendi*, a troopship which had sunk in the English Channel on 21 February 1916, while transporting men of the Labour Contingent to France. After colliding with the liner *Darro* in thick fog, the *Mendi* sunk within twenty minutes and 633 of the 894 on board were drowned. Grundlingh notes that with time, this event gained a mythology of its own, as the confused events of 21 February underwent mythification and the 'warriors' on board were said to have either lined

⁹¹ See MP, Newscutting Book, from the *Natal Mercury* 4 October 1916 and A. Grundlingh, *Fighting Their Own War: South African Blacks and the First World War* (Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1987), p. 65.

⁹² H. Tracey, *Zulu Paradox* (Johannesburg, Silver Leaf Books, 1948), p. 31.

⁹³ MP, Newscutting Book.

⁹⁴ Grundlingh, *Fighting Their Own War*, p. 74.

⁹⁵ MP, Newscutting Book, from *Natal Advertiser* 25 September 1917.

up on the deck and stoically awaited their fate or performed a 'dance of death' as the ship sunk.⁹⁶

During the period of the First World War meanwhile, new forces had emerged which pointed the way to a restructuring amongst the Zulu royal family. The various role players in this process developed the discourse of 'Zuluism' discussed in the 'Introduction'. John Wright has argued that in Natal, colonial ideologues such as Gibson, Plant and Stuart supported this process.⁹⁷ Stuart was certainly in favour of the maintenance of tradition. As noted above, he felt that the Zulu did not wish to free themselves from their established political and legal structures.⁹⁸ The 1916 recognition of Solomon had been facilitated by pro-Royal family officials.⁹⁹ The involvement of the experts was not limited to external control however. Harriet Colenso for example played a major role in the dispute over who should succeed Dinuzulu, by actively supporting Solomon.¹⁰⁰

Although there were exceptions, particularly Stuart and Colenso¹⁰¹, the general white image of the Zulu in Natal can be seen in the words of Plant to the Natal Native Affairs Commission:

*You will never govern any savage race to the best advantage, until you have got into sympathy with it...A native policy, to be of any practical value, must be marked by the presence of the constructive element, and should, commencing at the point at which we find the native, be calculated to lead him step by step, to that other point where we wish him to be.*¹⁰²

⁹⁶ See Ncwana, *Souvenir of the Mendi Disaster*, p. 3; Grundlingh, 'Black Men in a White Man's War', p. 16 and Grundlingh, *Fighting Their Own War*, p. 140.

⁹⁷ Wright, 'Notes on the Politics of being 'Zulu'', p. 9.

⁹⁸ SP File 2 #1, p. 2.

⁹⁹ Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, p. 78.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁰¹ See 'The Principles of Native Government in Natal: An Address by Miss Colenso' (Delivered to the Pietermaritzburg Parliamentary Debating Society) April 1908 in *Zulu Pamphlets* Volume II, p. 15, KCAL.

¹⁰² Evidence of the NAC, Evidence of R Plant.

This point would be a manageable labour force and a cost-effective 'native' administration. As such, 'Natal Colonial ideologues' lent their support to Zuluism. Within the black colonial community, the racialism and segregationist attitudes of the colonial authorities brought Zulu traditionalists and kholwa closer together, as did a failure of the black elite to construct a South African black pan-activism. A leading kholwa in this process was John Dube, who moved closer to the Royal family particularly after his break with the South African Native National Congress (later the ANC) in 1917.¹⁰³ The kholwa were quick to see the significance of Solomon and called for enlightened advisors to assist him. He was not to be a political leader but rather a source of identity, pride and inspiration.¹⁰⁴ These moves were assisted by pro-Royal family officials such as the new Chief Native Commissioner, C. Wheelwright (who had replaced the anti-Royal family R Addison) and the new Magistrate at Nongoma, O. Fynney. In addition Union in 1910 led to a national government which was less anti-Zulu and Natal was no longer as fearful of the Zulu, since it was now part of the Union. The Prime Minister, Louis Botha, was instrumental in Dinuzulu's release after his imprisonment for his alleged involvement in the 1906 Rebellion for example.¹⁰⁵

The First Inkatha

A recent study of Zulu ethnic identity has suggested that it did not originate in the Zulu kingdom of the 1820s. Instead identity was defined in political, economic and gender roles during this time. Moreover the Zulu ruling elite had attempted to exclude incorporated groups

¹⁰³ Lambert and Morrell, 'Domination and Subordination in Natal', pp. 90-91.

¹⁰⁴ Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, pp. 48-49.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

such as the *amalala* from the opportunity of making claims of kinship. Significantly, it was European traders and settlers, followed by the official Cape government discourse which began to refer to black people in the Natal region as 'Zulu'.¹⁰⁶ Even by the time of the Anglo-Zulu War, Zulu unity was a construct of European observers. The number of black troops who served on the side of the British and the difficulties Cetshwayo had in controlling his kingdom after Isandlwana, reflected the deep divisions of a heterogeneous society.¹⁰⁷ The War was followed by internal conflict and civil war. By the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, both as a result of the increasing alienation of black people in Natal¹⁰⁸ and the forces of imperialism and colonialism, new conditions for alignments with the Zulu royal family were established. 1898 particularly assisted in this development. This year saw the incorporation of Zululand into Natal. The Colonial Office had refused to allow this until Dinuzulu, who had been exiled at St. Helena for nine years, returned. As noted above, he did return but only as chief of the Usuthu.

Different sets of claims to Zulu identity began to emerge. The primary role players in this process were the royal family centred around the king, the emerging Christianized kholwa, colonial officials and previously hostile chiefs south of the Thukela. The role of kholwa intellectuals such as John Dube was amplified due to the fact that many chiefs were illiterate.¹⁰⁹ Furthermore segregation led them to search for new constituencies, an avenue for which was afforded by the Zulu monarchy. The historical and cultural tradition of the Zulu

¹⁰⁶ J. Wright and C. Hamilton, 'Ethnicity and Political Change before 1840' in Morrell *Political Economy and Identities*, p. 29.

¹⁰⁷ R. Morrell et al, 'Colonialism and the Establishment of white domination, 1840-90' in Morrell *Political Economy and Identities*, p. 50.

¹⁰⁸ J. Lambert, *Betrayed Trust: Africans and the State in Colonial Natal* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1995) p. 187.

¹⁰⁹ T. Nuttall, 'Segregation with Honour'? The Making of Zulu Ethnicities in Natal during the 1930s'. (Paper presented at the Conference on Ethnicity, Society and Culture in Natal, University of Natal, 14-16 September 1992), p. 6.

and the continued existence of this tradition in popular consciousness paved the way for the construction of a Zulu nationalism.¹¹⁰ As noted in the Introduction, the area between the Phongolo and Mzimkhulu Rivers did not have a single Zulu identity in the nineteenth century but Wright considers that the development of urban areas such as Durban and Johannesburg may well have drawn black workers from the Natal region into accepting the collective Zulu identity others had given them. This would have stemmed from competition over resources and employment in these areas.¹¹¹ Ethnic mobilisation was most effective when ideology intersected with specific material grievances. Leaders like Natal Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) leader A.W.G. Champion, therefore, utilized popular consciousness by appealing both to popular class interests and Zuluness.¹¹²

Established in 1919, the ICU was a voice for a broad range of popular grievances, both urban and rural. Tension between the main ICU and Champion led to the latter forming his own ICU yaseNatal in 1928. Sensitive to prevailing sentiments, Champion allowed it to become more Zulu-orientated. In Durban, which was Champion's most important urban constituency, Zulu custom and tradition had been transformed into popular culture, reflected in ngoma dancing for example. In 1929 Champion referred to workers as Zulu, and when addressing their supporters, ICU leaders used phrases that had been used when giving instructions to the amabutho or age-regiments in the nineteenth century.¹¹³ At one meeting, a praise singer hailed Champion as the successor to Shaka.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth-Century Natal* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1986), p. 111.

¹¹¹ Wright, 'Notes on the Politics of being 'Zulu'', pp. 8-10.

¹¹² Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, p. 181.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 181-193.

¹¹⁴ Nuttall, 'Segregation with Honour', p. 8.

In 1924 a rival organisation, Inkatha, was founded after extensive work by the kholwa. The name was an appropriation of the Inkatha - the 'sacred coil' of the Zulu nation. Destroyed during the Anglo-Zulu War, it had been a symbol of Zulu unity. This new organisation had a financial function initially, paying off the royal family's debts and using the funds for the 'betterment of the Zulu nation'.¹¹⁵ The government did not stop Inkatha's fund-raising, seeing it as a counter to the ICU. Within four years of its establishment, Inkatha underwent reorganisation, making it a more attractive ally of the state. This process was aimed at providing a single Zulu identity for all black inhabitants of the province, thereby ending 'inter-tribal' conflict, to reinforce the traditional leadership as well as the role of the elite, to open the way to expand the reserve systems (which Inkatha supported) and therefore segregation and to call for greater autonomy for the Zulu nation, under Solomon and the leadership of Inkatha.¹¹⁶

White business and politicians were actively involved in this restructuring, including G. Heaton Nichols and JS. Marwick. Natal Members of Parliament, they had co-operated closely in parliament to defend the interests of Natal farmers and to emphasize their province's view of the 'native problem' as discussed above. Heaton Nichols was also regarded as an expert on the 'natives', having lived in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) and farmed in Zululand. He stressed the importance of the Zulu Royal House as a bulwark against African nationalism and forged links with the kholwa.¹¹⁷ In February 1928 he wrote a speech for Solomon, who used it in an address to the Zulu National Training Institution at Nongoma, near Ulundi, where 'future chiefs of the Zulu race are trained'. The advert for it read '...Zulus must develop along their

¹¹⁵ Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence*, p. 69.

¹¹⁶ Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, p. 217.

¹¹⁷ S. Becker, 'George Heaton Nichols and the formulation of 'Native Policy' 1927-1936', (Unpl. MA, University of Natal, 1987), pp. 27-32.

own lines: Warriors Yesterday, Peaceful toilers today'. Heaton Nichols' network of associates ensured that the then *Natal Advertiser* gave the speech much publicity. It printed the full text of the speech, which was a conservative call for enlightened leadership by tribal authorities.¹¹⁸

The participation of white business and politics, together with the active support of the Native Affairs Department, ensured that the 1928 Inkatha meeting was the largest ever held. Dube acted as the link between the white and black factions involved in this process, having positioned himself as willing to collaborate in the evolving state policy of separate development.¹¹⁹

After 1928, official opinion towards Inkatha changed.¹²⁰ The Secretary for Native Affairs opposed it and the Chief Native Commissioner, Wheelwright was not in favour of appointing Solomon king. Part of the reason for this was that in both 1925 (when the Prince of Wales visited) and 1930 (the Governor General's visit), Solomon, to the dismay of officials, used these occasions to boost his role in front of his followers. This opposition was ended in 1933 when Harry Lugg was appointed as Chief Native Commissioner, the same year that Solomon was succeeded by a regent, Mshiyeni. This offered new possibilities for ethnic mobilisation as Lugg 'could work with' Mshiyeni. Lugg also 'knew' the Zulu, having grown up on a farm and worked for the government since the beginning of the century, mainly in 'Native Affairs'. His *Life under a Zulu Shield* was written to inform whites of the social background of the Zulu.¹²¹ The blurb refers to it as making an important contribution to 'Nguni anthropology'. Lugg's knowledge led to his role in recruiting Zulu for the 1955 film *Untamed* (see below). By the 1930s however, Inkatha as a political organisation went into decline. This was due to

¹¹⁸ 'Warriors Yesterday, Peaceful toilers today' *Natal Advertiser* 7 February 1928.

¹¹⁹ Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, pp. 193-197.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222.

¹²¹ H. Lugg, *Life under a Zulu Shield* (Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, 1975), p. 1.

Solomon's unreliability, financial problems and the activities of the ANC. Inkatha however, continued to exist as a cultural movement, rather than a political one. Its ideas exerted a strong influence on Zulu politics, Zulu 'tradition', Zulu nationhood and the symbols of Solomon and Inkatha remained central to Natal kholwa thinking. By the end of the 1930s for example, Inkatha focused on a cultural project to erect a memorial to Shaka.

Zulu nationalism continued to be supported however by the formation of the Zulu society in 1936, financed by the Native Affairs Department. In 1939, government agreed to recognize Mshiyeni as Paramount. Mshiyeni was prepared to co-operate with the government and he assisted in quelling rural violence for example. The Zulu Society's second annual conference held in Durban in January 1938 was a significant display of ethnic mobilisation.¹²²

The Zulu Paradox

By the end of the 1920s, the desire for knowledge continued, since from 1910 there had been little success in the creation of a uniform 'native policy'.¹²³ In 1929 the National European-Bantu Forum (which established the Institute of Race Relations) called for a 'thorough scientific investigation by trained experts into the economic condition of the Native people of South Africa as a necessary preliminary to deal adequately and usefully with the many problems connected with the development of the Native people'.¹²⁴ 'Native experts' continued to offer advice to the reading public. Stuart persisted in his call for enlightened leadership of

¹²² Nuttall, 'Segregation with Honour', pp. 4-12.

¹²³ Becker, 'George Heaton Nichols', p. 23.

¹²⁴ Ashforth, *The Politics of Official Discourse*, p. 71.

blacks, emphasising that the government should take the lead in this.¹²⁵ R.C.A. Samuelson, interpreter to Cetshwayo during the latter's captivity after the Anglo-Zulu War and informant to the 1903 to 1905 South African Native Affairs Commission, produced his *Long, Long Ago*. Samuelson clearly had great empathy for the Zulu, having been involved with them. He rues the affect whites have had on the Zulu. Nevertheless his altruism remained ambiguous. Samuelson presents three major images of the Zulu: the pre-colonial Zulu who is noble and forthright but secondly and simultaneously cruel and barbaric. Thirdly there is the Zulu who is the contemporary of Samuelson and despite vestiges of the first image, has been corrupted and mistreated by European society. His view of the cruel nineteenth-century Zulu is unemphatic however. He includes the image but when giving examples of Zulu cruelty, he provides mitigating circumstances. For example, Samuelson remarks that 'smelling-out' seems to have been caused by a criminal element in society, something which Cetshwayo kaMpande acted against.¹²⁶ Nevertheless, he remains unable to fully transcend the boundaries of the dominant racial consensus.¹²⁷

Long, Long Ago stands in contrast to another work which appeared contemporaneously - MacKeurtan's *The Cradle Days of Natal*. A history of the region, MacKeurtan's starting point is the European sea voyages. The Zulu remain an alien people, a cruel, threatening civilisation of secondary importance. A major theme of the book is in fact black-white hostility.¹²⁸ An examination of MacKeurtan's activities reveals the reasons for this attitude. In 1922, he formed the Democratic Reform League with the aim of promoting harmony between British

¹²⁵ See SP File 2 #5.

¹²⁶ R. Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago* (Durban, TW Griggs and Co, 1974), pp. 35-36. (Originally published 1929).

¹²⁷ Dubow, *Illicit Union*, p. 1.

¹²⁸ G. MacKeurtan, *The Cradle Days of Natal* (Durban, TW Griggs and Co, 1972), pp. 110-195. (Originally published 1930).

and Boer and their supremacy over other races.¹²⁹ Thus he is supportive of the endeavours and bravery of the Great Trek¹³⁰ and dismissive of the Zulu as fit for segregation.

The white view of the Zulu remained ambiguous as the century continued. In 1948 the ethnomusicologist Hugh Tracey's *Zulu Paradox* was published. The first of a series about the 'native races' of South Africa, it appears to offer the reader an opportunity to 'understand' the Zulu people in a historical and contemporary light. However, Tracey's book does not approach this task simply. It is a complex narrative operating on a number of different levels. The choice of the title *Zulu Paradox* is significant. Throughout the book there are attempts to show the paradoxes of twentieth-century Zulu life. The contradictions of this existence appear in the way they have been portrayed, who they are and where they live.

Tracey recognizes there are differences between European images of the Zulu and how they see themselves. In addition the lifestyle of the Zulu has changed. They have become a 'cog in an economic wheel...'. A further paradox concerns the difficulties of adapting to life in the industrial areas of the province.¹³¹ In dealing with such issues, Tracey engages major problems affecting black labourers in South Africa. The absorption of increasing numbers of black labourers into the industrial workforce during this period, brought numerous structural and psychological changes to previously rural-based modes of existence.¹³² Tracey reminds his reader of such developments as he attempts to describe the Zulu 'way of life'. The text however, fails to deal with these issues meaningfully. The potential for empathy is lost as *Zulu*

¹²⁹ P. Thompson, *Natalians First: Separatism in South Africa 1901-1961* (Johannesburg, Southern Book Publishers, 1990), p. 23.

¹³⁰ MacKeurtan, *The Cradle Days of Natal*, p. 232-237. For more on *The Cradle Days of Natal*, see Pridmore, 'Henry Francis Fynn', pp. 150-152.

¹³¹ Tracey, *Zulu Paradox*, pp. 14-39

¹³² W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994), p.138.

Paradox uses images of the Zulu 'way of life' to provide whites with a 'manual' on how to deal with Zulu employees. The Zulu, particularly the male, is trapped in a web of nostalgic fantasy¹³³ and must be dealt with accordingly. Much like one might teach a puppy how to behave properly, the Zulu needs to be treated with respect but also firmness. This is to propel him from his world of fantasy and violence into the superior Western civilization of the twentieth century. Once arrived, he will start a 'new Zulu race', which will finally be able to comprehend the modern world.

Tracey variously describes the Zulu as being a 'a challenge to men of ability', a 'fighter, a dandy and a bully', 'aggressive by nature, depraved and greedy', 'tyrants', 'a tribe born too late', 'noble', 'nomadic peasants', 'feckless, avowed thieves', 'tamed by Europeans', 'fascinating, lazy, bloodthirsty, poetic, pathetic', 'loveable, incorrigible' and a 'famous, infamous tribe'. Such rhetoric shows the positioning of Tracey's paradox to be flawed. It does not lie within the apparent contradictions of Zulu existence but within the author's own mind. It is he who cannot come to terms with who the Zulu are and how whites should relate to them. He moves from grudging admiration, to paternalism, to a rejection of their abilities. Tracey is in essence attempting to construct a paradigm with which to approach the Zulu, as the ambiguities of the above images reflect. Since he cannot successfully do so without a Western framework, he concludes that the twentieth century is an interim period for the Zulu. They are in the middle of evolutionary process, from 'nomadic peasantry' to 'full industrial emancipation'. *Zulu Paradox* represents a summation of the ambiguous nature of Western images of the Zulu. The notion of the noble but savage former tribal warrior underlies much of

¹³³ Tracey, *Zulu Paradox*, p. 15.

Western conceptualisation of them. Such conceptualisation requires that the reality - that is the existence of the Zulu - be conflated with fiction.¹³⁴

This convention is typified by Ritter's *Shaka Zulu*, published seven years after *Zulu Paradox*. Despite Ritter's desire to provide a non-fictional legitimacy for his book, *Shaka Zulu* is a mixture of myth and fiction. There is a fundamental inability to treat the Zulu in any other way but as extraordinary beings. Indeed *Shaka Zulu* owes much to Haggard and his publications, particularly *King Solomon's Mines*. The Zulu are denied the normative human abilities. Shaka's rise to power and thus the development of the Zulu kingdom lies not in political or economic developments but rather his 'crinkled ears' and 'stumpy genital organ'. Emphasis on sexual activities is, in fact, a constant focus of *Shaka Zulu*. Ritter returns repeatedly to stories of Shaka's sexual antics and the Zulu 'libidinal drive'. The book is also filled with stories that are silly in the extreme. These include the scenes where Shaka is asked to have a bodyguard, Shaka's relationship with his alleged son and where 'The King rescues the sun from the moon'. Here Shaka apparently ordered an eclipse to disappear. Ritter himself states that this latter story is fiction, yet he happily includes it in the book.

In the book one finds the perfect encapsulation of the image of the Zulu warrior:

Mgobozi's immense popularity may be summed up in one sentence. He typified the ideal of the Zulu warrior. Conservative, reluctant to learn 'new-fangled ideas' but, having learned them, like the use of the stabbing blade, obstinately clinging to them. Contemptuous of all strategy and tactics, except the encircling movement. A fixed idea that you must fight the enemy where you find him, irrespective of the strength of his position or numbers. A haughty scorn of sheltering behind any defences - even natural ones - let alone erecting any. Savage and bloodthirsty in battle. Slaying swiftly and surely, and without mercy, but never stooping to torture. No Zulu warrior would ever sully his name by using an impalement stick. The honour of any woman, friend or foe, was safe in the keeping of any Zulu warrior. Even in the flush of battle, as at Ndololwane, he would not dream of dishonouring any woman, though he would have

¹³⁴ See *ibid.*, pp. 23, 201-204, 277 and 320-322.

no compunction in killing her according to instructions. Lastly, the Zulu warrior was imbued with an intense sense of loyalty, and unquestioning self-sacrifice to his chief and comrades, which, with the fanatical pride he took in his regiment, bred that esprit de corps which made him prefer annihilation to defeat.

The above themes are very common images of the Zulu 'warrior' and reflect the Western paradox. Nevertheless, such romanticized myths do not concern themselves with their inherent contradictions. Thus the perfect warrior may not dishonour a woman but he may execute her. He dislikes tactics but utilizes the 'encircling movement', itself a tactic. These sentences tell the reader nothing about the Zulu soldier. Rather they concern Ritter's own romantic notions of warfare and how a gallant combatant should act. This fundamental inability to engage meaningfully, that is to say to conceptually relocate the Zulu from the ethnographic present to modernity, is reflective of the absence of an effective answer to the 'native question'. Although statements by government departments, such as the Natives Affairs Department in 1920, acknowledged that blacks were undergoing 'modernisation'¹³⁵, it was thought that this was not conducive to black development. In this paradigm, black political developments such as the activities of the ICU were sinister occurrences.

They're a proud people,' King said. 'At first we had to have something like 'get together' parties for them where they could get acquainted and get to know the various chiefs. Finally, we formed three different 'regiments' of about 750 Zulus each and they made out fine.' However, his troubles didn't stop there. The Zulus are trained as warriors from early childhood, and while the government doesn't permit them to carry their traditional spears, they are armed with sharp sticks and protective shields. At one point, while staging a battle between Zulus and the Beers, one of the tribal chiefs approached King in great agitation. 'My men say they'll not play this game any longer unless you change the rules,' he declared. King, who had assigned certain of the attacking Zulus to fall dead in the face of the Beer fire, expressed his surprise. 'Our history tells us that the white men died also,' the chief pouted. 'So why do you have only our Zulu warriors falling dead. It isn't 'fair.' There were other difficulties. Half-dressed Zulu women would frequently stray within camera range and had to be removed. And

¹³⁵ B. Bush, 'Fighting for the Underdog': British Pan-Liberalism' and the South African Native Question', 1926-1939'. (Paper presented at the Sixteenth Biennial Conference of the South African Historical Society, July 1997), p. 3.

*some of the extras, getting bored with the routine, would just pack up and leave, their curiosity satisfied. King said he ran into no racial trouble and got fine co-operation from the South African government ...*¹³⁶

These comments are part of a story about the making of the film Untamed in 1955, an imitation of the 1950 King Solomon's Mines. Concerned with the Great Trek, it was filmed on a grand 'Hollywood' scale with two of the stars of the day, Susan Hayward and Tyrone Power. It was in essence a Western set in South Africa. The above comments, from a journalist reporting on the filming and from the director Henry King, indicate a lack of proper engagement with the Zulu. Unconsciously perhaps, they portray the Zulu extras as shiftless, irresponsible children, concerned with fighting and satisfying their curiosity. Indeed King seems quite unconcerned with their sudden departure, such is their lack of value for the film.

By the 1950s, the National Party's intentions were being made progressively clear by a plethora of legislation which began to entrench apartheid. The Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act and the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act were all part of this onslaught. The National Party had promised to solve the 'native question'¹³⁷. The above comments provide a justification for this legal apparatus - the black/Zulu lack of responsibility and childlike behaviour meant that laws were required for control. Untamed with its black violence against whites - the author of the above comments wrote that battles with the Zulu 'cost thousands of the settlers' lives' - and its portrayal of South Africa as an 'empty land', acted as powerful propaganda in defence of apartheid. Untamed was followed by what was essentially a clone, The Fiercest Heart in 1961.

¹³⁶ Quoted in Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, p. 151.

¹³⁷ W. Hammond-Tooke, *Imperfect Interpreters: South Africa's Anthropologists 1920-1990* (Johannesburg, Wits University Press, 1997), p. 115.

More deliberate than these films however, was the earlier Die Bou van 'n Nasie or its English version, They Built a Nation. Produced in 1938, at the time of the Centenary celebrations of the Great Trek, the film showed Boer triumph over black (and British) adversity.¹³⁸ It was intensely nationalistic and patriotic, confirming the idea that the Zulu had attempted to block the path of 'civilization'. This theme was in keeping with the nationalistic ideology of the Great Trek celebrations and was developed further by the Voortrekker Monument, outside Pretoria, which commemorates this event. The foundation stone was laid in 1938, the Monument being completed in 1949. As noted in the Introduction the gate made up of assegais, as well as the portrayal of the black wildebeest in the architecture, officially represented the power of Dingane and his warriors, who attempted to block the path of civilization.¹³⁹

This simplistic and subjective view of the South African past became a basic aspect of Afrikaner nationalism. The Zulu in fact, play a significant role in the narrative of Afrikaner history¹⁴⁰, since they provide a supporting 'cast' for the actions and activities of the Trekkers. The Great Trek was a central theme in Afrikaner nationalist mythology in the first half of the twentieth century.¹⁴¹ The struggle against the Zulu - the execution of Retief and his colleagues and the subsequent attack on the Trekkers - provided justification for the Trekker retributions which followed. Moreover, the Zulu 'provided' a document of legitimation - the Retief-Dingane Treaty. Supposedly signed in February 1838, the treaty allegedly granted large areas of land to the Trekkers in the Natal area. Such a Treaty was necessary for the Trekkers, since their actions against the Zulu and occupation of Natal would have been opposed by the

¹³⁸ Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, p. 147.

¹³⁹ *Voortrekker Monument Brochure*, p. 6.

¹⁴⁰ Dubow, *Illicit Union*, p. 267.

¹⁴¹ Thompson, *The Political Mythology of Apartheid*, p. 180.

London Missionary Society and the British government without apparent agreement by Dingane.¹⁴² In using force to oppose the Trekkers, Dingane created a group of martyrs, mythologising the Trek. The eventual defeat of Dingane and the Zulu at the Battle of Ncome River on 16 December 1838, led credence to the notion that the victory had been divinely pre-ordained, that the Trekkers were a 'Chosen People'.¹⁴³ Indeed 16 December, a public holiday in South Africa, was referred to as 'Dingaan's Day' until 1952. Its subsequent names, the Day of the Covenant and the Day of the Vow attempted to move the emphasis away from the Zulu, to the act of the Covenant. Nevertheless portrayals of the Zulu were integral for displays of Afrikaner mythology and accordingly featured in nationalistic films such as the De Voortrekkers, Die Bou van 'n Nasie, as well as the Voortrekker Monument. Thompson comments that the monument crystallized the myth of the Covenant in Afrikaner historical consciousness¹⁴⁴ and it served as a venue for the showing of films such as De Voortrekkers for some sixty years.¹⁴⁵

The 'fine co-operation' that the producers of Untamed received from the government is not surprising, when one considers the context. The coming to power of the National Party and the strengthening of Afrikaner nationalism prior to that, meant that familiar images of the 'warrior' and 'tribal' Zulu became part of determined ideological restructuring of South African history. Apartheid ideology ensured that the history of the African communities of South Africa received greater attention than ever before. Historical grounds were sought for the division of Africans into different ethnic groups, as well as a justification for the

¹⁴² J. Naidoo, *Tracking Down Historical Myths* (Johannesburg, AD Donker Publishers, 1989), p. 86.

¹⁴³ Thompson, *The Political Mythology of Apartheid*, pp. 182-188.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

¹⁴⁵ K. Tomaselli, 'The Cinema of Jamie Uys' in J. Bignaut and M. Botha (eds.), *Movies, Moguls, Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991* (Cape Town, Marvic, 1992), p. 198.

'retribalisation' of urban Africans.¹⁴⁶ By the latter part of the 1920s, the Natal past had been dehistoricized. It was studied by anthropologists rather than historians.¹⁴⁷ These 'tribal monographs' which were produced in mid-twentieth century¹⁴⁸, tended not to differentiate between past and present of African societies. Eileen Krige's work is an example of this.¹⁴⁹ Krige's influential *The Social System of the Zulu*¹⁵⁰ appeared in 1936. Donald Morris considered it '...a superbly written account of the daily life of people-among the best surveys of a particular native civilization by a trained anthropologist'.¹⁵¹ While it may be well-written, Morris' comment does not acknowledge the fact that *The Social System of the Zulu* was not based on field research but was a compilation of other sources, including Fynn and Isaacs.¹⁵² Overall the Zulu are categorized in a mechanistic manner, who operate according to a set of laws and customs much like the instinctive behaviour deployed by animals and insects. The period 1930 to 1950 in fact saw anthropology as the dominant discipline for European policy towards Africans.¹⁵³ The evidence of anthropologists formed the basis for the 1932 Native Economic Commission, which defined the 'native question' as fundamentally concerning economics.¹⁵⁴ The Commission chose an adaptationist approach, mixing elements of black culture with European culture. This idea was drawn from the then newly-appointed government anthropologist GP Lestrade. The coming to power of the National Party in 1948 had meant that the Native Affairs Department was Afrikanerized. The implementation of apartheid demanded justification and accordingly Afrikaner intellectuals undertook to do this. Among the works produced was the 1943 *Die Oplossing van die Naturelevraagstuk in Suid-*

¹⁴⁶ Hamilton, 'Authoring Shaka', p. 33.

¹⁴⁷ Pridmore, 'Henry Francis Fynn', pp. 149-150.

¹⁴⁸ Hammond-Tooke, *Imperfect Interpreter*, pp. 73-93.

¹⁴⁹ Pridmore, 'Henry Francis Fynn', pp. 149-154.

¹⁵⁰ E. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulu* (Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, 1965).

¹⁵¹ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 615.

¹⁵² Krige, *The Social System of the Zulu*, p. v.

¹⁵³ Pridmore, 'Henry Francis Fynn', p. 165.

¹⁵⁴ Ashforth, *The Politics of Official Discourse*, p. 77.

*Afrika. Wenke ooreenkomstig die Afrikanerstandpunt van Apartheid (The Solution of the Native Problem in South Africa. Suggestions Concerning the Afrikaner Standpoint on Apartheid).*¹⁵⁵

These studies were a more determined attempt to solve the 'Native Question', than the earlier initiatives. Comparatively less formal segregationist notions gave way to the ideologically-driven apartheid. Nevertheless, this system owed its genesis, at least in part, to the Commissions of the earlier period. Apartheid policy for example, aimed at consolidating the position of 'tribal' authorities under the aegis of the state. The usefulness of these authorities had been one of the points raised by the South African Native Affairs Commission.¹⁵⁶ In investigating the 'Native Question', a variety of authors, government officials and 'native experts' provided a series of images of the Zulu which directly embodied nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century ideas of biological determinism and racial antipathy.

¹⁵⁵ Hammond-Tooke, *Imperfect Interpreters*, pp. 115-125.

¹⁵⁶ Schmidt, *Creating Order*, p. 147.

CHAPTER TWO THE ANGLO-ZULU WAR IN PERSPECTIVE

This Chapter will identify the background to the fascination with the War. This revolves around issues of militarism, imperialism, patriotism and popular interest in military history.

The next chapter concerns itself with interest in the War from the 1960s.

The most fundamental signifier in the creation of the Zulu image has been the Anglo-Zulu War. It has been a major factor in the development of what Mersham calls the 'global coherence of the Zulu mystique'.¹ 'Popular' books and films about the Anglo-Zulu War and the Zulu have attached sets of values to black South Africans, particularly those who live in KwaZulu-Natal. Indeed:

*The adventures of those barefooted warriors of old left such vivid impressions on the mirror of the world's mind that they still linger there today.*²

These 'adventures' - if that is how one could refer to the political and military events of nineteenth-century KwaZulu-Natal history - have been promoted by the above discourse in a persuasive and enduring manner. The discourse was shaped by the Battle of Isandlwana. When the British invaded the Zulu kingdom in early January 1879, only one London metropolitan newspaper sent a special correspondent to Natal. Isandlwana however, rapidly altered this. After the British loss became public knowledge, the press set about gathering information on the Zulu. This information had as its sources the writings of colonists, missionaries, officials, military officers and local journalists. As this thirst for knowledge

¹ G. Mersham, 'Mass Media Discourse and the Semiotics of Zulu Nationalism' *critical arts: a journal for cultural studies* Vol 7 No. 1 and 2 1993, p. 80.

² A. Elliot, *Sons of Zulu* (Johannesburg, Collins, 1978), p. 11.

grew, so did sensationalized images of the Zulu in the War. It is here that the ennoblement of the Zulu occurred, moving them into the forefront of public attention.³

In the decades which followed, this image was consolidated and further developed. In 1898, a mere nineteen years after the War, the following comments reflect the extent of the attitude towards it. They are worth quoting in full:

Where is the Englishmen who does not regard the war with Cetuyayo (sic) and his Zulus with mingled feelings. Is it likely that interest in the campaign will ever fade? Surely not. To think of the Zulu War of 1878-79 is to fill the mind with sadness and pride - sorrow, that at Isandula (sic) the enemy inflicted upon the Imperial and Colonial forces a disaster such as is scarcely surpass in its bitterness and completeness in the history of British warfare; pride, because of the lustre shed upon the English name at Rorke's Drift and Ekowe, not to mention other places, and by Lieutenants Melville and Coghill heroism in saving the colours upon the banks of the Buffalo. Yes! that was a campaign of strange contrasts, of melancholy occurrences, of noble deeds against desperate odds. A war of dangers and surprises, of attacks on hordes of barbarians, at once savage and intelligent, desperate and cruel, and a war of grand defences. An undertaking, too, against Nature in her relentless moods, in a country where hills and ravines, precipices, rivers, streams, rocks, and caverns abound, where roads had to be made before the thousands of oxen yoked to hundreds of wagons, groaning under their loads of stores, could advance, where the voices of the drivers and the crack of the whip testified to patience sorely tried, where irritation and inconvenience were of daily occurrence, where...rivers swelled to extraordinary proportions. Yes! a country in some of its aspects quite as uninviting as the half-naked, fearless heathen upon the war-path.⁴

This is a very appropriate summation of the Anglo-Zulu War for this study. It incorporates all the aspects of the campaign which make it attractive - heroism, a dangerous enemy and an inhospitable location. It is these features, as enunciated by the above quotation, which provide the conflict with its own sense of romance and adventure. This is catered for and sustained by a considerable amount of publications which deal exclusively with the 1879 War. From the very end of the campaign to the present time, a constant flow of books has been available. The

³ Martin, 'British Images of the Zulu', pp. 262-282 and 332.

⁴ W. Pimblett, *In Africa with the Union Jack* (London, JS Virtue and Co. Ltd, 1898), pp. 82-83.

War has variously been described as one of the epic sagas of Victorian England⁵, a dramatic colonial war⁶ and a storybook war⁷. For at least one publishing house - Osprey Publishing - the war ranks among the 'great conflicts of history', along with Normandy, Hastings and Agincourt⁸. It has also been the subject of several films and documentaries. To the casual observer, the amount of publications about the War seems out of proportion to reality. The War after all, lasted only seven months and was one of many colonial wars fought by the British. Nevertheless, despite being an episode in the annals of colonial history, the Zulu War has remained firmly in the public eye.

The influence of these concepts can be seen in recent events at Rorke's Drift, another of the Anglo-Zulu War battles which continues to have a resonance in the twentieth century. The battle is remembered by the South African National Defence Force in the form of a 'John Chard' medal for long service⁹ (Chard was one of the British officers at Rorke's Drift), while the South African ex-servicemen's association, The Memorable Order of Tin Hats (MOTHS), holds an annual parade at Rorke's Drift to commemorate both Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift.¹⁰ One of the eleven Victoria Crosses won at Rorke's Drift was auctioned in London in 1996 and was expected to reach R870 000, such was the interest.¹¹ The battlefield also received attention when a group of British officer cadets arrived at Rorke's Drift to build a community centre. The officer leading the group noted that fund-raising is normally difficult but with the purpose being Rorke's Drift, which many are familiar with in Britain, military charities readily

⁵ M. Glover, *Rorke's Drift: A Victorian Epic* (London, Frederick Warne Publishers, 1980), front flap.

⁶ C. Wilkinson-Latham, *Uniforms and Weapons of the Zulu War* (London, B T Batsford, 1978), front flap.

⁷ R. Edgerton, *Like Lion's They Fought - The Last Zulu War* (Bergville, Southern Book Publishers, 1988), p. 154.

⁸ I. Knight and I. Castle, *Campaign Series No 14 - Zulu War 1879* (London, Osprey Publishing, 1992), Rear Cover.

⁹ *Kudu*, the newsletter of the Regiment Christian Beyers, September 1996.

¹⁰ 'Peace bid finds new battlefield' *Sunday Tribune* 19 January 1997.

¹¹ 'Rorke's Drift VC on auction' *Daily News* 16 May 1996 and 'Last Rorke's Drift VC goes on auction' *Mercury* 11 June 1996.

assisted.¹² Rorke's Drift was also proposed as the site for the ceremony marking the Royal Regiment of Wales' (successor to 24th Regiment which was involved in both Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift) official affiliation with South Africa's (previously Zulu) 121 Infantry Battalion.¹³ Even a new brand of beer launched in the United Kingdom has been named Rorke's.¹⁴

On the 22 January 1995 the battlefields were visited by David Bromhead, Colonel of the Royal Regiment of Wales and the great-great nephew of Gonville Bromhead (one of the senior British officers at Rorke's Drift). He was in South Africa to participate in the annual commemoration parade at Rorke's Drift and commented to the *Sunday Tribune* that the events at Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift are extremely important for the British military. To attract recruits, successes, failures and regimental histories are emphasized and publicized.¹⁵ Earlier, in July 1994, a lecture given to the Royal Geographic Society in London about the Anglo-Zulu War was attended by seven hundred people, including the great-grandson of Lord Chelmsford (Commander of the British forces during the Anglo-Zulu War). Moreover the guest speaker (and owner of a lodge near the battlefields), David Rattray, was thereafter invited to the Royal Regiment of Wales' headquarters.¹⁶ The War continues to hold the same fascination it has had since 1879. A significant comment came from the author of a recent publication about the War. After having seen only one chapter and a synopsis, the British publishers Greenhill

¹² 'Redcoats are on their way' *Mercury* 25 June 1996 and 'It's a battle against time for Rorke's Drift' *Sunday Tribune* 25 August 1996.

¹³ See 'Friends with the impi: 118 years after Isandlwana a unique alliance is formed' *Sunday Tribune* 8 December 1996, 'Peace bid finds new battlefield' *Sunday Tribune* 19 January 1997 and 'Military milestone: Former bitter battlefield foes forge new ties of friendship' *Sunday Tribune* 24 January 1997.

¹⁴ 'Britons will soon be ale and arty with a historic SA connection' *Mercury* 15 January 1997.

¹⁵ 'Salute to Uncle Gunnie' *Sunday Tribune* 22 January 1995.

¹⁶ 'On the threshold of a dream' *Sunday Tribune* 24 July 1994.

Books, offered Ron Lock a contract for his *Blood on the Painted Mountain*. Lock commented in an interview...

*I suppose I wrote it for myself, but there is still such an interest in the Anglo-Zulu War that the publishers obviously think they can make money out of it.*¹⁷

Thus commercial interests stood to gain a great deal from the War. Lock described how his own fascination grew. As a child in England during the 1930s - a time when the image of the Empire was well-established¹⁸ - Lock first heard stories of 'gigantic fearless Zulus' from an Isandlwana survivor. His father was secretary of the local Disabled Ex-Servicemen's Association and a stream of ex-soldiers visited his home. Lock recalls that he had never seen a black man but his dreams were filled with Zulu warriors and he collected a set of picture postcards entitled *Battles for the Flag*. His favourite was Fripp's painting *The Last Stand of the 24th at Isandlwana*.¹⁹ Of all the images of empire, the most vivid and emotive were those of warfare, provided for by special artists such as Lady Butler.²⁰ The paintings were not solely expressions of the heroism which they portrayed but were part of a wider imperialist discourse.

¹⁷ 'Fruits of a childhood dream' *Sunday Tribune* 16 July 1995.

¹⁸ J. Richards, 'Boy's Own Empire: Feature Films and Imperialism in the 1930s' in MacKenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, p. 144.

¹⁹ 'Fruits of a childhood dream'.

²⁰ R. Steam, 'War Correspondents and colonial war, c.1870-1900' in MacKenzie, *Popular Imperialism and the military*, p. 139.

The popular pleasure-culture of war²¹

As noted above, the role of the Battle of Isandlwana is critical. Isandlwana represents the catalyst for the expansion of interest in the Zulu.²² Frere's anti-Zulu rhetoric was given substance by the battle, a factor which continued to dominate Anglo-Zulu War historiography until the 1980s. The battle did not involve the greatest loss of life for the Zulu, the Battle of Msebe between two Zulu factions in 1883 did.²³ Isandlwana is and was compelling however, due to its nature as a 'last stand'. The theme of soldiers holding their ground against the odds has a resonance and appeal throughout the centuries and has been the subject of books, plays, films and songs.²⁴ It is a significant factor in the psychological aspects of warfare²⁵, leading to a thirst for revenge but also a fascination - at best a superficial one - in the 'enemy'. Moreover, warfare plays a less obvious but no less dramatic role in the formation of identity. The soldiers who become heroized in adventure narratives are not weighed down by the complexities of human existence. Rather their task in the battle is clear: to hold their ground with their comrades or perish doing so. This simplicity of action - in essence a display of virtue and bravery - functions psychologically and socially in the public psyche as positive images to counteract the negative effects of anxiety. Accordingly, the soldier becomes the idealized figure of identity for the public.²⁶ The fact that Isandlwana was a defeat for the British is not important. It is not victory which establishes the soldier's greatness but the qualities he shows in confronting defeat or his demise. Only in this way, can his heroic virtue be made

²¹ G. Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinity* (London, Routledge, 1994), p. 4.

²² Martin, 'British Images of the Zulu', pp. 262-274.

²³ R. Morrell et al, 'Colonialism and the Establishment of white domination, 1840-90' in Morrell, *Political Economy and Identities*, p. 50.

²⁴ C. Philip, *Last Stands: Famous Battles Against the Odds* (London, Bison Group, 1994), p. 6.

²⁵ B. Perret, *Last Stand! Famous Battles Against the Odds* (London, Arms and Armour Press, 1994), p. 11.

²⁶ Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*, pp. 233 and 282.

manifest.²⁷ Another aspect of this heroic virtue is that it is a strongly masculine one. Newsinger argues that becoming a man and becoming a warrior are the same thing. Displays of virtuous masculinity can be found in the three Anglo-Zulu War films, war films being typical tales of masculinity. Stories of loyalty, bravery, the excitement of battle and of endurance are an essential part of this.²⁸

The battle at Rorke's Drift can also be considered together with Isandlwana, for here the combat was also a 'last stand'. In the case of Rorke's Drift, a numerically inferior British force defeated the Zulu, thus reversing the outcome of the battle at Isandlwana and redeeming themselves and the British officer corps in the eyes of the public. The number of Victoria Crosses awarded after Rorke's Drift bears testimony to the extent of the political and military imperatives at stake at the time.

The symbolic nature of the 'last stand' needs to be situated within a wider context, that of a popular pleasure-culture of war.²⁹ War has always had cultural and ideological prominence within society. Not the least of the reasons for this is emotive capacities of military pomp, ceremony and music.³⁰ It lives on today in military history and the continued interest in warfare. Although the two World Wars are a source of fascination for the public, there is an acknowledgement of the horrors of these conflicts.³¹ However colonial warfare is and was quite different in terms of its popular appeal. Towards the end of the nineteenth century,

²⁷ Rutherford, *The Literature of War*, p. 155.

²⁸ J. Newsinger, 'Do You Walk the Walk?: Aspects of Masculinity in Some Vietnam War Films' in P. Kirkham and J. Thumin (eds.), *You Tarzan: Masculinity, Movies and Men* (London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1993), pp. 126 and 312.

²⁹ Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*, p. 4.

³⁰ R. Giddings, 'Delusive seduction: Pride, pomp, circumstance and military music' in J. MacKenzie (ed.), *Popular Imperialism and the military 1850-1950* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1992).

³¹ The World at War series makes this very clear for example.

military strategists argued the need to avoid prolonged warfare. Instead military encounters were to be expeditious.³² Moreover, European technology meant that these 'small wars' were less dangerous and therefore more appealing. Combined with a sense of moral purpose and adventure, colonial wars offered an image of war, 'without its guilt and only five-and-twenty per cent of the danger'.³³

The War of 1879 occurred at a time when the armed forces were becoming popularized. The reputation of the soldier changed from a hated figure to popular hero.³⁴ This was reflected in the rising civic pride in local military units, the militarist tone of missionary evangelicalism and the proliferation of rifle clubs and drill units in factories. In addition, 'muscular Christianity and commitment to team games' also stimulated the desire for physical sport, an ethic exported from the playing field to the Church, the Civil Service, the Officer Class and to the Empire. A working class masculinity developed at the same time, extending the values of physical self-reliance, toughness and endurance into leisure activities such as football.³⁵ The year before the War, William Booth had founded the Salvation Army, appropriating the symbols of this militarist discourse.³⁶ Indeed colonial warfare took on an evangelical mantle, military action being explained as something holy.³⁷ The positioning of the War in military terms - the overwhelming way in the event has been historicized - contributed a martial discourse with which to contextualize it. At the time of the centenary of the War in January 1979, academics strongly criticized the planned commemorations. Their articles in the journal

³² MacKenzie, 'Introduction: Popular Imperialism and the military' in MacKenzie, *Popular Imperialism and the military*, p. 7.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

³⁵ G. Whannel, 'No Room for Uncertainty: Gridiron Masculinity in *North Dallas Forty*' in Kirkham and Thumin, *You Tarzan*, p. 200.

³⁶ MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p. 5.

³⁷ MacKenzie, 'Introduction' in MacKenzie, *Popular Imperialism and the military*, p. 4.

Reality portrayed the War, not as a glorious adventure of cinematic proportions but rather as the beginning of a process of social and economic manipulation. The authors argued that the 1879 conflict had been portrayed as a glorious adventure by the 'callous, racist myths of the imperial past', mainly through the eyes of the British Army's aristocratic officers³⁸ and that the centenary and hence such interest in the War commemorated what many settlers' descendants viewed as a victory of British civilization over a 'savage' Zulu society. Thus *Reality* and papers presented at 'The Anglo-Zulu War: A Centennial Reappraisal 1879-1979' Conference, indicated that there were wider political, social and economic issues at stake than simply adventure. Guy remarked that many of the publications about the War were sad distortions where many myths about the Zulu were best represented.³⁹ The art which celebrates the heroic myth of urban man, simplifies the social and political context, the realities and the moral issues involved. This 'entertainment art' commonly takes the form of boy's adventure stories.⁴⁰

Nevertheless the development and sustenance of such military history does not need to depend on fact. Fact becomes a foundation on which to construct the martial discourse. Indeed excessive deviation from the truth has to be avoided, since with a battle such as Isandlwana the outcome is quite clear. However, the discourse establishes a superstructural jingoism which supplants fact. What actually happened becomes less important than what 'our side' did. These same sentiments can be applied to many of the historians of the Anglo-Zulu War. The origins of this perspective of the War and the rise of such military history has a wider context within the military literature dealing with the colonial period. In the mid-nineteenth

³⁸ J. Guy, 'The British Invasion of Zululand' in *Reality*, p. 11.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁴⁰ Rutherford, *The Literature of War*, p. 10.

century, changes in children's literature occurred. Adventure replaced fable, taking on romanticized characteristics. This, it is argued, was the result of the adoption of the genre by the British aristomilitary caste.⁴¹ Fiction lends itself to the transmission of ideology. Even someone with a basic literacy level is accessible through a story. It offers a suitable medium for eliciting imaginative identification with English history and creating an emotional response.⁴²

In the case of the Anglo-Zulu War, Guy has suggested that the primary sources are the British officer class and hence the aristocracy. Thus there was a proclivity to depict the war in the 'exhilarating language of the chase'.⁴³ This in turn provided a structure to historicize the Zulu in military terms. As Green observes, literature creates an alternative world but one whose 'colours are the meanings of this one'.⁴⁴ Yet these sensationalized military narratives are not necessarily the products of the participants in the war. In the case of the Anglo-Zulu War, it is not easy to find examples of this in the primary English sources. Two of the earliest works are *The Story of the Zulu Campaign* and *Campaigning in South Africa: Reminiscences of an Officer in 1879*.⁴⁵ There is a noticeable difference between them. *The Story of the Zulu Campaign* was authored by a non-participant, Ashe but was based on the journals and notes of serving officers, particularly Wyatt-Edgell. *Campaigning in South Africa: Reminiscences of an Officer in 1879* was written by a participant, Montague. The former has a number of

⁴¹ Green, *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire*, p. 220.

⁴² J. Bratton, 'Of England Home and Duty: The Image of England in Victorian and Edwardian Juvenile Fiction' in MacKenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, pp. 76-79.

⁴³ Guy, 'The British Invasion of Zululand', p. 11.

⁴⁴ Green, *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire*, p. 338.

⁴⁵ W. Ashe and E. Wyatt-Edgell, *The Story of the Zulu Campaign* (London, Sampson Low, Marston, Learle and Livingston, 1880), W. Ashe and E. Wyatt-Edgell, *The Story of the Zulu Campaign* (Cape Town, N & S Press, AZ War Reprint Series, 1989) and W. Montague, *Campaigning in South Africa: Reminiscences of an Officer in 1879* (London, William Blackwood and Sons, 1880)

instances of entertaining or sensationalized rhetoric⁴⁶, while Montague's work is notably devoid of sensationalism. Rather there is the drudgery of campaigning in a foreign country, the Zulu being treated as the enemy in a neutral manner.⁴⁷ Montague's sober approach to the War can also be found in the narratives Emery used to construct his *The Red Soldier*. Here eyewitness accounts and comments describe and assess the various battles and the enemy but avoid portrayals of melodramatic bravado.⁴⁸ It is the histories which have been based on these accounts or those that have been written later which adopt notions of imperialism and sensationalism. An illustration of this is Hamilton-Browne's *A Lost Legionary in South Africa*, probably produced in 1912. He served during the Anglo-Zulu War but the book is overly-dramatic, more concerned with entertainment than history.⁴⁹

The primary military narratives were therefore extended and refurbished with different needs in mind.⁵⁰ One focus was the classroom. In the first decade of the twentieth century, it was noted that chauvinist text books and military pictures had a greater influence than the teacher.⁵¹ Two works which appeared around the turn of this century display these notions of militarism. Both deal with colonial warfare and have sections devoted to the War. *In Africa with the Union Jack*, *The Romance of Empire* and *For the Colours: A Boy's Book of the Army*⁵² concern themselves with theme of empire and the dangers of constructing it. The aim of *For the Colours* was to supplement school textbooks for:

⁴⁶ See for example Ashe and Wyatt-Edgell, *The Story of the Zulu Campaign*, pp. 42, 150 and 245.

⁴⁷ See for example Montague, *Campaigning in South Africa*, pp. 191 and 232-233.

⁴⁸ See for example F. Emery, *The Red Soldier* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1977), pp. 63, 153 and 185-186.

⁴⁹ See for example G. Hamilton-Browne, *A Lost Legionary in South Africa* (London, J Werner Laurie, 1912[?]), pp. 108-111 and 205-213.

⁵⁰ See J. Jaffe, 'The Gentleman's War: The Ideology of Imperialism in Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Great Boer War*' *Alternation* Vol 2, No 2, 1995 for a characteristic example.

⁵¹ J. Mangan, 'The Grit of Our Forefathers': Invented Traditions, Propaganda and Imperialism' in MacKenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, p. 117.

⁵² W. Pimblett, *In Africa with the Union Jack* (London, JS Virtue and Co. Ltd, 1898) and H. Hayens, *For the Colours: A Boy's Book of the Army* (London, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1902).

*The ordinary school text-books seem...dull and lifeless, their authors having crammed in too many political and economic arguments, and omitted those adventurous detail which alone appeal to young blood...'*⁵³

To appeal to this young blood, there were images such as 'But great hearts were there - magnificent fellows who were not, and could not be, blind to the fact that with Rorke's Drift swept away, and with Helpmekaar a ruin, the whole of Natal would be open to the bloodthirsty enemy' and 'From all sides poured the human sea, wave after wave rolling in mad delirium over the handful of damned soldiers. Resistance was hopeless but in that hour of dire distress our men proved themselves true sons of Britain'.⁵⁴ *In Africa with the Union Jack* also has a curious illustration of 'Zulus preparing for war'. They are wearing unusual outfits and horns on their heads, suggestive of evil.⁵⁵ These descriptions of battle have less to do with reality and more to do with what Tuchman refers to as 'raising the idiom of warfare'.⁵⁶ Warfare and conflict become exaggerated and sensationalized in these discourses. Sensationalism is significant in that it acts as a vehicle through which many popular perceptions about the world are obtained⁵⁷, while the linguistic elevation of warfare is in fact a significant part of the ideology of imperialism.⁵⁸

These displays of heroic masculinity gain further stature when they are part of this governing discourse - imperialism. This third factor has provided the infrastructure for the interest in the Battle of Isandlwana and the military discourse of the campaign. An imperialist ethos has underpinned the interest in the War and the Zulu themselves. As the next chapter shows,

⁵³ Hayens, *For the Colours*, pp. v-vii.

⁵⁴ See Pimblett, *In Africa with the Union Jack*, p. 100 and Hayens, *For the Colours*, p. 351 respectively.

⁵⁵ Pimblett, *In Africa with the Union Jack*, pp. 90-91.

⁵⁶ Quoted in P. Fussel, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London, Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 175.

⁵⁷ B. Shepard, 'Showbiz Imperialism: The Case of Peter Lobengula' in MacKenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, p. 95.

⁵⁸ Jaffe, 'The Gentleman's War', p. 91.

despite assertions to the contrary, the major focus on the War has been the imperial activities of British troops. Notions of or nostalgia for imperialism continued to be attractive into the 1980s and the 1990s.⁵⁹

J.M. MacKenzie, together with other scholars, has analysed imperialism in its British context. The argument that imperialism was a minor issue, restricted to the nineteenth century, has been shown to be spurious. The vehicles of imperialism included photographs, postcards, cigarette cards, plays and musicals and in the twentieth century, film.⁶⁰ The War itself came at the end of a period of increasing union between British patriotism and nationalist, imperialist and royalist ideologies⁶¹ and therefore presented a suitable image of the British soldier to fixate upon. The quotation on the first page of this chapter is typical of this attitude. The romance of the colonies, the apparent dangers - natural and unnatural - that they held for foreigners and the rise of patriotism in the nineteenth century are essential components of the 'Zulu mystique'.

Their arguments focus, of course, on the United Kingdom. As such their analyses are suitable for assessing British literary and cinematic interventions about the War. These have comprised the major part of the Anglo-Zulu War's historiographical canon. Nevertheless similar precedents can be found for South African contributions to the canon. An example of this is the first Anglo-Zulu War film, Symbol of Sacrifice. Shown in 1918, this is the only Anglo-Zulu War film to show the entire conflict. Its successors, Zulu and Zulu Dawn have concentrated on specific battles. Symbol of Sacrifice was produced by African Film

⁵⁹ See N. Parsons, 'Imperial History in the Ukay' *South African Historical Journal* (34) May 1996, pp. 211-222 and McKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, pp. 1-2 and 91.

⁶⁰ McKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, pp. 20-91.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Production Ltd. Chapter One noted that by 1916, African Film Production had already produced A Zulu's Devotion and De Voortrekkers. Symbol of Sacrifice followed, its script being co-written by F. Horace Rose, a well-known South African writer and then editor of the *Natal Witness*. The film opened with the following verse projected against a fluttering Union flag:

I am the flag that braves the shock of war. From continent to continent and shore to shore. Come weal or woe, as turns the old earth round, Where hope and glory shine, there is the symbol found. Look ! Sun and moon and glittering star, Faithful unto death, my children are ! You who for duty live, and who for glory die, The symbol of your faith and sacrifice am I.

The use of the symbol of Imperial Britain vividly promoted an appeal to a sense of patriotic duty. It predated the controversy over a new flag for South Africa without the Union flag. The government's attempts in the mid-1920s to introduce this, led to violence, protests in Natal over the exclusion of the Union flag and jingoistic activities in which the flag featured.⁶² Although the setting was South African, Symbol of Sacrifice's focus was the First World War. Its message is intensely imperialistic, reminding the public of their duty and loyalty. Certainly Rose had imperialistic sentiments. At the time of Union in 1910, he had been a member of the executive of the Natal Party, which emphasized close links with Britain. His newspaper's view was 'Be British and stay British'. Three years later he was involved in an attempt to create a Federal League for Natal.⁶³ The film also included the Prince Imperial incident, probably as a nod to the Anglo-French alliance.⁶⁴ Symbol of Sacrifice was premiered on the 27th March 1918 and played to large houses. It was shown throughout the country to sizeable

⁶² Thompson, *Natalians First*, pp. 29-42.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 16 and 19.

⁶⁴ For comments about Symbol of Sacrifice, see Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, pp. 135-141; Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures*, pp. 316-318 and Knight and Castle, *The Zulu War Then and Now*, p. 254. For the Anglo-French *entente*, see J. Eddy and D. Schreuder, 'The Context: The Edwardian Empire in Transformation and Decline, 1902-14' in J. Eddy and D. Schreuder (eds.), *The Rise of Colonial Nationalism: Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa first assert their nationalities 1880-1914* (Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1988), p. 28.

audiences and although it did not create the stir provoked by De Voortrekkers, the film was acclaimed by Press critics. When offered on the overseas market, it attracted a number of buyers. In May 1919, Symbol of Sacrifice was shown by special request at Windsor Great Park to the Canadian Forestry Corps. Princess Alice, who was instrumental in arranging this, wrote to say that 'she and the men thoroughly appreciated the picture'.⁶⁵ Thus this South African film was very much part of imperialistic propaganda.

The expansion of militarism was also a factor in the Natal colony during the 1870s, although this stemmed from different circumstances, namely the 'Zulu threat'. A militaristic ethos was supplied by the formation of rifle associations, volunteer militias, formal military regiments and school cadet units, which lasted until the 1960s.⁶⁶ A focus on heroic masculinity was also not absent from Victorian and Edwardian Natal, the cult of athleticism being imported to South Africa from England. The development of rugby for example during the latter part of the nineteenth century was stimulated and constituted by the theme of masculinity. The ability to excel at rugby became synonymous with manhood.⁶⁷

Moreover English-speaking South African whites were also subject to imperialistic propaganda, as reflected in British literature and the educational system discussed above. In the nineteenth century the formative influences on white South African education were the British public school and the Scottish educational system, particularly in the Cape and Natal.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures*, pp. 317-318.

⁶⁶ R. Morrell, 'White Farmers, Social Institutions and Settler Masculinity in the Natal Midlands, 1880-1920' (Unpl. PhD, University of Natal, 1996), pp.119-137 and R. Morrell, 'Forging a Ruling Race: Rugby and White Masculinity in Colonial Natal, c.1870-1910' in J. Nauright and T. Chandler (eds.), *Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity* (London, Frank Cass, 1996), p. 96 and P. Thompson, 'Schools, Sport and Britishness: Young English Natal, ca. 1902-1961'. (Paper presented at the Natal History Workshop, University of Natal, April 1997), p. 8.

⁶⁷ Morrell, 'Forging a Ruling Race', pp. 102 and 105.

⁶⁸ J de S. Honey, *Tom Brown in South Africa* (Grahamstown, Rhodes University, 1972), p. 7.

Thompson notes that in the early part of the twentieth century, British teachers were responsible for the 'Englishness' of South African English-speaking schools. British settlers were particularly receptive to this ethos, since they utilized it in making their environment more understandable.⁶⁹ Numerous nineteenth-century clergymen and politicians were also products of English public schools. Harry Escombe, premier of Natal at the end of the century, was one example.⁷⁰ Furthermore, such institutions as the League of Empire and the British Empire Union produced imperial propaganda which South Africa was also subject to. The Council of the Royal Institute for example worked with the Natal Education Department in the 1920s to sponsor essay competitions and promote imperial interests. The Department also participated in the various imperial exhibitions in the early part of the twentieth century. School texts embraced patriotic and imperialistic sentiment. Indeed, the Natal syllabus reflected a very British outlook and as in the metropole, juvenile literature was filled with adventure and heroism.⁷¹ Royal occasions such as the 1925 Prince of Wales' visit and coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 were celebrated. The fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Isandlwana in 1929 was commemorated with a twelve-page supplement from the *Natal Mercury*. A dramatic introduction to the supplement spoke of the War as the introduction of civilisation to the 'Dark Continent', emphasising the moral mission of British imperialism. The 'native' was released from a life of despotism and war.⁷²

Such imperial imaginings have supplied a context for much of the understanding of the Anglo-Zulu War. Imperialist concepts, together with a militarist discourse, defined its content and style. The above discussion looks at how the emphasis on heroism and militarism

⁶⁹ Morrell, 'Forging a Ruling Race', p. 91. Also see Morrell, 'White Farmers, Social Institutions and Settler Masculinity', p. 1.

⁷⁰ Honey, *Tom Brown*, p. 9.

⁷¹ This information is derived from Thompson, 'Schools, Sport and Britishness'.

⁷² Supplement to the *Natal Mercury* 22 January 1929.

celebrates the British soldier in Anglo-Zulu War literature. Yet, as noted at the beginning, it also fulfils this role for the Zulu. In effect, a point of reference is established with which to describe and explain Zulu lifestyles and behaviours. This point of reference takes three forms - either the same masculine, heroicized virtues are given to the Zulu, or they become the 'supporting cast' for British displays of virtue or both. They provide a measure against which the level of the heroes' bravery can be measured, thereby enhancing the white hero.⁷³ In all of these instances, the Zulu become permanently located within a military paradigm. The Anglo-Zulu War forms a basis for this paradigm, a non-fictional demonstration of the Zulu penchant for war.

Utilising militarism as a point of reference to comprehend the Zulu attained its apotheosis with Tracey's *The Zulu Paradox*. For Tracey, fighting was a form of recreation for the Zulu.⁷⁴ Fighting becomes a hobby, something which is not serious but all in great fun. This belies the seriousness of political violence. Tracey also maintains that the whites 'rescued' the Zulu from this barbaric sort of activity, bringing civilization to them.⁷⁵ The Anglo-Zulu War is accordingly restructured as an attempt to save the Zulu from themselves. However, not only were they aggressive by nature but they were also prepared to 'let the devil take the hindermost' in the scramble for land, they were 'depraved and greedy' and they were like the Nazis. This notion of Zulu militarism is a theme which Tracey happily promotes throughout his book. Indeed he sees faction fights as being caused by this natural aggressiveness.⁷⁶ Embracing this reductionist explanation means it is unnecessary to look for other more valid and less palatable socio-political reasons. Tracey chooses to see this in light of some animal

⁷³ Mannsaker, 'The dog that didn't bark' in Dabydeen, *The black presence in English literature*, p. 122.

⁷⁴ Tracey, *Zulu Paradox*, p. 32.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

instinct which needs to be released at times. This must be traced back to the intellectual context within which *The Zulu Paradox* was written. The influence of anthropology in the 1940s was noted in the previous chapter.

Like other colonial campaigns, the Anglo-Zulu War was constructed and mediated in the popular culture of the governing power and justified by contemporary religious and ethical systems.⁷⁷ The inability to move away from the military paradigm and specifically the Anglo-Zulu War as a point of reference for the Zulu, continued in the second half of the twentieth century as well. A quantitative increase in literature occurred, yet despite the development of more nuanced approaches to the study of the Zulu generally, these works continued in the same mould as before.

⁷⁷ MacKenzie, 'Postscript' in MacKenzie, *Popular Imperialism and the military*, p. 221.

CHAPTER THREE
THE ANGLO-ZULU WAR REVISITED
1965 - 1979

The first part of this chapter is concerned with the precedents and techniques used to generate images of the Zulu as 'warrior' in texts and the varieties of media that I have identified as 'popular' interpretations. The criterion I have used in selecting these works is that they all rely on a sense of the Zulu as part of the 'warrior' mass. In so doing, they propagate images, myths and historical fabrications. In the 'Introduction', the power of visual imagery was assessed. The images discussed below become part of the socializing apparatus, sustaining the many 'primitive' images of the Zulu and indeed African people. The second part assesses the role of the Anglo-Zulu War Centenary in facilitating black-white interaction in Natal.

It is from the 1960s that a second wave of literature about the War appeared. This second wave has been characterized by more extensive - although not necessarily more comprehensive - studies. The decade of the 1960s therefore represents a distinctive schism in Anglo-Zulu War and 'Zulu studies'. This schism had resonances for both academic and popular histories. In the popular paradigm and particularly in film however, the discursive elements of the fictive and mythistorical elements of 'Zuluness' expanded. The writings of inter alia Fynn and Isaacs were replicated *sans* problematisation for the audiences of the latter half of the twentieth century.¹

The appearance of two historical 'blockbusters', *The Washing of the Spears* and the film Zulu provided impetus for contributions to the stockpile of Zulu studies. The interest and the popularity of the War must therefore be placed within a context of a revival of interest in the

¹ D. Wylie, 'Shaka and the Modern Zulu State' *History Today* May 1994, p. 8.

Anglo-Zulu War from the 1960s. The successful reception of these works was also related to the political climate of these years. The increasingly segregationist laws of apartheid meant that whites became isolated from African society and as a result a desire developed for more knowledge about such societies.²

'The Zulus are certainly booming!'³

For Ian Knight, 1965 was a 'good year' for Zulu War studies. Prior to this, accounts had been fictionalized and unreliable but the work that changed all of this was Donald Morris' *The Washing of the Spears*.⁴ It has been viewed as both a comprehensive and perceptive study of Zulu history, while at the same time being a commercial success.⁵ This success apparently resulted from the fact that works prior to Morris' had been fictionalized and unreliable⁶ and thus Morris offered something new and different.

In the post-1945 era one work which fits into this 'fictionalized and unreliable' category is Watt's *Febana*.⁷ This an extraordinary piece of imaginative writing. Concentrating on Farewell, *Febana* contains many 'blood drenched' and 'primitive' images of the Zulu Farewell met.⁸ The settlers' expedition to Natal is elevated - as in the Shaka Zulu television series (see Chapter Five) - to a Colonial Office mission. Watt admits there is no written

² Hamilton, 'Authoring Shaka', p. 89.

³ Donald Morris to Killie Campbell 15 August 1964. Uncatalogued Manuscripts File, Correspondence between Killie Campbell and Donald Morris, 1959 - 1965, Killie Campbell Africana Library. Here Morris comments on the increasing amount of books being published about the War.

⁴ First published in 1965.

⁵ I. Knight (ed.), 'Editors Introduction' *Soldiers of the Queen* (1982), p. 3.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ E. Watt, *Febana* (London, Peter Davies, 1962).

⁸ See for example *ibid.*, pp. 163, 169 and 170.

evidence of this meeting but she asserts that it did occur (how she knows this is not revealed to the reader). She also suggests that the official records were altered so as to keep the meeting a secret and moreover states that the book is a 'true story' and 'well researched', although it is Isaacs which provides her sources.⁹ The book is nothing more than sensationalism, partially resembling earlier settler discourse but going beyond even that. Yet *Febana* is blatantly 'fictionalized and unreliable', its nature is more obviously revealed through the book's pages. Other pre-Morris works however present a veneer of authenticity, cultivated by statements which suggest either exhaustive research, sympathy for or a personal familiarity with the subject matter.

T.V. Bulpin's contributions could be categorized in this manner. His *Shaka's Country: A Book of Zululand*¹⁰ displays, on occasion, sympathy for the Zulu (never empathy) and in addition he constantly utilizes Fynn, Isaacs and Gardiner as sources throughout the book.¹¹ *Shaka's Country: A Book of Zululand* is also supplemented by a lengthy source list¹², all of which gives the book legitimacy. Then there is Bryant's work. *The Zulu People As They Were Before The White Man Came*, completed in 1935 but first published in 1949, also trades on a legitimising premise. As the book's publishers put it, Bryant had the reputation of being the greatest authority on Zulu matters South Africa had yet produced. His information stemmed from personal contact, supported by the writings of early authorities, travellers, explorers and missionaries.¹³ Thus Bryant's work seems unquestionably reliable.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 3 and 5.

¹⁰ T. Bulpin, *Shaka's Country: A Book of Zululand* (Cape Town, Howard Timmins, 1952).

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 38-39, 42 and 60.

¹² Ibid., pp. vii-ix.

¹³ Bryant, *The Zulu People*, Front flap.

Another important addition here is of course *Shaka Zulu*. This is lent reliability by a bibliography but also by Ritter's insistence that he used Zulu sources¹⁴ and that he is telling the story of Shaka 'as the Zulus saw him'.¹⁵ He also attempts to link his work to that of Bryant, whom he refers to as the 'incomparable authority'.¹⁶ His entire 'Introduction' is concerned with creating this perception.¹⁷ Works such as these, appeared neither fictionalized nor unreliable at the time and certainly Ritter, as noted in Chapter One, remains prominent into the 1990s. Thus what exactly did Morris have to offer to KwaZulu-Natal historiography which has given it such endurance?

The magazine *Punch* called *The Washing of the Spears* a magnificent book about the history of the Zulu¹⁸, yet did it really deserve this accolade? In his discussion of the sources, Morris notes the problems previous books, such as Ritter's, had contained.¹⁹ Nevertheless, *The Washing of the Spears* has evidence of extensive reliance on these sources. As in *Shaka Zulu*, Shaka's genitalia become a focus of the story of Shaka, Morris having him bathing in full public view.²⁰ (This would later be reflected in the television series). Reliance on Fynn and Isaacs is another factor. Both Fynn and Isaacs' pedigree as recorders of oral history are given respectability by Morris, thus providing justification for Morris himself to rely on their writings. Morris also saw Bryant as a legitimate source, considering him to be the 'only one who truly loved [the Zulu]'.²¹ Indeed Morris later defended Bryant, Fynn and Isaacs as a foundation for nineteenth-century KwaZulu-Natal history. He admitted that they have

¹⁴ Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*, pp. 377-378.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. ix.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 72.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. ix-xiv.

¹⁸ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 1.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 615-621.

²⁰ See Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*, p. 14 and ibid, pp. 45-46.

²¹ Donald Morris to Killie Campbell 15 August 1964.

problems but suggested that their works can still be used, particularly Fynn's *Diary*. He saw the problem as lying with the secondary sources which have interpreted these texts without taking into account the context of the times.²² The arrival of the English traders and their subsequent dealings with the Zulu are seen from the perspective of the *Diary* and Isaacs' *Travel and Adventures* and there is nothing to be regarded as 'magnificent'.²³ There is, therefore, very little difference between *The Washing of the Spears* and books which had preceded it in this regard.

The Washing of the Spears' success however depended on three factors. The first concerns its nature as a military history. Morris' fascination with the Zulu and the War can be seen in terms of the interest in military endeavours discussed in the previous Chapter. His engagement with this popular military discourse - like Ron Lock (in Chapter Two) - began as a child, reading a Rudyard Kipling story about Rorke's Drift.²⁴ This was reinforced by his reading of Michael Leigh's novel *Cross of Fire*.²⁵ *Cross of Fire* is the fictional story of a Scotsman farming in South Africa, who comes to like the English after his participation on their side in the Anglo-Zulu War. He conveniently fights in both the battles at Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift, Leigh using the opportunity to portray the battles in an exciting and entertaining manner. *Cross of Fire* is more than a fictional story however. Despite the main character's assertion that the book 'is not a historical textbook', much is made of the reasons for war (war was inevitable since the Zulus were fierce and aggressive'), the strength of the Zulu and British troop dispositions.²⁶ The book is therefore a historical novel with enough factual military

²² Letter to the Editor *Leadership* Vol. 5 (No. 6) 1986.

²³ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, pp. 68-109.

²⁴ Donald Morris to Killie Campbell 21 December 1959 and *Ibid*.

²⁵ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 9.

²⁶ M. Leigh, *Cross of Fire* (London, Werner Laurie, 1949), pp. 29-215.

history to make for exciting reading. It is very much a book about the British during the war. Thus fictional adventure stimulated his interest in the War.

The Washing of the Spears had a further birthplace in the writings of Cecil Woodham-Smith. Morris saw these as a model for his work.²⁷ One of Woodham-Smith's best-known books is *The Reason Why*, first published in 1953. Based on extensive research, the book examines the 'charge of the light brigade' during the Crimean War in 1854. This British military history is a detailed expose' of the military politics of the nineteenth century, dealing with the personalities and backgrounds of participants²⁸, tension amongst officers and men and of course the charge itself told in chivalrous terms.²⁹ Morris' Part II of *The Washing of the Spears* has similar aspects. There are also discussions of military politics³⁰ and the personalities involved.³¹ The battle scenes (see below) are also filled with action and adventure.

It is also worth noting here that Morris was a member of the United States military himself, having served in the Second World War and then joining the Central Intelligence Agency.³² Thus the emphasis on the military aspects of *The Washing of the Spears* had a personal precedent as far as Morris is concerned. It is this precedent which gave rise to the book. Its 'fame' lies not in the discussion of the 'rise' of the Zulu but in his analysis of the Anglo-Zulu War and in particular the British activities during the conflict. By 1955 he was planning a magazine article about Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift. Having been commissioned by the

²⁷ Donald Morris to Killie Campbell 21 December 1959.

²⁸ C. Woodham-Smith, *The Reason Why* (Middlesex, Penguin Books, 1960). Chapter 1.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-249.

³⁰ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 544-549.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 259-264.

³² 'Donald Morris - Zulu expert extraordinaire' *Daily News* 23 June 1994 and 'An American African' *Mercury* 11 June 1997.

Saturday Evening Post to write such an article, Morris met Ernest Hemingway in Cuba in 1956. Hemingway's comments that there had never been an adequate account of the war and in addition none published in the United States, led Morris to expand the article into a more detailed history of the Zulu. That there was an American market for such a book was assured when the publishers Simon and Shuster provided full support for the project³³, funding a research trip for Morris to South Africa in early 1962.³⁴ As an American, Morris would have appeared impartial or neutral, implying a reliable product. Yet the United States, as noted in the Introduction and the first chapter, was also subject to Zulu mythology, most notably in the form of Tarzan films.

The military history Morris develops, incorporates much detail, examining the entire campaign and offering extensive discussions of the various battles.³⁵ An examination of his sources reveals a concentration on this military discourse.³⁶ *The Washing of the Spears* is significant in its contribution to the historiography of the British role in the war and only in this regard can it be said to be a 'bench-mark and essential reading'.³⁷ It did not offer major revision of pre-existing conceptions of the Zulu and the Zulu kingdom. As a military history of the British in 1879 the book's place in South African historiography was assured. Once the book was completed in March 1965, Morris began to contemplate a fictional novel about South Africa in the 1870s. Significantly the plot had a military theme, involving the activities of an English officer.³⁸

³³ Donald Morris to Killie Campbell 1 December 1960.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 27 May 1961.

³⁵ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*: 'Part Two'.

³⁶ Donald Morris to Killie Campbell 21 December 1959.

³⁷ I. Knight, *Brave Men's Blood* (London, Greenhill Books, London, 1990), p. 195.

³⁸ Donald Morris to Killie Campbell 8 August 1965.

A further aspect of this military history is that Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift were the 'stuff of high drama' for Morris and Rorke's Drift seemed to be more satisfactory than battles such as the Alamo or Little Big Horn. It is significant that Morris states this in that it sets a precedent for the book. Was the South African battle more satisfactory than its American counterparts due to who won and who lost? Is it this mindset - the victory of the heroes (the British or Western 'civilization') over the villains (the Zulu, the 'uncivilized'), as opposed to the defeat of the former at the Alamo and Little Big Horn - which provided the basis for *The Washing of the Spears*? There is proof of this in the 'Preface'.

[The Zulu kingdom's]...irresponsible power posed a considerable threat to the continued existence of the European civilization in its vicinity. The European civilization, therefore, waged a preventive war against this native state and destroyed it...

This is *The Washing of the Spears* in essence. Morris may preface his discussion of the war with an examination of the rise of the Zulu kingdom but the book is mainly about the tension and conflict between Western and African societies. Indeed Morris justifies his book on these grounds: that the war was the last time the 'native population' offered a major challenge to European civilization and this story needed to be told.³⁹ This establishes the style and content for the book. It revolves around the issue of the conflict together with a hero-villain dichotomy which if not explicit, certainly permeates the pages of *The Washing of the Spears*.

Secondly, the book's popularity rested on its comprehensive nature - unique as far as the War was concerned until that time. This provided it with further legitimacy.⁴⁰ Morris himself was impressed with *The Washing of the Spears*' outcome. Although he has stated that the book

³⁹ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, pp. 9-14.

⁴⁰ See for example 'Looking around with Michael Green' *Daily News* 6 February 1986, 'Story of the Zulu told with skill' *Mercury* 20 March 1995 and 'An American African' *Mercury* 11 June 1997 for comments on *The Washing of the Spears*' comprehensive nature.

was not intended to be an academic work⁴¹, privately at least Morris felt it should be accorded a greater standing. The inclusion of an index made the book... 'something it was not before - a reliable academic tool - and adds enormously to its stature'. For Morris it was a 'definitive work' on the subject.⁴² Notably, Morris was invited to take up a fellowship at Oxford in 1970.⁴³

Thirdly, a further stimulus for *The Washing of the Spears*' popularity was the film Zulu. The film did not influence Morris' work, since *The Washing of the Spears* was completed by the time he saw Zulu.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, Zulu's almost simultaneous arrival gave *The Washing of the Spears* a suitable companion in the audio-visual medium, concentrating on the military aspects of the War that Morris also examined.

Zulu was the brainchild of Welsh actor Stanley Baker. It concentrated on the events at Rorke's Drift between 22 and 23 January 1879. Apart from a brief survey of the field at Isandlwana, the 'action' occurs around the mission station at the Drift, which in reality was the Drakensberg mountains. A film brochure states that:

*In order to provide Zulu with that certain sense of reality which has been acclaimed worldwide Cy Endfield and Stanley Baker spent fourteen weeks in the foothills of the Drakensberg with their crew and production unit. There, in the shadow of the amphitheatre at Mantoux Sources, they re-created Rorke's Drift.*⁴⁵

There is remarkable irony in this. In order to provide for 'reality', a site was sought away from the actual locale. This suggests a reality informed by conjecture, rather than geographical fact.

⁴¹ See Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 615 and Morris' letter *Soldiers of the Queen* (1982), p. 8.

⁴² Donald Morris to Killie Campbell 9 March 1965.

⁴³ Donald Morris to Brown, Killie Campbell Africana Library, Uncatalogued Manuscripts File, Morris, Donald

⁴⁴ Donald Morris to Killie Campbell 15 August 1964.

⁴⁵ Ocean City Souvenir Programme, p. 15. My translation. In my possession. The Royal Natal Hotel made a considerable profit thanks to the presence of the production crew. Interview between J.Pridmore and L.Kapp, Royal Natal Hotel, March 1994.

In keeping with this it must be noted that this recreation of the battle in the 1960s was very well received. The Anglo-Zulu War authors Ian Knight and Ian Castle, both trace their interest in the war from this film for example⁴⁶ and subsequent reviews describe it in praiseworthy terms.⁴⁷

Zulu's nature had a number of determinants. As noted above, the idea for the film lay with Stanley Baker. The legendary involvement of Welshmen at Rorke's Drift attracted him to the story,⁴⁸ although he had already been involved in film production in South Africa. Earlier in the 1960s, Baker had acted in Jamie Uys' Dingaka. Shown in 1964, the film provided familiar images of 'tribal life' - 'witchdoctors', European law versus 'native law' and rural as opposed to urban modes of existence. An accompanying brochure described the background to the making of Dingaka. The description belongs more to a nineteenth-century travelogue, than a twentieth-century film brochure. Filmed in the then Northern Transvaal, in King Malabog's 'remote African kingdom', production was disturbed by having to hire a 'witchdoctor' to protect the black lead actor (Ken Gampu) from the evils of desecrating traditionally sacred ground. Moreover, the brochure emphasized the wonderment the black extras felt, when having to perform in front of the 'small glass eye of the White Man' (the camera). Dingaka was, the brochure's foreword maintained, of particular importance to those interested in archaeology, 'native' habits, 'tribal' rites and anthropology, amongst others.⁴⁹ The conceptual precedent that Dingaka and later Zulu established for Baker, is borne out by statements he made in an interview with the *New York Mirror*. He suggested inter alia that the black extras did not use money and would not know what to do with it anyway, that a 'native' in his

⁴⁶ See I. Knight, *The Sun Turned Black: Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift - 1879* (Rivonia, William Waterman Publications, 1995), 'Preface' and Knight and Castle, *The Zulu War Then and Now*, Rear Flap.

⁴⁷ See for example T. Thomas, *The Great Adventure Films* (Toronto, Citadel Press, 1976) pp. 260-266.

⁴⁸ Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, p. 154.

⁴⁹ Dingaka, Gala Premiere Film Brochure 1964, pp. 1-8. In my possession.

surroundings is wonderfully happy and Zulu women do all the work, while the men do nothing but sing and dance.⁵⁰ These ideas reflected the anthropological studies discussed in Chapter One which, together with Baker's with Dingaka experiences, provided a personal context for his role as producer of and participant in Zulu.

After some initial difficulties in obtaining finance for the film, Joseph E. Levine - at that time one of the most influential figures in the film industry and a pioneer of modern marketing techniques - was attracted to the idea of a military adventure of this nature. In South Africa, Baker had little difficulty in gaining government sanction for his project. The relevant government bureaux readily agreed to his requests.⁵¹ The reasons for this acquiescence lay in events which occurred during the preparations for Zulu. 1960 saw news of the shootings at Sharpeville spread around the world and thereafter both the ANC and the Pan-African Congress (PAC) were banned. These two organisations responded by going underground, by adopting a policy of armed resistance and by sending representatives overseas.⁵² A film such as Zulu, showing the defeat of a numerically-superior black force at the hands of a small group of whites, would have been exactly the message the South African government would have promoted locally and overseas.

In assessing the reasons for the popularity of films such as Zulu, McKenzie considers that the imperial world continued to exist after the Second World War. Decolonisation had the effect of producing a series of films of 'imperial nostalgia' which concentrated on the justice and morality of imperialism and the heroic exploits of those involved. Other examples are North

⁵⁰ Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, pp. 156-157.

⁵¹ Thomas, *The Great Adventure Films*, p. 260.

⁵² Beinart, *Twentieth-century South Africa*, pp. 159-160.

West Frontier (1959), Fifty-five Days at Peking (1962) and Khartoum (1966).⁵³ An imperial ethos continued to be attractive to the cinema audiences into the 1950s and 1960s. In South Africa, white cinema-goers would have seen these films as reflective of the dangers of Africa and the need for treating the 'native' with circumspect. When Zulu was shown in South Africa in 1967, advertising effected a link between past and present. In Durban for example, where the film's reputation resulted in its attachment to the opening of a new cinema complex, the Ocean City, a public relations campaign was mounted prior to its showing. An employee was shown displaying an Anglo-Zulu War muzzle-loader for the media⁵⁴, while a ceremonial shield and assegai were presented to a Ster films official. Moreover, both the opening of the cinema complex and Zulu were preceded by Zulu dancing.⁵⁵ Thus there was a very strong appeal to an established historical precedent, Zulu 'warriors', Zulu dancing and Zulu 'tribalism'.

Zulu is a perfect example of the Western image of facing the colonial 'native foe'. An imperial ethos is imbued with a sense of jingoistic heroism and a 'call to duty'. In the nineteenth century, such images had been brought home by the pictures and drawings of war correspondents and the works of artists such as Lady Butler. The latter's work for example contained the necessary elements to make it an emotional exposition of the bravery of the British soldier in a war fought in a distant land.⁵⁶ Eighty years later such sentiment is to be found in Zulu. The very words of the dialogue attest to this. At one point, while the British troops at Rorke's Drift wait for the attack to begin, a nervous private asks his sergeant:

Why us? Why does it have to be us?

The sergeant replies...

⁵³ MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p. 90.

⁵⁴ See for example *Natal Mercury* 12 September 1967.

⁵⁵ *Natal Mercury* 19 September 1967.

⁵⁶ See for example I. Knight, and I. Castle, *The Zulu War Then and Now* (London, Battle of Britain Prints International, 1993), p. 50.

Because we're here lad.

The stoic cynicism of this statement implies all that is necessary to understand one's duty - loyalty, patriotism and determination. In *Zulu* this latter-day jingoism is juxtaposed with the events related to the battle at Rorke's Drift. *Zulu* opens with the Reverend Otto Witt (Jack Hawkins) and his daughter visiting the Royal Homestead (built specially for the film) where one is presented with Zulu singing, chanting and dancing en masse. The viewers are firstly shown the dozens of 'warriors' and semi-naked 'dancing girls', a stereotypical scene of 'tribalism', which can be traced to Burrough's Tarzan novels.⁵⁷ To avoid censorship, Endfield had to provide underwear for the female dancers but significantly he insisted that they be bare-breasted. The latter was acceptable to the British censor⁵⁸ and is indicative of the 'nubile savage' image alluded to in the Introduction. Such imagery was perfectly compatible with contemporary representations of the exotic. The *National Geographic Magazines* for example made use of it to evoke a sense of the primitive and exotic in articles dealing with 'primitive peoples'.⁵⁹ The camera then pans slowly across to the only whites in the area. They are perfect examples of 'civilization' - a fashionable young woman (although Witt's daughter was a child) and Witt himself - a respectable missionary. All around there is primeval activity. This prelude is lengthy, providing the director, Cy Endfield, with an opportunity to show firstly 'tribal' Africa and secondly the shock and revulsion Witt's daughter feels for all of this. Here she represents the 'naive' Western mind, while her father is the understanding and tolerant missionary, a 'veteran' of Africa as it were. Witt's character is in fact reminiscent of Bishop Colenso, the ally of the Zulu in the latter part of the nineteenth century.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ B. Street, 'Reading the novels of empire: race and ideology in the classic 'tale of adventure' in Dabydeen, *The black presence in English literature*, p. 98.

⁵⁸ M. Caine, *What's it all about?* (Arrow, London, 1993), pp. 180-181.

⁵⁹ See for example *The National Geographic Magazine* Vol. XCIII, no. 3, March 1948, p. 424 and *The National Geographic Magazine* Vol. 119, no. 2, February 1961, p. 258 and 290.

⁶⁰ My thanks to Julie Pridmore for this suggestion.

Then this situation of black-white tolerance (for it is obvious that Cetshwayo tolerates the Wits - after all he is allowing a white man to witness the above scene) changes rapidly. Sudden silence follows the arrival of a messenger. The victory at Isandlwana is announced to the assembled 'masses'. This news is met with great joy and the chorus of 'Bayete! Bayete' is taken up. Shocked at the news, Witt and his daughter attempt to leave. At this point implied savagery becomes explicit violence. Amidst the shouting and celebrating, the daughter is seized by one of the excited 'warriors', who is then promptly executed on the orders of Cetshwayo. These opening scenes become a perfect encapsulation of 'savage Africa' - violence lurking beneath a veneer of dormancy. The actual battle is also portrayed in this way. The Zulu are effectively 'othered' by there being no Zulu perspective at all. Instead the view is a British one, as the fort is repeatedly attacked. The viewer is shown the strain, tension, fear and ultimate fate of the soldiers of the garrison.

Nevertheless jingoistic nostalgia and devotion to duty are not the only issues at work here. *The Washing of the Spears* and Zulu effectively link themselves with the fear of primitive man or more generally, the fear of nature. In Africa and in the other colonial areas, one is left to face man's base instincts, isolated from the Western world's facade of social order. Here is the 'law of the jungle', 'kill or be killed', as one must confront the semi-naked 'warrior': fearsome, indefatigable and deadly. The viewpoint and the emotion of the defenders becomes the viewers. He or she is faced by waves of Zulu 'warriors' who appear frightening and infinite. In terms of the film, such scenes were often entire fabrications created by special effects. In the final sequences of Zulu for example, Endfield required 6000 Zulu. There were only 2000 black extras however. This was overcome by giving each of the extras a piece of

wood with two shields and a head-dress attached to each.⁶¹ Yet the effect of this illusion is to create a very real sense of fear. The attackers become inhuman, superhuman creatures to be feared, as they appear almost out of nowhere. Like overcoming the forces of nature itself, only technology and courage provide an opportunity to withstand this menace:

Colour Sergeant Bourne: *It's a miracle.*

Lieutenant John Chard: *If it's a miracle Colour Sergeant, its a short chamber Boxer Henry, point 45 miracle.*

Colour Sergeant Bourne: *And a bayonet sir, with some guts behind.*

A century after Rorke's Drift, these sentiments remain. The actor, Michael Caine (who portrayed Lieutenant Bromhead in the film), commented on the arrival of the black extras: 'It was just at this moment that I realized how brave the men we were making the film about must have been even to stand against such a formidable foe'.⁶² These sorts of comments and images are deeply at odds with the reality of warfare. An example of this is the period immediately after the Rorke's Drift battle. Apart from the cost to the Zulu, there was no grand military derring-do even for the victors of Rorke's Drift. Instead the garrison at the post had to live in squalor, while the British forces recouped after Isandlwana.⁶³ The film does not show this.

Fact and fantasy

The subject matter and success of *Zulu* and *The Washing of the Spears* were rapidly emulated by authors and publishers. The result was a series of Morris 'clones', which appeared in the

⁶¹ Caine, *What's it all about?*, p. 183.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 175.

⁶³ I. Knight, *Nothing Remains but to Fight* (Greenhill Books, London, 1993), p. 123.

1970s and 1980s. Their interest however, was only the military aspects of the Anglo-Zulu war.⁶⁴ *Zulu* and *The Washing of the Spears* had both emphasized the military aspects of the Zulu and thus were part of a process which promoted this view, making it readily accessible to the public. It was the first serious academic study of the battle of Isandlwana which anticipated such an aspect. The historian Sir Reginald Coupland began his assessment with the statement:

*The Zulus are the most famous of all native peoples of South Africa, and they owe their fame to their military record.*⁶⁵

One of the lasting impressions that the reader obtains from Morris but particularly his 'clones', is the often startling imagery that is used to describe this military record. The first and most obvious one is that of the 'mass'. As noted in Chapter One, the image of the black body is one of the defining features of the evolutionist racial paradigm, which continued to hold the attention of popular writers. The recurring image is one of a mass of Zulu launching an assault. Morris and Clammer particularly, are indicative of this. At Isandlwana '...the mass cascaded over the rim and began to pour down onto the plain'⁶⁶, while at Rorke's Drift '...The whole area was a seething mass...of Zulus...'⁶⁷ Closely allied to the 'mass' image is the 'horde', this being another popular collective term for the Zulu in war.⁶⁸ When the Zulu 'mass' or 'horde' attack, their numbers appear endless. At Rorke's Drift ... 'hundreds upon hundreds'...⁶⁹ of Zulu are involved in the attack. Thus the image the reader receives is one of

⁶⁴ Examples are D. Clammer, *The Zulu War* (Cape Town, Purnell and Sons, 1973); A. Lloyd, *The Zulu War, 1879* (London, Hart-Davis, 1973); M. Glover, *Rorke's Drift: A Victorian Epic*, (London, Frederick Warne Publishers, 1980); A. McBride, *The Zulu War* (London, Osprey, 1976) and C. Wilkinson-Latham, *Uniforms and Weapons of the Zulu War* (London, B T Batsford, 1978).

⁶⁵ R. Coupland, *Zulu Battle Piece: Isandlwana* (London, Collins, 1948), p. 9.

⁶⁶ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 368.

⁶⁷ Clammer, *The Zulu War*, p. 106.

⁶⁸ See for example Clammer, *The Zulu War*, pp. 109 and 161 and Wilkinson-Latham, *Uniforms and Weapons of the Zulu War*, p. 12.

⁶⁹ Clammer, *The Zulu War*, p. 106.

an infinite mass or horde moving inexorably into battle. The observer of this action it must be noted, is almost powerless to halt this advance, for it would be like stopping nature itself ...'Witt's unfinished stone wall was only a ripple in the surging black tide'⁷⁰, as the Zulu pounded '...at the little fort like a black tide lashing a storm - wrecked island...'.⁷¹ Such a sight can only invoke a great amount of fear, an emotion which is worsened by two further qualities attributed to the Zulu, fanaticism and savagery. The Zulu fighting man is portrayed as a fanatic, who goads himself to a new level of frenzy⁷² and then proceeds to throw himself against his enemy. When this occurs, fanaticism it seems can lead to unparalleled cruelty. If, like Joseph Williams at Rorke's drift, one becomes their victim, the following treatment can be expected:

*An assegai ripped down through his exposed belly, a dozen blades plunged into his body, and the maddened warriors quartered him and tore the corpse to bloody shreds.*⁷³

This fanaticism and savagery however, enables the Zulu military man to confront an enemy other lesser mortals would shy away from. At the Battle of Ulundi for example:

*All except those still unblooded, had experienced the terrible effect of the British volley firing, and the devastation wrought by the guns, but they came on once more, their ferocious courage unquenched. They were in the full panoply of war⁷⁴, a moving wall of black picked out with regimental shield colours, and the gleam of assegai blades matching the glint of steel now ringing the red square.*⁷⁵

The Zulu warrior therefore rises above the average man. He emerges as superhuman, perfectly fearless and determined. Thus it seems fortunate for the British soldier that he was armed with a Martini-Henri rifle in 1879, since it was a '...man - stopper even if the target was a charging

⁷⁰ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 404.

⁷¹ Clammer, *The Zulu War*, p. 113.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 409.

⁷⁴ This description is borrowed from Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*, p. 256.

⁷⁵ Clammer, *The Zulu War*, p. 212.

a charging Zulu'.⁷⁶ This concept of superhumanity is further emphasized by the very colour of the Zulu. He is '...as black as Hell ...' itself⁷⁷ and he advances together with his comrades as '...a vast black wall...'⁷⁸. African nature, the very embodiment of savagery, was based on colour, shape and makeup.⁷⁹ This image is sufficient to inspire terror, the lesson being to ensure that one keeps the barrel of a Martini-Henry between oneself and this Zulu 'horror'.

The reader of these publications might wonder why the Zulu soldier fights in such a manner. The answer is readily available. The literature re-emphasizes the 1950s and 1960s anthropological concepts of the celibacy theory, that is that the Zulu male had to 'wash his spear' in blood before marriage.⁸⁰ Prior to liquidating an opponent, he remained in enforced celibacy.

It is important to note that these aggressive desires are also portrayed as being biological in nature. There was apparently, an innate desire, a latent militarism⁸¹ within the Zulu to fight and slay his enemy. This militaristic ethos was at the same time limiting however, since its logical outlet was war. The fact that a new Zulu king had to organise a campaign to allow his 'warriors' to 'wash their spears' is cited as an example of the need to provide such an outlet.⁸² If the latter is not provided, then the Zulu male - driven by these latent desires - turns on himself. Indicative of this apparently, is the incident which occurred in 1878, when fighting broke out between the uThulwana and iNgobamakhosi regiments over the issue of marriage.⁸³

⁷⁶ Glover, *Rorke's Drift: A Victorian Epic*, p. 106.

⁷⁷ Allegedly said by Trooper Hall at Rorke's Drift and quoted in several publications. See Clammer, *The Zulu War*, p. 103 and Wilkinson-Latham, *Uniforms and Weapons of the Zulu War*, p. 13 for example.

⁷⁸ Clammer, *The Zulu War*, p. 162.

⁷⁹ Comaroff and Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, p. 217.

⁸⁰ Glover, *Rorke's Drift*, p. 50.

⁸¹ Clammer, *The Zulu War*, p. 21.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ See inter alia Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 284.

In this incident Cetshwayo's officials were able to intervene but their absence led to the most serious repercussions in terms of Zulu bloodletting. Here the reader finds the example of the Ndongakusuka battle in December 1856 between Cetshwayo and his rival for the throne, Mbuyazi. The latter's faction was said to have been totally liquidated, suffering casualties numbering between 20000 and 25000.⁸⁴ Thus this battle apparently resulted in twice the amount of Zulu casualties inflicted by British firepower in seven months in 1879. It is important to note here that the reporting of such casualty figures is problematic. It has been argued that European sources which report high battlefield mortality among African groups must be treated with caution.⁸⁵

These sorts of comments and descriptions are the extent of the Zulu role in the war. Their actual strategy, tactics and abilities on the battlefield suffer neglect. The Zulu leadership apparently did not think in '...sophisticated tactical terms'⁸⁶, while their movements are viewed in a vague manner. During the iNyezane battle the Zulu army suddenly appears⁸⁷ and at iNtombi River the British are attacked by a group which appears out of nowhere.⁸⁸ The Zulu are merely seen to appear. Clammer devotes 57 lines to describe Zulu movements and activities between July 1878 and 20 January 1879 but by contrast, 39 pages cover British movements and preparations in considerable detail.⁸⁹ Zulu tactical movements are mentioned elsewhere but only as they influence British activities. For example on the nights of 21 and 22

⁸⁴ P. Gon, *The Road to Isandlwana* (London, AD Donker, 1979), p. 184 and Bulpin, *Shaka's Country*, p. 118.

⁸⁵ E. Eldredge, 'Migration, Conflict, and Leadership in Early Nineteenth-Century South Africa: the Case of the Mawane', p. 27. (Paper presented at Department of History Seminar Series, University of Durban-Westville, 1994).

⁸⁶ Clammer, *The Zulu War*, p. 437. Frederick Engels also thought this as well, see J. Raum, 'Historical concepts and the evolutionary interpretation of the emergence of states: The case of the Zulu reconsidered yet again' *Zeitschrift fuer Ethnologie* Volume 114 (1989), pp. 125-138.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 426.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 66-69 and 29-68.

January, the army moved to a valley five miles from Isandlwana and spent the night there, in silence and without lighting fires. Clammer however seems to mention this in order to excuse the British inability at finding the main Zulu force - that is the Zulu did not attract attention - and to heighten the readers' sense of expectation and fright as the Zulu moved nearer the unsuspecting British. Clammer's Zulu also suddenly appear out of nowhere. Before the battle of Khambula, the Zulu attackers suddenly appear⁹⁰ - there is an implied sinister nature to this. Once they attacked however, tactics were a failure. Useful only when practised against a 'native foe' in open country, the results were a disaster when used against entrenched forces with firearms.⁹¹

Thus a view continued to be promoted of the colonial 'other' which did not challenge 'popular' convention. Images were presented which were from a previous time period but which were given new meaning by this discourse of African savagery. While the battle of Rorke's Drift, for example, is part of historical reality, it was an event in the nineteenth century. It is however made into a new, twentieth-century reality by Zulu. In the film and the books mentioned above, both the viewpoint and the emotion of the defenders becomes the viewers. He or she is faced by waves of Zulu 'warriors' who appear frightening and infinite.

By the 1970s however, images of the Zulu were not only being driven by white representations but also by an increasingly active Zulu participation. As noted in Chapter One, Inkatha lost momentum as a political organisation by the 1930s. By 1975 however, the name was once more in use. In 1951, the Bantu Authorities Act had initiated the process to reinforce

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 155.

⁹¹ Wilkinson-Latham, *Uniforms and Weapons of the Zulu War*, p. 77.

segregation by separate political units.⁹² This spatial division attempted to revive ethnicity within South Africa, by separating its black population into exclusive 'tribal' categories. These included the Xhosa in the Ciskei, the Tswana in Bophutatswana and the Zulu in Natal. In Natal a traditional structure based upon the Zulu monarchy, supported by the elite, still existed and accordingly this facilitated the government's attempts to rebuild or reinforce traditional authorities there.⁹³ The following year, the government set the precedent by recognising Cyprian Bhekuzulu (Solomon's son) as king. By 1970, a Zululand Territorial Authority had been established and in 1972 the KwaZulu Legislative Authority was created with greater political powers. Geographically KwaZulu was a series of regions throughout Natal but with larger areas north of the Thukela River. Instrumental in these events was Mangosuthu Buthelezi, chief of the Buthelezi.⁹⁴ He first came to national prominence in 1955 during a visit of the then Minister of Native Affairs, Hendrik Verwoerd.⁹⁵ Paul Forsythe has examined Buthelezi's use of history in the establishment of his political career and notes that between 1951 and 1968 he carved out a position of power for himself in Zulu politics.⁹⁶ He relied on Zulu history, emphasizing his forebears' role in acting as Prime Minister to the Zulu kings.⁹⁷ From 1968 to 1979, he further consolidated his role within KwaZulu politics, simultaneously gaining international recognition. As leader of KwaZulu - he had been elected chief executive officer of the Zululand Territorial Authority in 1970 - Buthelezi used the homeland to its full potential. Refusing to accept independence for KwaZulu, he used his

⁹² G. Maré and G. Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and the Politics of Local Resistance* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1987), p. 28.

⁹³ Beinart, *Twentieth-century South Africa*, pp. 156-157.

⁹⁴ For more on Buthelezi, see Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi: Chief with a Double Agenda* (London, Zed Books Ltd, 1988), as well as B. Temkin, *Gatsha Buthelezi: Zulu Statesman* (Cape Town, Purnell, 1976) and J. Shepherd-Smith, *Buthelezi: The Biography* (Melville, Hans Strydom Publishers, 1988) for uncritical examinations of his political career.

⁹⁵ Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi: Chief with a Double Agenda* (London, Zed Books Ltd, 1988), p. 59.

⁹⁶ Forsythe, 'The Past in the Service of the Present', p. 75.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

position to gain popular support as a critic of apartheid.⁹⁸ At the same time, he mobilized Zuluist discourse in constructing a power base for himself and Inkatha.

Mzala comments that Buthelezi had suggested the revival of Inkatha in 1959⁹⁹ but this idea only came to fruition in 1975. Inkatha YaKwaZulu was, according to Buthelezi, meant to be an organisation exclusively for the Zulu and to promote 'Zuluness'.¹⁰⁰ It extended, even exaggerated, the Zuluist discourse that had been utilized since the nineteenth century.¹⁰¹

Forsythe notes the following:

The launching of Inkatha in 1975 was designed not only to mobilize a Zulu ethnic following, but also to provide a platform from which Buthelezi could address a national audience...In attempting to mobilize a national support-base, he claimed to stand as the logical historical purveyor of the ANC tradition. He also claimed to speak on behalf of the black consciousness movement. Black consciousness, claimed Buthelezi, derived historically from the assertive 'nationalism' of Shaka.¹⁰²

In their analysis of Inkatha and Buthelezi's politics, Maré and Hamilton note that there were a number of similarities between the first Inkatha and Buthelezi's. One similarity involved the role of whites in the organisation. Chapter One pointed to the white support the 1920s Inkatha had received. The second Inkatha was actively supported by sections of the white media and academia¹⁰³, as Buthelezi came to be seen as someone more acceptable than the now banned ANC (see the next chapter). The Anglo-Zulu War Centenary celebrations facilitated the forging of a link between 'white Natal' and KwaZulu.

⁹⁸ Beinart, *Twentieth-century South Africa*, pp. 207-208.

⁹⁹ Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi*, p. 109.

¹⁰⁰ Maré and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, p. 57.

¹⁰¹ Golan, *Inventing Shaka*, p. 7.

¹⁰² Forsythe, 'The Past in the Service of the Present', p. 84.

¹⁰³ Maré and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, pp. 46 and 49.

1979 and the Centenary

The advent of the centenary in 1979 encouraged further interest in the War, placing it firmly in the public psyche nationally and internationally. A programme of events was prepared for May and June 1979, preceded by a build-up since the latter part of 1978. Commemorative stamps and cards were issued, an Anglo-Zulu War essay-writing contest held and a limited edition of 602 goblets produced by a London silversmith, one for every 24th Regiment fatality at Isandlwana. Accompanying this was debate about the nature and causes of the War in newspaper letter columns¹⁰⁴ and dispute over the respective merits of the Battle of Blood River and Isandlwana.¹⁰⁵ Britain's Anti-Apartheid Movement opposed the commemorations, demanding that Zulu War memorabilia at the National Army Museum in London be returned to South Africa.¹⁰⁶ During May and June, the conflict was remembered in the usual manner of ceremonies commemorating military endeavours - displays, religious services and flag-raising. The Natal Provincial Administration and the KwaZulu government organized the events, while the national government was also represented. In addition the Royal Regiment of Wales sent a delegation to South Africa to participate in the Centenary. The *Natal Mercury*, *Daily News* and *Natal Witness* all issued special supplements, covering the many aspects of the War. The commemorative services were filmed by both the South African Broadcasting Corporation and the British Broadcasting Corporation, while Britain was treated to two televised documentaries about the War¹⁰⁷, one of which was Black as Hell and as Thick as

¹⁰⁴ '1879 war was a great misfortune' Letter to the *Natal Witness* 15 January 1979, 'Do not blame the British' Letter to the *Daily News* 18 January 1979 and 'British the Aggressors at Isandlwana' Letter to the *Natal Mercury* 24 January 1979.

¹⁰⁵ 'Monuments distort history' Letter to the *Daily News* 11 January 1979, 'Isandlwana - where 3500 Brave Men Died' Letter to the *Natal Mercury* 18 January 1979 and 'Difference between Blood River and Isandlwana' Letter to the *Natal Mercury* 25 January 1979.

¹⁰⁶ *Sunday Tribune* 21 January 1979.

¹⁰⁷ 'Prince Imperial lives again' *Tonight Supplement Daily News* 11 May 1979.

Grass: An account by Kenneth Griffith. This documentary attempted to show the injustice of the War and drawing upon Frank Emery's *The Red Soldier* it allowed the Zulu to speak. Buthelezi reprised the role of Cetshwayo once more. It was mostly concerned with the errors of the British government and is a superficial understanding of politics of the period. Overall, Black as Hell and as Thick as Grass tended to emphasize the 'lot' of the ordinary British soldier.

Thus the Anglo-Zulu War was relived once more. The presence of Zulu 'warriors' and 'impis' projected the customary images, turning the War into a contemporary reality, rather than an event from another era. This resonated significantly with the period, since 1979 was very much the year of the Anglo-Zulu War. The Centenary year also saw the next instalment of the Zulu in film. The 'historical adventure blockbuster'¹⁰⁸ Zulu Dawn saw the light of day. Filmed in South Africa in 1978 and costing R7 million to make, it was released the following year. Another of Stanley Baker's projects and written by Cy Endfield, Zulu Dawn was the prequel to Zulu.¹⁰⁹ Notably, there was a rise in interest in Zulu during this time. In Durban there was an 'all race' showing of Zulu by, ironically perhaps, the Social Contact Group of Women for Peaceful Change.¹¹⁰ Zulu Dawn was not a commercial success. A confusion of revisionism and stereotyped images of the Zulu, together with weak direction, a poor script, financial difficulties and a premature release resulted in a critical and commercial failure.¹¹¹ Be that as it may, the film offered a number of intriguing images of the Zulu. The scene is set from the very beginning. Zulu Dawn begins with the words:

¹⁰⁸ *Daily News* 6 May 1980.

¹⁰⁹ Knight and Castle, *The Zulu War Then And Now*, p. 258.

¹¹⁰ 'First Zulu film' *Natal Mercury* 24 August 1978.

¹¹¹ Knight and Castle, *The Zulu War Then And Now*, p. 258.

One hundred years ago the British Colony of Natal in Southern Africa was surrounded by a vast and independent Zulu kingdom. In 1879 a battle took place that was to forever alter the course of colonial history: Isandlwana.

This statement is suggestive of a sober approach to history, in keeping with its revisionist tendencies (see Chapter Six). Concise but dramatic, it suggests that Natal was surrounded by a great state and that a fierce battle would occur which would have a profound effect on Britain and her colonies. *Zulu Dawn* is therefore provided with a sense of credibility, that it is indeed the story of the battle at Isandlwana. However, although the intention may have been to take history seriously, in practice this was not fulfilled. The two images - the 'vast and independent Zulu kingdom' and the great battle - are problematic. As far as the former is concerned this concept is of course not uncommon. Fynn wrote that Shaka succeeded in overrunning 'the whole country from Delagoa Bay to the St John's River'.¹¹² By 1855 the Zulu kingdom was an 'empire'¹¹³, extending from the Pongola to the Thukela Rivers and from the Indian Ocean to the Mzinyathi (Buffalo) Rivers.¹¹⁴ Morris is another author who used 'empire' to describe the Zulu kingdom.¹¹⁵ Recently research has suggested that the kingdom was not so 'vast and independent' as has been thought. In fact this notion has been criticized as being a conception of what an African kingdom should look like and not what it really was.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, when examining what the Zulu kingdom was, it is important to take chronology into consideration. For example it was only in 1843 that the border between Natal and the Zulu state was formalized.¹¹⁷ Consequently, to announce that the kingdom was 'vast and independent' is

¹¹² J. Stuart, and D. Malcolm (ed.), *The Diary of Henry Francis Fynn* (Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, 1986), p. 20.

¹¹³ Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*, p. 14.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

¹¹⁵ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 574.

¹¹⁶ Wylie, 'Shaka and the Modern Zulu State', p. 11.

¹¹⁷ 'The Limits of the kingdom' *Sunday Tribune* 20 February 1994.

hardly to make an informed statement, particularly as even today there is much to be done before an understanding of the period can be obtained.¹¹⁸

It is true that the benefit of hindsight affords one the opportunity of making such a statement. The Zulu Dawn scriptwriters potentially had to rely on problematic research material, such as Morris, Ritter or Fynn and this has to be taken into account. However it is necessary to go beyond this cautious critique of Zulu Dawn. This description of the Zulu kingdom fulfils a particular purpose. It creates an image of the Zulu opponent, implying that they were a threat to the Colony of Natal. The word 'surrounded' is suggestive of danger and the need to defend oneself. This theme of threatening danger is continued throughout the film. The common man's view is given by Quartermaster Bloomfield, one of the film's characters:

One Zulu is only one man and I'm not feared of one man but the Zulu...they come in their thousands...like a black wave of death in the thousands...and the assegais...stabbing!

Alone the Zulu or a black is not a threat but collectively - *en masse* - the implication of danger is obvious. This is developed further by the scene at Cetshwayo's umuzi (homestead), which is contrasted with Frere's garden party. At the umuzi the viewer is presented with a curious scene. A group is gathered around two Zulu who are fighting. The one is knocked to the ground and the victor, with his assegai poised over the other's chest, looks to Cetshwayo who gives the thumbs down. The victor then drives the assegai home. The producers seem to have confused the Zulu with Roman gladiators. There is a great deal of dust and mass crowd scenes. In short, all of this offers a sense of the primitive and 'savage', Cetshwayo being presented as quite ruthless. The absolute power of the Zulu king over his subjects' lives is a

¹¹⁸ Wylie, 'Shaka and the Modern Zulu State', p. 11

common feature of films about the Zulu.¹¹⁹ In immediate contrast to this is the garden party. This is filmed in bright, clear colours. Colour provides setting and the dark theme of the umuzi deliberately invokes a sense of the primitive, which is quite clearly contradicted with the tea party.¹²⁰ This is 'civilized', with the younger officers and ladies engaging in cricket or tennis ('civilized sports' unlike the 'gladiator' contest above). The older guests sip their tea, discussing the Zulu 'threat'. There is laughter and a generally pleasant atmosphere.

The sharp differences between these two scenes - essentially civilization versus barbarism - implicitly offer the image of the Zulu as a threat. Once again, as with Zulu, it is the audience which is on the receiving end of such concepts. The invasion seems justified and moreover, modern views of the Zulu may have been influenced by the film. Western views of 'primitive man' will have been reinforced.

As far as the second assertion in the prologue, that Isandlwana forever altered the course of colonial history, this too is problematic. The course colonial history was taking before Isandlwana was in essence the course it took afterwards. Expansion of British and local colonists' interests at the expense of indigenous peoples was the order of the day. Isandlwana did not alter this, it merely gave impetus to British attempts to defeat the Zulu. What it did do, was impact upon the way writers of the past would perceive colonial history. Nevertheless, this assertion is included, no doubt, to produce excitement or tension in the members of the audience, thereby making the film more 'entertaining'. Apart from the interest in their military activities, there is no attempt to show the 'normal' aspects of Zulu society. The nearest the

¹¹⁹ Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, p. 166.

¹²⁰ For more on the use of colour see K. Tomaselli, 'Camera, Colour and Racism: Shaka Zulu' *History News* Vol. 30, November 1987.

film comes to this, is the view of Zulu singing and dancing at the beginning of the film. Unfortunately, these scenes serve to show masses of people gyrating on the screen. It would seem then that all the Zulu do is sing, dance and 'wash their spears' in accordance with their leaders' (and the choreographer's) whims.

However, it is not incorrect to consider that some attempt was made to address the problems with Zulu. As noted above there were revisionist tendencies in the film. The political situation in South Africa during the 1970's, may have led the producers to attempt to include the Zulu perspective. The growing prominence of the Inkatha movement, together with Buthelezi, is important here. The 1970s also saw the development of academic reassessments of Zulu history, which Chapter Seven discusses. Thus the Zulu for example, speak Zulu and subtitles are used. There are attempts to show the injustice of the invasion - what Knight calls the 'diluted moral tone'¹²¹ - in the words of Bishop Colenso and the cynical comments of the journalist, Norris-Newman. British contempt for their black levies is shown. Bloomfield for instance, is more concerned about the ammunition issued to them, than the fact that some of them have drowned - 'Natives is not on my invoices...ammunition is', he states. Furthermore the Zulu are shown to have some tactical ability in that they make use of decoys to fool the British. Bloomfield again...

The Zulu may not have shoes and trousers and the like but it don't mean to say they got no brains.

Compared to Zulu, Zulu Dawn's Zulu play a greater role but this was merely a nod to revisionism. The film is the British story of the battle of Isandlwana. It really does not focus on the Zulu, a factor also dictated by the need to focus on the stars of the film who were taking

¹²¹ Knight and Castle, *The Zulu War Then and Now*, p. 289.

the British parts.¹²² The battle itself is indicative of this. The camera, showing the British view of the Zulu troops charging, portrays them (the Zulu) as a large mass running blindly at the British lines without any sense of organisation. They attempt to 'steamroller' the British with numerical superiority and little or no strategy. Thus the British (and the viewer) are faced by a mass of warriors moving inexorably towards them. This is problematic, since the Zulu did have tried and tested military tactics. These included the crescent formation, which was employed at Isandlwana. Clammer, a source available at the time of Zulu Dawn's production, provides a diagram of the battle. It shows nine Zulu regiments spreading out to encompass the British camp. This military formation, consisting of approximately 20 000 men (according to Clammer) was spread out across a two mile front as it advanced. Furthermore the Zulu soldiers did not merely run at the guns but camouflaged themselves and took cover when necessary. Although recent research has emphasized the Zulu use of tactics¹²³, Zulu tactical ability was also referred to in Morris.¹²⁴ Thus there were most definitely Zulu military tactics involved, which the film does not present. To be fair this may be complicated for the producers to include in a two hour film but nevertheless it is the visual image one is presented with. As it was, fifteen minutes of footage - considered unsuitable for the necessary family certificate - were removed. These linked the battle sequences together, making it easier to follow.¹²⁵ Much is also made of the 'saving of the Colour', filmed in the sort of heroic tradition of which Alphonse de Neuville would have been proud. Davis argues that this is a

¹²² Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, p. 165.

¹²³ See J. Laband, *Fight Us in the Open* (Pietermaritzburg and Ulundi, Shuter and Shooter and the KwaZulu Monuments Council, 1985) and J. Laband, *Isandlwana* (Pietermaritzburg and Ulundi, Shuter and Shooter and the KwaZulu Monuments Council, 1992).

¹²⁴ See Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 372 where the Zulus duck and run in between incoming artillery fire.

¹²⁵ Knight and Castle, *The Zulu War Then and Now*, p. 285.

vestige from Symbol of Sacrifice, which focused on the flag in a patriotic manner (see the previous Chapter).¹²⁶

Another point is that the film's epilogue mentions only the political ramifications of the battle for Britain (the fall of Disraeli's government and so on). There is no mention of the destruction of the kingdom, the title and subject of Jeff Guy's 1979 book, based on his earlier PhD.¹²⁷ On the Zulu side there were also heavy casualties and the battle forced Cetshwayo to abandon his defensive strategy, especially after his half-brother Prince Dabulamanzi KaMpande attacked the fort at Rorke's Drift without official sanction. This is exactly what the British commander Lord Chelmsford wanted - an offensive Zulu army which could be engaged with British firepower. The battle of Isandlwana, therefore, had important effects for both sides, even more so the Zulu. They, unlike the British, could not sustain a continuous, drawn-out war. Furthermore Isandlwana was a pyrrhic victory for the Zulu, not only inflicting severe casualties upon them but amplifying their warlike image in British eyes¹²⁸ as well as in the eyes of subsequent generations of writers.

Thus, while Zulu Dawn was an attempt to place the battle of Isandlwana in a more credible context, it failed to do this. Davis suggests that the film producers attempted to 'have it both ways' - to appear more enlightened and anti-imperial but to hark nostalgically back to the nineteenth century.¹²⁹ Commercial constraints and the reliance on familiar, 'popular', images of Zulu life meant the result was a film that seemed to suggest to white viewers what would happen if they were not adequately prepared for an attack. Such a view would not have been

¹²⁶ Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, p. 166.

¹²⁷ J. Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom* (London, Longman Group, 1979).

¹²⁸ J. Laband and N. Etherington, 'The reduction of Zululand, 1878-1904' in Duminy and Guest, *Natal and Zululand*, p. 197.

¹²⁹ Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, p. 167.

out of place in a time of increasing black resistance to white rule, nor would it have been incompatible with the Centenary commemorations. The two 'fed off' each other, neatly promoting interest in the battle of Isandlwana and the Anglo-Zulu War. It had been hoped that the film would be chosen for a Royal Command Performance in London. In the view of Nate Kohn, one of the producers, Zulu Dawn was overlooked for this honour due to the political climate of the time. An American comedy was chosen for the Command Performance instead.¹³⁰

As it was, the production of the film caused a considerable amount of interest in South Africa. It utilized hundreds of South African extras (including 6000 black extras) and attracted numerous visitors to the set.¹³¹ The fascination with Zulu Dawn continued after production had ended. One reason for this was the financial dispute which occurred when the production company reneged on its debts.¹³² However, this was not the sole source of interest and throughout 1978 and 1979 articles dealing with issues related to Zulu Dawn could be found in the media. These included such trivialities as a film extra involved in criminal activities¹³³ and the marital discord of another¹³⁴, as well as more earnest reports about the influence the film production had on the area in the vicinity of the set.¹³⁵ Part of this area, Babanango (west of Ulundi) remains linked to the production of the film thanks to tourism. 'Stan's pub' at Babanango, has become a tourist attraction as a result of the owner's collection of Zulu Dawn memorabilia.¹³⁶

¹³⁰ *Tonight* supplement, *Daily News* 12 January 1979.

¹³¹ See for example *Family Radio and TV*, 11-17 September, 1978.

¹³² See 'Fire - and food - cloud 'Zulu Dawn'' *Natal Mercury* 10 August 1978, 'Court clamp on 'Zulu Dawn'' *Natal Mercury* 15 August 1978 and "'Zulu Dawn' reels in London' *Natal Mercury* 7 September 1978.

¹³³ 'Zulu Dawn extra lived in 'dream world'' *Natal Mercury* 18 May 1979.

¹³⁴ "'Zulu actor' faces divorce' *Natal Mercury* 16 August 1978.

¹³⁵ See for example 'Babanango baby-boom' *Natal Witness* 23 January 1979 and 'The old way of life returns to Babanango' *Daily News* 2 February 1979.

¹³⁶ Visit made in September 1995.

Retrospective views of the film have, in the main, emphasized the British aspects. Inaccuracies in uniform and weaponry¹³⁷ and the stereotype of Bloomfield issuing ammunition¹³⁸ have been some of the areas of interest. In criticizing the latter and myths about the battle generally, David Langley asked:

*Will the shades of the 24th forgive us if we do not set the record straight?*¹³⁹

Although it was not mentioned, the same could have been said of the Zulu units engaged.

The background to Zulu Dawn is informative in providing a context for the film. Kohn described his knowledge of South Africa as originating from Tarzan films, wildlife programs and Zulu. As he puts it, he was prepared for adventure and wild fantasy. Despite this or perhaps because of it, he notes that the production team felt confident they knew best how to represent the Zulu.¹⁴⁰ Scriptwriter Cy Endfield's imaginings about Africa and the Zulu, while tempered in the film, can be seen in *Zulu Dawn*¹⁴¹, the novel he wrote based on the screenplay of the film. *Zulu Dawn* preceded the film, presumably designed to pave the way for it. An examination of the book's cover leaves one in no doubt as to which market the book was aimed at. A subtitle states... 'From the creator of Zulu, a novel as savage and powerful as Africa itself'. This phrase neatly encapsulates popular perceptions of Africa. It is dark, exciting and dangerous, in short all the ingredients for a first-rate 'adventure'. This theme is continued by the blurb explaining how the story develops from an imperial adventure into one of the bloodiest episodes in African history.¹⁴² Comments such as these belittle historical

¹³⁷ Knight and Castle, *The Zulu War Then and Now*, p. 258.

¹³⁸ D. Langley, 'A Note on the Assumptions' in *Soldiers of the Queen*, 1983/1984.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Quoted in Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, pp. 162-163.

¹⁴¹ C. Endfield, *Zulu Dawn* (London, Arrow Books, 1979).

¹⁴² Ibid., blurb.

practice. They typify the book's action/adventure genre with sweeping generalizations such as Isandlwana being 'one of the bloodiest episodes in African history'. Firstly this seems to imply that African history is made up of 'bloody episodes' and secondly it is another pointer to the interest in the Isandlwana battle. Militarily the battle is an interesting one, nevertheless it is unfortunate that all roads lead to Isandlwana. It was one among many battles. Constant attention on it obscures many of the wider issues of the War, including the fact that the events of 1879 were not merely a series of battles but an actual war with its attendant political, social and economic consequences for both sides. It was therefore hardly an 'imperial adventure'. While the plot does bow to reality by using real names for British officers and men, much of the dialogue is supposition, a hopelessly imaginary creation. In keeping with this fictional nature, Endfield takes every opportunity to imply pre-destiny, that is Isandlwana was a battle destined to happen. An early reference comes when Zulu employees of the main character, Vereker, crowd around...

*jabbering, miming, thrusting hands and pointing fingers eastward in the direction of Nqutu mountains beyond the river, towards the peak known to them as Isandlwana.*¹⁴³

Thus a sense of foreboding is built up, Isandlwana taking on a supernatural, magical property. The scene then, is set for the 'tragedy'. Accompanying these images of the battle are, of course, images of the Zulu. One set of images concerns the 'umKhosi' or 'ingathering', where all of Cetshwayo's 'full-time' soldiers are paraded...

*50 000 massed blades tightly held in black fists thrust skyward in unison to the accompaniment of the singlevoiced roar, 'Bay-de-e! Then again and again the mighty chorus of 50 000 warrior throats, shields and spears stabbing repeatedly in unison to the heaven, giving fearsome expression to the armed will of the Zulu nation 'Zu... Zu-u-u!... Bayede!... Bayede!'*¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 7-9.

Here the Zulu are viewed as a mass of 'slaves', mindless robots who worship their ruler. It is interesting to note that this passage bears a strong resemblance to events portrayed in *King Solomon's Mines* and *Shaka Zulu*. In *King Solomon's Mines* the Kukuanas greet their King Twala in the same way¹⁴⁵, while Ritter has the Zulu acting in the same sycophantic manner towards Shaka.¹⁴⁶ Also, as recent research has shown, the 'armed will of the Zulu nation' was not at one in the decision to oppose the British.¹⁴⁷ The image of Zulu unity and blind obedience to the king is a fallacy.

The martial image of the Zulu features throughout the book. As for the army itself, 'indoctrination and training' had made it a 'military machine par excellence', which could move together as one man, with 'the unity and purpose of a single driven individual...Zulus were capable of anything truly extraordinary'. Thus they are quite superhuman. This idea of abnormality extends to individual Zulu. Descriptions of them are never ordinary, rather they are 'ebony sculptures of perfectly disposed muscularity', 'fiery, brave and intelligent' or 'sharp featured, hawk-eyed, youthful looking'.¹⁴⁸ Romanticized rhetoric such as this, simply does not allow Zulu society to be seen as 'normal'. If they are not viewed in a martial light, then they are described in child-like terms:

*And if Bayele were up to it, he was welcome to join this attack. He could carry the shield of the regiment and become an honorary member on the spot. Bayele was proud of this appointment by so great an inDuna...*¹⁴⁹

Perhaps this was Endfield's attempt to provide a Zulu insight into Isandlwana. If this was so, then Endfield's Zulu are incapable of higher mental functioning. Instead they are devoted

¹⁴⁵ See for example Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, pp. 116 and 131.

¹⁴⁶ See Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*, pp. 155 and 163.

¹⁴⁷ See Laband, *Kingdom in Crisis*, pp. 18-22.

¹⁴⁸ Endfield, *Zulu Dawn*, pp. 27-224.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

children. Cetshwayo does receive some attention but the view of him is one of a 'god' who has restored Zulu 'greatness'.¹⁵⁰ In addition, no discussion about the Zulu would be complete without that much discussed aspect of Zulu society, their sexual activities. This is referred to in some detail, including a lengthy description of a 'provocative dance'.¹⁵¹ It is included to interest readers, reflecting the erotic and exotic flavour of the 'nubile savage'.

This desire seems to be the motivation for many of the above images. They are included to attract commercial interest for both the book and the film. *Zulu Dawn* is really nothing more than a cheap novel, owing more to Haggard and Ritter, than reality. At the same time however, the book is interesting in that it neatly encapsulates many of the prevailing myths about the Zulu. Moreover it is a pointer to the reasons for the development of these myths. Isandlwana, the battle, has become Isandlwana, the symbol. As was evident in the film and noted above, Isandlwana represents the Western 'fear' of Africa, a fear of the 'unknown' perhaps or more to the point a 'fear' of cultures which are perceived as less 'civilized'. They can only be dealt with if they (this other culture) are on the other side of a gun barrel. If however, this fails and the battle is lost, then savagery is released - all of the defenders being exterminated in a hideous manner. On the United States frontier this involved scalping, in Natal disembowelment is the method of 'horror'. The weapons of these cultures are also 'primitive' and 'frightening' - the Zulu used the dreaded 'iKlwa'. Bullets and bayonets however appear infinitely more civilized. Completely disregarded are the vicious British pursuits at Khambula, Gingindlovu and Ulundi. Turning for a moment to the twentieth century, American activities in the Pacific during World War II are not normally regarded as savage or barbaric. Yet on Okinawa, American forces killed 70 000 Japanese troops in three

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 15-18.

months.¹⁵² This is hardly 'civilized', yet Zulu warfare is savage and fearful. These concepts - fear and/or morbid interest in Africa - are embodied in Isandlwana. This leads to an assumption that Africa is a place where people can be easily and thoughtlessly liquidated. Post-colonial violence in Africa, linked to political instability not primeval savagery, seems to justify this point of view. Such an image has also been portrayed in Forsythe's *The Dogs of War*, as well as John Shannon's *Courage* and Leslie Watkin's *The Killing of Idi Amin* and on film in Dark of the Sun/The Mercenaries (1968), The Wild Geese (1978) and The Dogs of the War (1980).¹⁵³

The casualty figures at Okinawa represent the will of the Americans and Japanese to fight, as well as the effectiveness of United States' firepower and tactics. Certainly the Isandlwana battle and the war in the Pacific are 66 years apart but the same principle applies. Quite apart from the 'savagery' and 'barbarism', the battle occurred since the British were prepared to stand and fight and Zulu tactics and weaponry were effective on the day. The Zulu victory was not therefore something supernatural nor magical but the result of a combination of factors. The idea that Isandlwana was unnatural or supernatural continues to be given credence in the 1990s. Features of this discourse can be found in *The Sun Turned Black: Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift - 1879*. Knight uses the testimony of British officers and men, who for various reasons looked upon Isandlwana with superstition¹⁵⁴, to create a sense of the supernatural. The battlefield therefore receives a pejorative connotation. The author seems to overlook the possibility that the benefit of hindsight has given these comments a more sinister interpretation than that which might originally have been intended. Furthermore the title of

¹⁵² I. Dear, and M. Foot (eds.), *The Oxford Companion to the Second World War* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 836.

¹⁵³ Cameron, *Africa on Film*, p. 146-151. F. Forsythe, *The Dogs of War* (London, 1978); J. Shannon, *Courage* (New York, 1975) and L. Watkin, *The Killing of Idi Amin* (New York, 1976).

¹⁵⁴ Knight, *The Sun Turned Black*, pp. 2 and 45.

this book is a reference to the eclipse of the sun which occurred during the battle. Mentioned by Knight on several occasions¹⁵⁵, this aspect is also seen to suggest an unnatural quality about the 22 January 1879.

This then leads one to another reason for the development of the Isandlwana mythology. There was and is a tendency towards disbelief at the British defeat. At the time of the Centenary, the latter was still 'a staggering setback'¹⁵⁶, while the Zulu Dawn film sought excuses in the form of the usual indefensibility of the camp and the failure of the ammunition resupply. Such myths and many more continued to emanate from various forms of discourse during the Centenary period. *Zulu Dawn* was a prime example, one which had its base in fiction, not historical fact. Its sensationalistic content was not aimed at describing the battle of Isandlwana but rather its aim was to produce a series of images attractive to and familiar to a 'Western' market. Thus the desire was to cater for the needs of those whose interest was piqued by the forthcoming Centenary.

Another work which fitted this category was that of military hobbyist, Philip Gon. The amateur nature of the book was readily admitted to by the author. He stated that the book was aimed at the general reading public, interested in military history and South Africa's past.¹⁵⁷ The Centenary would have provided for this interest. The book's 'Preface' suggested that much research had been done and certainly the bibliography testified to this. Gon stated that he had read the testimonies of survivors from both sides¹⁵⁸ and his bibliography lists Emery, Umsweanto's *A Zulu Boy's recollections of the Zulu War and of Cetshwayo's Return* and *A*

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 72 and 76.

¹⁵⁶ Supplement to the *Natal Witness*.

¹⁵⁷ Gon, *The Road to Isandlwana*, p. 13.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 12.

*Zulu King Speaks*¹⁵⁹, these serving to provide the Zulu view. The book's title also suggested that the path to war and ultimately Isandlwana would be comprehensively chronicled. This expectation however is not met. Gon offers a valuable insight into the activities of an Imperial infantry battalion of the 1870s and little more.

Admittedly the inclusion of any sort of qualitative Zulu perspective was still in its infancy but Gon fails to use the Zulu testimony provided by Emery amongst others, to arrive at an empathetic view of the Zulu 'road to Isandlwana'. Through Gon, with no counter-argument or evaluation, Frere speaks vicariously to the twentieth-century reader. His belief that Cetshwayo's departure was necessary on 'humanitarian' grounds, is faithfully repeated. Gon lists such comments, all the while providing justification for the invasion of the kingdom.

Hackneyed additions such as Cetshwayo revitalising the military system, Zulu male celibacy until the display of bravery in battle, the Ndongakusaka battle, and so on, are all part of Gon's story. He also makes comments like the 'black man's mood of depression' was worsened by cattle disease and drought. This in turn led to superstition 'and the barbaric side of native life was glaringly emphasized'. Again the implication - and image - is that the Zulu were largely responsible for the War. He does point to Frere's and Shepstone's culpability and the desire of the settlers in Natal for war¹⁶⁰ but the publication is mainly about the 24th regiment and its activities until Isandlwana in the first place and secondly the role of the British in South Africa. Apart from references in relation to the causes of the War, the Zulu are merely - as they have been before - the supporting cast for this British military history.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 261-266.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 64-195.

In concentrating on this aspect, Gon would certainly have found an audience in 1979. Much of this interest in the Centenary was focused on the British in the War. Images of the Zulu were present but they were confined to specific categories, namely militaristic, bizarre or superhuman, as singer and dancers, loyal and faithful followers or were merely cast in a secondary role. These were aimed at a popular, commercial market. The *raison d'être* for the celebration, ostensibly at least, seemed no different from any other military commemoration. Indeed the ceremonies involved the unveiling of statues and plaques, religious ceremonies and wreath-laying. Frequent statements in the media and by officials involved in the centenary celebrations pointed to a sense of reconciliation as being the basis for the commemoration. George Chadwick, a well-known figure in the preservation of local history, commented that the centenary would be a 'celebration of reconciliation and dedication never seen in South Africa before', a dedication to a 'common future'.¹⁶¹ Media editorials and articles spoke of the same desire.¹⁶² More simply the centenary celebrations were intended to honour the bravery of the casualties of the conflict.

Such notions were however questioned. The previous chapter noted that the January 1979 edition of *Reality* was aimed directly at the centenary celebrations. Contributors, including leading academics in the field of Zulu studies, launched a verbal assault on the commemorations. Their articles offered a more sobering account of the War than that which prevailing sentiments allowed for and their often harsh words offered a view which had largely been ignored in the twentieth century. John Wright believed that the centenary celebrations commemorated what many settlers' descendants viewed as a victory of British

¹⁶¹ 'Tribute to Brave Men of Both Sides' *Natal Mercury* 23 January 1979.

¹⁶² See for example 'Battles to Remember' *Natal Mercury* 5 August 1978 and 'Wrong Spirit' and 'Tell that to my Zulu War grandpa' *Daily News* 11 January 1979.

civilization over a 'savage' Zulu society. In modern times in South Africa, he continued, this ideology became basic to the system of apartheid - white superiority over a black working class:

[The Anglo-Zulu War]...can be seen as having been instrumental in setting in motion the historical processes that created the conditions of economic and political repression in which South Africa's five million Zulu people live today.¹⁶³

These were harsh words. For the Anglo-Zulu War enthusiast filled with thoughts about British uniforms, weapons, regimental histories and the careers of British officers, these themes were certainly unpleasant. Wright indicated that there were wider political, social and economic issues at stake. Jeff Guy continued, observing that the War caused great disruptions for the Zulu and he advocated the idea¹⁶⁴ that the Battle of Ulundi was not really the 'swansong of the Zulu warrior' as the *Natal Witness* suggested.¹⁶⁵ Rather it was promoted as a decisive victory so as to inter alia serve as an example of British power over colonial peoples. This is not the view of the battle which has pre-dominated. Indeed the Battle of Ulundi has been presented as the 'final coup de' grace'¹⁶⁶, the war ending as it was bound to, in an overwhelming Zulu defeat.¹⁶⁷ Guy's article contradicts this, offering an insight into the war which goes beyond a military history.

This theme is continued by the other contributors. Peter Colenbrander reviewed the causes of the war, rejecting the idea that the ultimatum caused the war. He argued that the causes of the war needed to be examined in the context of the wider struggle for land.¹⁶⁸ Dick Cloete discussed the Zulu people since 1879, suggesting that Cetshwayo's 'warriors' had become

¹⁶³ J. Wright, 'Beyond the Washing of the Spears' in *Reality*.

¹⁶⁴ He elaborates on this in his *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*.

¹⁶⁵ Supplement to the *Natal Witness*, 23 January 1979.

¹⁶⁶ Wilkinson-Latham, *Uniforms and Weapons of the Zulu War*, p.15.

¹⁶⁷ Coupland, *Zulu Battle Piece*, p. 9.

¹⁶⁸ P. Colenbrander, 'An Imperial High Commissioner and the Making of a War' *Reality*

'wage - slaves' in the twentieth century. This too, is an interesting issue. The attention focused on the War has meant that Zulu history in the twentieth century has often been ignored. Cloete argued however, that the war was merely the beginning of a process of economic and political manipulation by various groups, including the British in the latter part of the nineteenth century. He considered that it was they who laid the basis for this process, something which subsequent governments built upon after 1910.¹⁶⁹

Thus this edition of *Reality* offered a rather different perspective than many of the publications which had preceded it. The contributors offered a new image of the Zulu. The 'warrior' was replaced with the 'victim'. In this paradigm the Zulu emerge not only as being at the mercy of the forces of colonialism and imperialism but also at the mercy of a historiographical tradition. The latter had manipulated Zulu history in order to establish justification for events of the nineteenth century, such as the invasion of the Zulu kingdom. *The Zulu Paradox* discussed in Chapter One, saw faction fights as a product of innate Zulu aggressiveness.¹⁷⁰ Furthermore it considered that Europeans had 'rescued' the Zulu from constant warfare, offering civilisation instead.¹⁷¹ *Reality's* articles served to negate such assertions. The concept of political and economic manipulation suggests that there were deeper causes for fratricidal conflict amongst the Zulu, perhaps implying frustration and anger at their circumstances. As for the second of Tracey's beliefs, the Europeans had certainly brought 'Western civilization' but this had entailed an entry into a 'Western-style' labour force, not necessarily the perceived benefits of a Western 'way of life'.

¹⁶⁹ D. Cloete, 'From Warriors-Wage to Slaves: The Fate of the Zulu People since 1879' *Reality*.

¹⁷⁰ Tracey, *Zulu Paradox*, p. 22.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

Thus *Reality* of January 1979 sought to establish a more critical perspective of the Anglo-Zulu War and the Zulu role therein. More specifically its immediate desire was that all South Africans examine the 1979 commemorations with a more sober and critical attitude.¹⁷²

This academic intervention caused a storm of protest from the media and centenary organisers.¹⁷³ The *Reality* articles were accused of being subjective and misleading. In particular, observers criticized the 'belaboured Marxist interpretation' of this edition of *Reality*. The motives for the commemorations were seen as legitimate and it was too late to regret the Anglo-Zulu War. Indeed the articles were said to represent a divisive element in the otherwise reconciliatory celebrations.¹⁷⁴ It was argued that the celebrations were 'in the correct spirit', since Buthelezi was actively involved and the KwaZulu Government had appointed a white, whose grandfather fought the Zulu, to represent them.¹⁷⁵ This centenary polemic represents a significant battleground for the appropriation of the Zulu image. The unusual academic intervention into the preparations (unusual in the sense of the number of articles and the extent of the criticism levelled) drew on contemporary images of poverty and alienation within KwaZulu. The image of the brave and fearless 'warrior' engaging in combat with colonial troops was dealt a severe blow. The counter-argument, that the conflict was to be remembered in a spirit of reconciliation, undoubtedly had merit. Yet celebrating the Anglo-Zulu War also offered other, more practical opportunities.

¹⁷² Wright, 'Beyond the Washing of the Spears', p. 4.

¹⁷³ The contents of this article of *Reality* were also reported in 'Zulu War celebrations spark bitter attack', *Daily News* 9 January 1979.

¹⁷⁴ See for example 'Tell that to my Zulu War grandpa' and 'Ex-Judge Raps Lecturer on Zulu War Remark' *Daily News* 11 January 1979 and 'Anglo-Zulu War articles biased, says Player' *Daily News* 16 January 1979

¹⁷⁵ See 'Tell that-my Zulu War grandpa' *Daily News* 11 January 1979 and 'Anglo-Zulu War articles biased, says Player' *Daily News* 16 January 1979.

An indication that the organizers were sensitive to the Zulu role occurred when a Cape Town-based company, the South African Historical Mint, announced its intention to mint eight medallions for the centenary. They depicted the battles at Isandlwana, Rorke's Drift and Ulundi, the Prince Imperial episode, the saving of the regimental colours at Isandlwana and the capture of Cetshwayo. The company was minting 20 000 sets, the majority to be sold overseas. When this was announced, Buthelezi was highly critical of the 'negative depiction of the Zulu and glorification of imperialism'. The medallions depicted Cetshwayo as a captive and the accompanying brochure described him as a despot. In addition the Zulu victory at Isandlwana was described as 'murder'.¹⁷⁶ This, together with disapproval from the organizers, led to the brochure being withdrawn and an apology offered.¹⁷⁷ Blatant commercialism was rejected. This receptiveness to the 'Zulu position', was in reality a sense of unity with Buthelezi and by extension Inkatha. The involvement of Inkatha provided the sort of image the organizers were in need of. This organisation provided the 'impis', the dancers and thus a counterpoint to a colonial-orientated celebration of past defeats and victories. That the activities were attended by local government officials as well as delegates from the Victorian Historical Society and the Royal Regiment of Wales was offset by the presence of Inkatha and the unveiling of plaques and statues dedicated to the Zulu involvement.¹⁷⁸ The image of the Zulu 'warrior' had a very real presence during the celebrations. This presence was assured by the active participation of the KwaZulu authorities. The commemorations were, as noted already, a joint venture by the Natal Provincial Administration and the KwaZulu government. The initiative had in fact come from the latter, which according to media reports, offered a figure of R50 000 for the events. (The Natal

¹⁷⁶ 'Buthelezi angry over Zulu War Medallions' *Daily News* 11 January 1979.

¹⁷⁷ 'Medallions row - Chief gets apology and brochure is withdrawn', *Daily News* 20 January 1979. Also see the *Natal Witness*, 20 January 1979.

Provincial Council proposed R60 000).¹⁷⁹ Moreover the participation of Inkatha and Buthelezi was not treated lightly. On May 25, the second day of the proceedings, King Goodwill Zwelithini and Buthelezi, together with Natal officials, were flown by a South African Airforce helicopter to Rorke's Drift. This ensured their full participation.

While this meant that the centennial activities were enhanced by the Zulu-Inkatha role, there was a reciprocal nature to these events. Indeed the sense of reconciliation is given a more tangible signification by the coexistent context of regional and national politics. There are at least two media references to the possibility of using the centenary to provide the foundation to initiate a Natal indaba.¹⁸⁰ Both situate the centenary within the move to bring a federative solution to the relationship between Natal and KwaZulu.

Having failed to secure a constituency outside KwaZulu, Buthelezi had turned to white politicians in search of an alliance.¹⁸¹ In March 1978 he had approached the New Republic Party to discuss federation. It has been suggested that Natal's secessionist tendencies, which have existed since Union in 1910, saw Buthelezi and Inkatha as allies in attempting to gain special status for Natal.¹⁸² Indeed in February 1995 the Inkatha Freedom Party released a document which stated that:

*KwaZulu-Natal had the inherent right to receive autonomy and to exist on the basis of a federal relation with the rest of South Africa even if the rest of the country by overwhelming majority wished to organize itself as a unitary state.*¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸ 'Plan for Zulu impis to mark Isandlwana' *Daily News* 10 January 1979, 'Programme of events on the battlefields' *Natal Mercury Centenary Supplement* 22 May 1979 and 'Ulundi pageantry as impis dance' *Daily News* 28 May 1979.

¹⁷⁹ See 'Battles to Remember' *Mercury* 5 August 1978, 'Ex-Judge Raps Lecturer on Zulu War Remark' *Daily News* 11 January 1979 and 'Battle-preserve Zulu War Graves' *Natal Mercury* 23 January 1979.

¹⁸⁰ 'A plan for reconciliation' *Daily News* 12 January 1979 and 'A Natal indaba is urgently needed' *Daily News* 16 January 1979.

¹⁸¹ P. Forsythe, 'The Past as the Present: Chief A.N.M.G. Buthelezi's use of History as a Source of Political Legitimation' (Unpl. MA, University of Natal Pietermaritzburg, 1989), p. 112.

¹⁸² 'Secession' *The Sunday Tribune* 20 February 1994.

¹⁸³ Quoted in 'IFP walk-out threatens stability' *Daily News* 22 February 1995.

There were numerous references to the possibilities during the centenary events. Speaking at the annual KwaZulu Assembly prayer breakfast, Buthelezi stated that 1979 should be the turning point in human relations not only for Natal but the entire country¹⁸⁴, while at the unveiling of a statue of Cetshwayo, he called for a national convention and the need to build a better future.¹⁸⁵ He saw a modern Anglo-Zulu War as a possibility if the political situation in South Africa was not resolved. Moreover Buthelezi made the point that White settlers had been well-received by Shaka¹⁸⁶, clearly emphasising that whites and blacks or more correctly the Zulu, could and should work together. The then Administrator of Natal, W. Haveman, spoke of economic interdependence and dialogue¹⁸⁷, while a more national presence was provided by the Minister of Co-operation and Development, Dr. Piet Koornhof. The latter spoke of the need for shared interests and more significantly referred to the danger of the 'communist threat'. There was, he stated, a 'need to unite' and he pointed to Buthelezi as the successor to Cetshwayo.¹⁸⁸

Thus reconciliation came to be used, not only in an emotional sense but a very visible one. The images of Zulu 'warriors', the participation of the Zulu monarchy and Buthelezi - in his role as elder Zulu statesman - working and celebrating together with whites provided a strong message. The Centenary was part of a much wider political debate over the future of the country as a whole but more specifically the region of Natal and KwaZulu. Although of course

¹⁸⁴ See 'Let 1979 be a turning point, says Chief Buthelezi' *Daily News* 18 May 1979 and Editorial 'Lessons of History' *Natal Mercury* 22 May 1979.

¹⁸⁵ 'Isandlwana: 10 000 on a battlefield of old turn to dedicate themselves to peace' and 'Guests of the past at rest' *Natal Mercury* 26 May 1979.

¹⁸⁶ See 'Brave men died in an unjust war: A Zulu perspective of the war of 1879' *Daily News* 22 January 1979 and 'The Anglo-Zulu War - 100 Years On' *Daily News* 23 May 1979.

¹⁸⁷ 'Mutual respect is key to co-existence, says Haveman' *Daily News* 25 May 1979.

¹⁸⁸ 'Groups cannot go own ways any longer, says Koornhof' *Daily News* 25 May 1979 and 'Isandlwana: 10 000 on a battlefield of old turn to dedicate themselves to peace' and 'Guests of the past at rest'.

it was not the sole determinant in the relations between the Inkatha and Buthelezi and Natal authorities as well as the South African government, its psychological effect is fundamental to an understanding of the events which were to follow. The next Chapter examines these events.

CHAPTER FOUR
'WHOSE SHAKA IS THIS?'¹
1979 - 1989

The previous Chapter noted that 1979 was a significant year for the Zulu and those who wished to make use of what it was perceived as representing. The Centenary, Zulu Dawn, the ANC's break with Buthelezi and a variety of political developments contributed to the continued prominence of Zulu iconography.

It has been suggested by Paul Forsythe that for Mangosuthu Buthelezi the decade of the 1980s was a period when the Zulu 'nation' was being reborn as a political entity and that it represents two phases of his political career. The first, 1979 to 1983, saw him establishing his political role in the place of the African National Congress, while the second, 1983 to 1991, saw him reinforcing this.² Having portrayed himself as the internal symbol of the ANC and opponent of apartheid, his break with that organisation in 1979 caused Buthelezi to adopt new strategies and objectives. These involved amongst others, the use of Zulu nationalism and symbolism to promote his political agenda and that of the Zulu 'nation' as a whole. Buthelezi also continued to maintain exclusive control over the uses of Zulu symbolism. Cyprian's son and successor, Goodwill Zwelithini, one such symbol, was kept in careful check. In January 1980 Buthelezi announced that the king would not grant press interviews without the participation of his press secretary and the KwaZulu minister of justice. Visits he intended making outside Nongoma had to be cleared with the cabinet.³ Another potent symbol, Shaka, continued to be co-opted into stimulating Zulu nationalism. It has been argued that Shaka is the most important source of Inkatha imagery and Buthelezi has referred to him as 'a spiritual

¹ K Ngwenya, 'Whose Shaka Is This?' *Drum*, January 1987.

² Forsythe, 'The Past in the Service of the Present', pp. 75-89.

³ 'The king and Buthelezi: History of a power struggle' *The Natal Witness* 21 October 1994.

colossus who passed on great ideals to the Zulu nation'.⁴ The KwaZulu Legislative Authority had declared 24 September Shaka Day in 1972, although its origins extended back to 1954. Shaka Day provided an annual opportunity for ethnic mobilisation around the figure of Shaka.⁵

Buthelezi's and Inkatha's reasons for promoting Zulu imagery in this manner were the result of several factors. Firstly Inkatha's constituency, KwaZulu and Natal, began to come under attack from the ANC. From 1980, the latter's radio station, Radio Freedom, broadcasting from Ethiopia, announced that Buthelezi was the major opponent of the party, a 'snake' that needed to 'be hit on the head'.⁶ Within the country, Inkatha became involved in clashes with various opposition groups. In October 1983 for example, students and Inkatha supporters clashed at the University of Zululand, causing several casualties.⁷

More ominous for Inkatha was the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983, viewed as the internal representative of the ANC.⁸ Conflict between the UDF and Inkatha often escalated into violence. In 1984 for example, the government announced that the townships of Lamontville and Hambanathi were to be incorporated into KwaZulu. This worsened the Inkatha-UDF conflict in these areas (their incorporation would benefit the former) - houses were burnt down and cars stoned.⁹

⁴ C. Hamilton, 'An Appetite for the Past': The Re-Creation of Shaka and the Crisis in Popular Historical Consciousness' *South African Historical Journal* 22 (1990), p. 142.

⁵ See Maré and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, p. 42 and S. Klopper, 'Mobilising Cultural Symbols in Twentieth Century Zululand' in R. Hill et al, (eds.) *African Studies Forum 1* (Pretoria, HSRC Publishers, 1991), p. 214. After the 1994 elections, 24 September became a national public holiday, known as Heritage Day. Buthelezi, as Minister of Home Affairs, oversaw this.

⁶ Quoted in J. Shepherd-Smith, *Buthelezi: The Biography* (Melville, Hans Strydom Publishers, 1988), p. 115.

⁷ P. Maylam, 'The Historical Background to the Natal Violence' (Extension Series Lecture, 2.11.1989.) in A. Minnaar (ed.), *Conflict and violence in Natal/KwaZulu: historical perspectives* (Pretoria, Human Sciences Research Council, 1990), p. 75.

⁸ Forsythe, 'The Past in the Service of the Present', p. 88.

⁹ Maylam, 'The Historical Background to the Natal Violence', p. 76.

In addition, Inkatha was facing competition from non-white parliamentary groups. The establishment of the Tricameral Parliament in 1983 had given Coloured and Indian population groups an apparently greater role in their own affairs and in parliament.¹⁰ Buthelezi came out in strong opposition to these moves¹¹, a reason for this no doubt being black exclusion from this process but also because his desire to promote the Zulu and himself as primary forces in the country¹², was offset by this involvement of other communities.

In the face of these threats, Inkatha went on the offensive. In 1986, it established the United Workers' Union of South Africa (UWUSA) in opposition to the UDF's and the newly-created Congress of South African Trade Unions' (COSATU) attempts to organise workers.¹³ In August and September 1987, Inkatha supporters also embarked on forced recruitment campaigns in townships in the Pietermaritzburg region. These campaigns were a response to the perceived threat to Inkatha's authority and more importantly their claim to represent the Zulu nation.¹⁴ An example of this was the creation of the KwaZulu Monuments Council in 1980. To further consolidate their power in the face of these threats, Buthelezi and Inkatha established a series of museums in KwaZulu, thereby institutionalising an Inkatha-orientated Zuluism.¹⁵ It was established ostensibly to counter the emphasis on 'white history'¹⁶ but museums such as the Ondini Site Museum, Nodwengu Museum and the KwaZulu Cultural Museum set up during the early 1980s, contained Inkatha's 'official' version of the Zulu past.

¹⁰ Beinart, *Twentieth century South Africa*, p. 229.

¹¹ See his speeches quoted in for example Shepherd-Smith *Buthelezi*, pp. 188-191.

¹² Forsythe, 'The Past in the Service of the Present', pp. 87-89.

¹³ A. Minnaar, 'The Escalation of the Violence in the 1980s' in Minnaar, *Conflict and violence in Natal/KwaZulu: historical perspectives*, p. 45.

¹⁴ Minnaar, 'The Escalation of the Violence in the 1980s', p. 45.

¹⁵ J. Wright, and A. Mazel, 'Controlling the Past in the Museums of Natal and KwaZulu' *critical arts*, vol 5, no. 3 (1991), pp. 72-73.

¹⁶ 'Home is where the history is' *Sunday Tribune* 28 August 1994.

These monuments and historical sites had 'been captured to define territory, both physically and symbolically'. In keeping with the 'warrior tradition', battle sites featured prominently. In 1981, Buthelezi announced that 74 historic battlefields were to be restored.¹⁷ As proponents of Zulu traditionalism, the museums of KwaZulu justified it as a political entity and confirmed Inkatha's legitimacy to rule.¹⁸

Furthermore, Zulu nationalism began to seek alliances, a situation assisted by the violence and the contemporary economic situation.¹⁹ The previous chapter noted how the Centenary was used to establish relations with Buthelezi and the KwaZulu authorities and how Buthelezi made contact with the NRP. There were those who began to look at Zulu nationalism as a possible ally. Initially there was a strong sense of purpose which existed among certain members of the academic community, the press and Buthelezi.²⁰ He was on the editorial board of *Reality* and had played a prominent role in the 'The Anglo-Zulu War: A Centennial Reappraisal 1879 - 1979' conference at the University of Natal, Durban. Buthelezi opened the conference and his pleading for a 'Zulu approach' to Zulu history was quoted in *The Anglo-Zulu War: New Perspectives*, which published a section of the conference proceedings.²¹ Black empowerment was the goal of both groups but with Buthelezi's alienation from the more radical movements and his move towards increased ethnic mobilization in the early 1980s²², the two parted company. Already by 1979, Guy had called Buthelezi 'a controversial figure'.²³ Nevertheless, there were others who were prepared to negotiate with him.

¹⁷ Maré, *Brothers Born of Warrior Blood*, p. 78.

¹⁸ Wright and Mazel, 'Controlling the Past', p. 67.

¹⁹ Beinart, *Twentieth-century South Africa*, pp. 171 and 242.

²⁰ See Maré and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, pp. 46 and 48 for examples.

²¹ A. Duminy, and C. Ballard, 'Introduction' in A. Duminy, and C. Ballard (ed.), *The Anglo-Zulu War: New Perspectives* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal, 1988), p. xix.

²² D. Bonnin et al 'The Struggle for Natal and KwaZulu: Workers, Township Dwellers and Inkatha, 1972-1985' in Morrell (ed.) *Political Economy and Identities*, p. 170.

²³ Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p. xv.

Comments about him indicate the way in which he was seen by certain sectors of the white community. Laurence Gandar, editor of the *Rand Daily Mail*, stated that Buthelezi ...

*more than anyone bridges the gap between white and black in South Africa...To a great many people...Chief Buthelezi is a symbol of hope for the future.*²⁴

Inkatha used the instrument of ethnicity as a means of labour recruitment for mines as well as ending strikes.²⁵ Big business responded favourably to these activities as well as to Buthelezi. Jan van der Horst, chairperson of Old Mutual was greatly impressed with Buthelezi as a leader²⁶, while Gavin Relly, Chairman of Anglo-American and who also met the ANC outside the country in 1985, believed that he would be 'the anvil on which apartheid ultimately faltered'.²⁷ The *Natal Mercury* cast him as a 'latter-day Shaka'.²⁸ Buthelezi himself, did not hesitate to emphasize his role. In relation to the economic situation, he had told an American audience that Inkatha had a significant role to play in stimulating investment in South Africa.²⁹ His was a special responsibility to lead the Zulu nation through difficult times until its 'liberation'.³⁰ His appearances in the role of Cetshwayo in both Zulu and As Black as Hell and as Thick as Grass cannot be dismissed lightly. In acting as the Zulu king, Buthelezi reinforced portrayals of himself as a fundamental roleplayer in 'Zuluness'.

This theme of Buthelezi, the latter-day Shaka, as the mediator between the black and white was given credence in April 1980, when he announced the establishment of the Buthelezi Commission with a view to considering the political future of Natal and KwaZulu.³¹

²⁴ Quoted in Shepherd-Smith, *Buthelezi*, p. 105.

²⁵ See for example Maré, *Brothers Born of Blood*, pp. 91-94.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

²⁷ Quoted in Shepherd-Smith, *Buthelezi*, p. 105.

²⁸ Centenary Supplement *Natal Mercury* 22 May 1979.

²⁹ 'Chief calls on U.S. Blacks for pact' *Natal Mercury* 10 August 1978.

³⁰ 'Cops secure' *Umlazi Mercury* 25 September 1995. Also see 'More misery' in store for the Zulus' *Mercury* 26 September 1995. Also see Maré, *Brothers Born of Warrior Blood*, p. 57.

³¹ Quoted in Shepherd-Smith, *Buthelezi*, p. 160.

Consisting of inter alia academics, churchmen and businessmen, the forty member commission began its sittings at the University of Natal, Durban in October. Two years later, the Commission's findings were released, recommending that Natal and KwaZulu be joined together by a multi-racial legislative assembly.³² These findings were however rejected by the government and by the NRP, which controlled the Natal Provincial Council (NPC). This temporary change in attitude towards Buthelezi came about as a result of the 1983 tricameral parliament system, which eroded support for regional alignment with Inkatha. However the rift was repaired in 1984 and the 'UluNdi Accord' was signed between NPC representatives and the KwaZulu cabinet, aiming at federal government for the region.³³ Two years later, the KwaZulu/Natal Indaba came into being. Similar in aim to the Buthelezi Commission, the Indaba intended that the inhabitants of the two areas 'should be afforded full political participation under the law, while at the same time ensuring that minority groups were protected'.³⁴ In fact Buthelezi went so far as to state that the Indaba's proposals were in accord with the 'regional style' of government used by Shaka. Although its proposals for a federal system in Natal were also rejected by the government, an opinion survey conducted in 1988 found that 50% of white respondents living in Natal, saw Buthelezi as 'the kind of black man who could be trusted with power'.³⁵ These sorts of white views of Buthelezi would later be reflected in the Shaka Zulu television series (see below). During this period then, white capitalism and black capitalist and political interests in KwaZulu moved towards a tentative political alliance.³⁶

³² Ibid., p. 172.

³³ Bonnin et al, 'The Struggle for Natal and KwaZulu', pp. 166-167.

³⁴ Shepherd-Smith, *Buthelezi*, p. 210.

³⁵ Quoted *ibid.*, p. 216.

³⁶ Wright and Mazel, 'Controlling the Past', p. 73.

Thus images of the Zulu came to be manipulated by various sources. Inkatha's desire was to consolidate its own position in the face of threats by more radical groups, while at the same time, similar motives caused sectors of the white community to move closer to Inkatha. As Witz and Hamilton observed, the promotion of African views of history by certain white interests stemmed from the need to accommodate black political aspirations. 'Powerful leaders, noble Zulus and the non-conflictual indaba forum' were selected to be part of a new consciousness of the past. The similarity between these and versions of the African past promoted by 'conservative African nationalist politicians', ensured that white interests and conservative black interests were united against radical movements and their 'more subversive reading' of the past.³⁷

Secondly, the 1970s saw a reaction by black South Africans against 'Bantu education'.³⁸ This resulted in a desire for an alternative and more popular history, something which accelerated in the 1980s.³⁹ Indeed, the concept of the popular became a fully-functioning discourse of its own. By the mid-1980s, popular protest and the extent of the popular movement against apartheid was attaining its zenith. Its primary aim was to overturn the past - that is the laws and the administrators of segregation and apartheid - and create something new.⁴⁰ The Readers' Digest organisation found for example that there was a demand for a history of South Africa which examined the black contribution to the past.⁴¹ The result was the *Reader's Digest Illustrated History of South Africa: The Real Story*⁴², first published in 1988.

³⁷ L. Witz and C. Hamilton, 'Reaping the Whirlwind: The Readers' Digest *Illustrated History of South Africa* and Changing Perceptions of History' in the *South African Historical Journal* 24 (1991), p. 193.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

³⁹ Callinicos, 'Popular History in the Eighties', p. 295.

⁴⁰ Beinart, *Twentieth century South Africa*, p. 244.

⁴¹ Quoted in Witz and Hamilton, 'Reaping the Whirlwind', p. 194.

⁴² *Reader's Digest Illustrated History of South Africa: The Real Story* (Cape Town, The Reader's Digest Association, 1988).

This was a concerted effort to place the history of black South Africans on a par with that of whites. Revisionist concepts included cautionary notes on Fynn's reliability and on the legitimacy of the concept of the Mfecane. However, there remained strong emphasis on Shaka as an omnipotent ruler and the book echoed popular interpretations by referring to his 'conquering armies'.⁴³ COSATU, the National Union of Mineworkers, the UDF-affiliated National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) and others became involved in the production of popular history, specifically in the form of 'people's history'. This was achieved by means of booklets and pamphlets.⁴⁴ The KwaZulu Monuments Council also responded by producing a series of booklets covering various aspects of Zulu history.

The above desires and the political situation of the time, evoked similar reaction by individuals outside of overt political groupings or academic circles who also saw a need for revisionist history. There was a recognition that the demise of apartheid was inevitable and economically desirable.⁴⁵ An indicator of this was a tourist video Love Changes People made in the 1980s. Distributed around the world from South African consulates, it contrived to show South Africa as a place of non-racialism.⁴⁶ The period after the 1976 Soweto violence had led to a surge of mass opposition to the State. An aspect of this resistance was an awareness of the role that media could play in educating, organising and mobilising people.⁴⁷ The way in which audio-visual media came to be viewed during this time, is indicated in the words of John Cundill, a writer for the South African Broadcasting Company (SABC). He noted in 1986 that television could be used to ease racial tension in South Africa. A colleague,

⁴³ *Reader's Digest Illustrated History*, pp. 77, 81 and 88.

⁴⁴ Callinicos, 'Popular History in the Eighties', pp. 287-289.

⁴⁵ Beinart, *Twentieth century South Africa*, pp. 226-237.

⁴⁶ Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, p. 168.

⁴⁷ L. Steenveld, 'Reclaiming History' in Bignaut and Botha, *Movies, Moguls, Mavericks*, p. 301.

Bill Faure, shared this view.⁴⁸ It was during this period of white-black discussion in Natal, political violence and the demand for more acceptable history that a powerful array of images were prepared and then presented to local and overseas television audiences. The significance of the above events and activities did not escape the producers of the television series Shaka Zulu.

The advent of a film version of Shaka Zulu and early Zulu history, accorded images of the Zulu a place they had not previously enjoyed. The power of the visual medium ensured that these images were disseminated to an audience on a greater scale than before. One hundred million viewers, both in South Africa and the United States, saw the series within a year. By 1997 the series had been shown more than thirty times and it achieved success in Europe and Australia. In general critics were divided in their opinions. Some saw it as a rare insight into black history from a black perspective, while others regarded it as racist. It opened in a number of American cities to demonstrations and protests.⁴⁹

Despite this criticism which emanated from various sources, the producers of Shaka Zulu did succeed in certain respects. Films like Zulu and Zulu Dawn had failed to provide any involvement of the Zulu in real terms. Their role as the 'supporting cast' meant a qualitative Zulu perspective was absent. 'Popular literature' also contained the same elements. As the previous chapters have shown, Zulu history had often been about the white role in that history or the impact of the Zulu on white society. Although Shaka Zulu would incorporate the same themes, its large Zulu cast - many of whom were the principal characters - are seen to play a

⁴⁸ Witz and Hamilton, 'Reaping the Whirwind', p. 193.

⁴⁹ C. Hamilton, 'A Positional Gambit: Shaka Zulu and the Conflict in South Africa' in *Radical History Review*, Vol. 44, 1989 and 'Return of the loincloth' *Mail and Guardian* 15-21 August 1997.

primary role in the events of Zulu history. Furthermore the series attempted to promote authenticity. Faure emphasized this, costumes being made out of genuine hide and feathers, huts were constructed in the traditional manner and Zulu weapons being as realistic as possible.⁵⁰ Thus there was a conscientious attempt to re-create the environment of early Zulu history. Much of the filming occurred within this environment, the action occurring in various Zulu homesteads and around Eshowe. The viewer then is among the Zulu, rather than facing them, as in Zulu and Zulu Dawn (The latter very fleetingly transported the viewer to Cetshwayo's headquarters). This also serves to anchor Zulu history in its own time and place, as opposed to seeing it only from the perspective of Natal or the Cape. In these respects Shaka Zulu was very different from much of the 'history' which had preceded it.

Indeed the announcement that a film version of this legendary Zulu leader was being produced led to much anticipation. One of the reasons for this was that the director Bill Faure stated he was moving away from the type of discourse where Shaka's life was recorded by white historians who provided bigoted and sensationalized accounts of the Zulu. It was the producers 'intention with this series to change that view'.⁵¹ These words implied a desire to see Zulu history in an objective fashion, moving away from the myth which had surrounded them and particularly their nineteenth-century leader Shaka Zulu. The power of the visual medium could be used to provide a new interpretation of Shaka. Faure then, had a duty to 'set the record straight' as it were. People, both black and white, wanted to see what this 'great man' was really like.⁵² *The Souvenir Brochure* however, suggested that there were other aims involved. Shaka Zulu was called an 'epic historical drama', a story which would take its place

⁵⁰ Hamilton, 'A Positional Gambit', p. 13.

⁵¹ *Shaka Zulu - The Official Souvenir Brochure*, p. 3.

⁵² T. Msimang, 'The Reception of Shaka Zulu: An Evaluation of its Cultural and Historical Context' *African Studies Forum*, 1991

in world history.⁵³ The series was not going to be a documentary but an epic. An epic is a form of narrative which is usually historical in nature, examining the origins of the social structure and ultimately validates particular societal norms, values and identity.⁵⁴ This formula is faithfully followed by the series. Its epic nature came about after the involvement of an American screenwriter, Josh Sinclair. Faure had intended to produce 'a 13 hour mini series' but after alterations and rewriting, it became 'a more concise 10 hour epic'.⁵⁵ What Faure had wanted - and it is not inconceivable to think that this was greater historical accuracy, something borne out by his own words⁵⁶ - became a 'history' subverted for various purposes.

The series as history

Shaka Zulu was a staunch advocate of the 'great man' theory. Shaka is viewed as a great and powerful leader who built a vast kingdom through military conquest. The Mfecane was the result of this. The Shaka Zulu of the series (Henry Cele), appears a despotic, often cruel and ruthless leader set on revenge and building an empire. A single battle (that of Dingiswayo and Shaka versus Senzangakhona assisted by the Buthelezi) allows Shaka to change the course of Zulu history. Then begins the Mfecane, a theme which is promoted by burning huts, wailing and panic-stricken individuals running about. Shaka's assumption of leadership of the Zulu is portrayed as follows. When he hears his brother Sigujana is succeeding their father Senzangakhona, he marches to the Zulu homestead. On arrival, Sigujana grovels and kneels

⁵³ Souvenir Brochure, p. 3.

⁵⁴ Tomaselli, 'Camera, Colour and Racism: Shaka Zulu', p. 10.

⁵⁵ Souvenir Brochure, p. 6.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12, when filming certain sequences he had to avoid the temptation to film them as a documentary.

before Shaka, who executes him on the spot. 'Nothing will be as it was ever again' is Shaka's comment to one of the elders. This is very tense and dramatic but its accuracy is questionable.

Fynn believes Shaka employed his half-brother Ngwadi to assassinate Sigujana.⁵⁷ According to Ritter's version this could have happened or alternatively he suggests that Ngwadi and Sigujana may have had an altercation in which Ngwadi emerged the victor.⁵⁸ Jantshi kaNongila, one of James Stuart's informants has a very different version. According to him, Sigujana was a casualty in the battle against the Khumalos.⁵⁹ Hamilton points out that according to Zulu custom, a usurper who ordered or was involved in an assassination of the rightful heir is viewed as being an illegitimate ruler.⁶⁰ In any event it seems unlikely that Shaka would march up to Sigujana in the manner portrayed by the series. The reason for adding it is of course for dramatic effect. It promotes the idea of the great man, ruthless, driven and determined. There are other pointers to this. At one point Francis Farewell (the actor Edward Fox) remarks that ... 'empire was in his [Shaka's] imagination before it became a reality', while throughout the series the musical score reminds one that Shaka is 'growing higher and higher'. Furthermore, not only is empire-building his aim but also revenge. His alienation as a child has caused him to make all those who taunted him and his mother Nandi, pay. As a result the series thereby adopts the view that only the actions of Zulu kings and great men are of importance. Throughout the series, the viewer sees both Senzangakhona's counsellor and Shaka's counsellor (Ngomane) referring to the 'people' - the 'people' are puzzled, the 'people' are concerned and so on. In most cases the two kings are apathetic.

⁵⁷ Stuart and Malcolm, *The Diary*, p. 14.

⁵⁸ Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*, p. 57.

⁵⁹ Webb and Wright, *The James Stuart Archive Volume I*, p. 182.

⁶⁰ Hamilton, 'An Appetite for the Past', p. 152.

Shaka Zulu continued the theme of portraying the Zulu people as a faceless mass, like robots who serve as prey for their cruel leaders. Apart from that, they merely eat, sing and dance.

It is unfortunate that the series did not make use of new interpretations of events. As research had shown at the time, Shaka cannot be seen as the sole impetus behind the changes in South East Africa during the early nineteenth century. At least the series omits the myth that some of these changes were white inspired. Fynn initiated this view which held that Dingiswayo, when a refugee from the Mthethwa, met a certain Dr Cowan, who told him of the ways of the Whites.⁶¹ In addition the viewer is mercifully spared the other myth about Zulu conquest being a product of Shaka's psychosexual dysfunction, which was another popular view.⁶² Nevertheless Shaka Zulu portrays Shaka as the impetus behind new military tactics. 'A warrior must be an artist' he says philosophically to his Mthethwa commander who is made out to be incompetent and reactionary.⁶³ Overlooked for example is the ecological paradigm which links the physical environment with the growth of Zulu power. Guy in 1980 pointed to there being a scarcity of resources due to changing ecological factors (including over-grazing and soil erosion). This may have led to social changes such as leaders assuming control of larger areas of land and greater numbers of people to offset these problems.⁶⁴ Shaka then, would have been one of these leaders. There is no single explanation and by the time of the series' production, the 'great man' theory was largely discredited. Later comments by Wright and Hamilton could have been applied directly to Shaka Zulu. They suggested that until a new conceptual framework for analysing the nineteenth century was developed, assessments of the

⁶¹ Stuart and Malcolm, *The Diary*, p. 5.

⁶² See for example Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*, p. 14.

⁶³ This reactionary nature is something Ritter also referred to. See *ibid.*, p. 45.

⁶⁴ J. Guy, 'Ecological factors in the rise of Shaka and the Zulu kingdom' in S. Marks and A. Atmore, (eds.) *Economy and Society in pre-industrial South Africa* (London, Longman, 1980).

careers of individual rulers simply reinforced stereotypes.⁶⁵ This is in fact what Shaka Zulu did. The 'great-man' theory in this production also implies that Shaka believed himself to be a demigod. He is seen as having ultimate power over his people. He has the girl, whom Fynn allegedly cured on his way to meet Shaka, executed in front of the whites. Fynn himself makes no mention of such an execution.⁶⁶

Another familiar image associated with Shaka is that of excessive cruelty. The series also takes up this perspective. The view one is left with, is the ghastly sight of rows of impaled people. Shaka is followed by a group of 'enforcers' who are ready to impale at Shaka's command. In discussing impaling, Msimang remarks that execution by these long poles was not a part of Zulu custom. Witchdoctors were executed by ukujoja, a number of stakes being pushed up the rectum but not of the type in the series. The production team had Zulu advisors, yet they chose to ignore their advice and include such inaccuracies.⁶⁷ Again, one can see the influences of 'white historians'. The television 'enforcers' resemble the 'slayers' portrayed by Ritter⁶⁸ and Haggard.⁶⁹ Furthermore the series seems to support the notion that Shaka ordered scores of people to be massacred after Nandi's demise. This seems at odds even with Fynn, who wrote in his manuscript that when Shaka heard about this, he ordered it stopped.⁷⁰ These comments by Fynn seem to have been used selectively. Bulpin discusses the events that surrounded this episode but refrains from mentioning that Shaka stopped it.⁷¹ Ritter has the

⁶⁵ Wright and Hamilton, 'Traditions and transformations' in Duminy and Guest, *Natal and Zululand*, p. 69.

⁶⁶ See for example Stuart and Malcolm, *The Diary*, pp. 66 and 71-77.

⁶⁷ Msimang, 'The Reception of Shaka Zulu', pp. 243 and 248.

⁶⁸ Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*, p. 238.

⁶⁹ Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, pp. 130-131.

⁷⁰ Stuart and Malcolm, *The Diary*, p. 135.

⁷¹ Bulpin, *Shaka's Country*, pp. 42-44.

same story.⁷² It is portrayed in this way to obtain a dramatic impact and emotional response from the viewer.

Moreover images of the Zulu are displaced by images of the role of the whites. Emphasis on the activities of the settlers make them appear to be a significant part of Zulu society at that time and accordingly fundamental to Zulu history. The whites actually save Shaka's 'empire' when they help him to his feet after the unsuccessful assassination attempt. They are therefore, seen as having a certain amount of control over Shaka. Also, they help Shaka defeat Zwide and the Ndwandwe (the series dates this event as 12 April 1827). Again dramatic licence has been used. Fynn, although suggesting he treated Shaka, does not mention anything about helping Shaka to stand and as a result preventing a coup d'etat by Dingane.⁷³ The battle with the Ndwandwe is also interesting. In this Shaka sends the Whites out in front. They open fire, inflicting severe losses on Zwide's forces. This is all very dramatic but untrue. Zwide had already been defeated in 1819. In 1826, Fynn alleges he witnessed Shaka defeating a Ndwandwe army under one of Zwide's son Sikhunyana⁷⁴, while the date given in the series approximates to that of the battle with the Beje. Here Isaacs and several others are reported by Fynn to have assisted the Zulu in a very minor offensive.⁷⁵

Furthermore the very reason for the whites sailing to the Coast of Natal becomes politically motivated. According to the series the colonial office in London was becoming increasingly concerned with the Zulu 'threat to the Cape frontier'. King George orders Bathurst to do something about these 'ogres in their birthday suits'. The colonial office cannot deploy troops

⁷² Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*, pp. 311-316.

⁷³ See Stuart and Malcolm, *The Diary*, pp. 83-87.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Ch IX.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

so the alternative is to send one man, Lieutenant Francis Farewell. Farewell is seen as a man of action, a thrill-seeker and he willingly accepts his task of pacifying Shaka. Accordingly Farewell gathers a motley crew including the compassionate Henry Francis Fynn (Robert Powell) and sets off. Evidence however points to Farewell and Fynn embarking on a commercial venture, rather than it being a colonial office mission. The main aim of the party was trade. Fynn emphasizes that ivory was the goal and that his role was to purchase articles which could be traded for ivory.⁷⁶ Farewell in his correspondence to Somerset⁷⁷ hoped to establish commerce which would benefit the Cape Colony. It is interesting to note the subservient tone Farewell adopts in these letters, hardly the tone of a man with a colonial office mission. Faure and his team seem to have drawn this from Watt's *Febana* which tells of Farewell receiving similar instructions from Somerset (see Chapter Three). Notably however, Faure and his team failed to show that Shaka gave the settlers wives.⁷⁸ Presumably the producers felt this would not have been compatible with the plot, nor 'suitable' for potential South African or American audiences with their racial sensitivities.

Perhaps the greatest myth and most serious flaw of the production is the emphasis of the supernatural. The 'great man' theory is mixed up with magic, witchdoctors and prophecies. It was this aspect which was the most fundamental departure from the series as serious history. The cinematic origins of this inclination towards fantasy and consequently special effects, lies in the decade before Shaka Zulu. Science fiction and fantasy have been subjects of film since the early years of cinema. In the second half of the twentieth century, science fiction films became firmly entrenched in the cinema-goer's psyche as a result of 2001: A Space Odyssey

⁷⁶ See *ibid.*, Ch III.

⁷⁷ B. Leverton, *Records of Natal* (Pretoria, Government Printers, 1984), Document No. 19.

⁷⁸ Fuze, *The Black People*, p. 52.

(1968).⁷⁹ The decade of the 1970s represented a major advance in the genre, technological developments allowing for spectacular special effects. Fantasy became interwoven with science fiction in productions such as the Star Wars trilogy of films, beginning in 1977. These pioneered a new way of film production. Their popularity is such that the 1977 Star Wars have had US theatrical grosses to date of \$323 million, and its two sequels, Empire Strikes Back in 1980 and Return of the Jedi in 1983, had combined grosses of \$487 million.⁸⁰ Star Wars was a reworking of T.H. White's *The Once and Future King*, itself a retelling of the Arthurian legends. Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1977) and the first of the Superman films (1978) followed Star Wars into the cinemas. Close Encounters of the Third Kind was a fantasy drama about the arrival of aliens and in 1982 the highly-successful ET was produced, also about alien encounters. The Arthurian legend was again retold in Excalibur (1981).⁸¹ These films established a cinematic context for Shaka Zulu. Excalibur is particularly significant with its use of King Arthur's legendary sword. In the Star Wars trilogy, a 'light sabre' replaces the sword, while in Shaka Zulu it is the assegai (see below).

In justifying the use of the supernatural, Faure argues that the intention was to place the series in its contemporary context of the belief in witchcraft and superstition.⁸² However pure fiction and Western conceptions of 'tribal life', became confused with 'traditional superstitions'. It seems unlikely that nineteenth-century Zulu beliefs can ever be properly understood, considering the romanticized interest in 'witchdoctors' and 'witchcraft'. One of the few 'Zulu films' which did not demonize the witchdoctor was Siliwa the Zulu, mentioned in Chapter Two.⁸³ In Shaka Zulu however, Shaka's birth, alienation as an infant and

⁷⁹ D. Shipman, *A Pictorial History of Science Fiction Films* (London, Hamlyn, 1985), pp. 112-113.

⁸⁰ 'Star Wars trilogy relaunched' *Business Day* 26 September 1995.

⁸¹ Shipman, *A Pictorial History*, pp. 134-142.

⁸² *Shaka Zulu - The Official Souvenir Brochure*, p. 15.

⁸³ Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, p. 141.

subsequent rise to power are explained in terms of a prophecy. Architect of this prophecy is the 'witchdoctor' Sitayi. She stands in a forest surrounded by a pack of hyenas, waving her arms and making 'magic', while bolts of lightning and thunder reverberate across the sky. These occur for example, when Shaka is born, when he is assaulted by other youngsters and when he is injured and seeks refuge with Dingiswayo. Sitayi bears a close resemblance to Gagool, the witchdoctor in *King Solomon's Mines* and to the alien in *ET*. There is also a Sitayi-like character in *Shaka Zulu*, whom Ritter calls Nobela.⁸⁴ The notion of the prophecy is fiction. It certainly is not mentioned by Stuart's informants such as Baleka ka Mpitikazi and Jantshi, for instance.⁸⁵ Rather such a concept is mentioned in the play 'Chaka' by Mofolo.⁸⁶

Even the forging of Shaka's spear is elevated to mythical status, being compared to King Arthur's magical sword, Excalibur.⁸⁷ After it is forged, a witchdoctor (with glowing red eyes what's more) emerges from the forest. He takes the weapon and cries 'The spirit of the blade speaks'. 'No' says Shaka confidently, 'the spirit of Shaka speaks. 'So be it' agrees the witchdoctor 'the spirit of Shaka speaks through the blade'.

What emerges visually is an excessive use of fantasy, a common feature of film but which suggests that the Zulu people believed firmly in magic and were governed by it. Furthermore individuals commanding packs of hyenas does tend to defy the imagination and make the series seem unrealistic. Again the reason for this inclusion is dramatic and emotional effect. Moreover a considerable amount of time is spent by the series on the 'nubile savage'. Images

⁸⁴ Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, p. 121 and Ritter, *Shaka Zulu*, Ch. 19.

⁸⁵ Webb and Wright, *The James Stuart Archive* Volume I.

⁸⁶ Msimang, 'The Reception of Shaka Zulu', p. 250.

⁸⁷ K. Ngwenya, 'Whose Shaka Is This?' *Drum*, January 1987.

of bare-breasted women and naked men are played as Davis puts it, for their 'soft porn value'.⁸⁸

The series as a product of its sources

That Shaka Zulu was very dependent on *The Diary of Henry Francis Fynn*, was readily admitted to⁸⁹, although as is evident above, the series deviated from this publication, offering a variety of other images. The 'bigoted white historians' Faure was trying to move away from, provided the content for the series. It has been argued that perceptions of Fynn as a recorder of oral history are as important as his material.⁹⁰ In this sense the series also accords Fynn as well as Ritter respectability. Hence Fynn's role as a chronicler of early Zulu history is further authenticated.

Faure's very aim, to revise white perceptions of Zulu history, merely created a production which largely reinforced and legitimated them. The image of the Zulu in the nineteenth century, courtesy of Fynn and Isaacs, was replicated on television screens around the world. It is significant that despite such a display of the dangers of unquestioningly accepting various sources or perhaps due to this televisual display, the 'post-Shaka Zulu' period saw a continuing reliance on these sources in popular and academic circles.⁹¹ One of the series most vehement critics was a journalist, Louis Du Buisson. He called it a 'fiasco', noting that Fynn was given to the most frightful exaggeration and distortion. The result was the 'bloodiest interpretation of Shaka yet'.⁹²

⁸⁸ Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, p. 185.

⁸⁹ *Souvenir Brochure*, p.12.

⁹⁰ Pridmore, 'Henry Francis Fynn', p. 291

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁹² L. Du Buisson. 'An Open Letter to Bill Faure' *Style*, February 1987, pp. 92-96.

It was with such interpretations in mind, that Du Buisson set out to create with his *The White Man Cometh*

*...a piece of investigative journalism - an exploration of the theme that there is more to African history than the white man has made of it...from the writings of those who sought to manipulate it for their own ends.*⁹³

This objective however, remained unfulfilled. *The White Man Cometh* did not succeed in providing a Zulu perspective of events. Instead Du Buisson attempted to show the vagaries of the early settlers at Port Natal and thus their roles are emphasized. They 'lied, schemed and cheated, treating the Zulu people with incredible disregard for life and limb'.⁹⁴ These comments and his concentration on the whites in a one-dimensional manner - whether they are fit to be regarded as heroes or should be the villains of the story - elevate them to the status displayed in the television series. Accordingly, Zulu images are effectively displaced. When the Zulu are focused on, there is very little that is revisionist. There remains the emphasis on the 'great man' Shaka, who formed a monolithic political entity out of a multitude of groups. Moreover it is the invention of the stabbing iKlwa , a mere weapon, which Du Buisson regards as having changed Zulu society.⁹⁵ The Zulu themselves are 'tall, strong, proud, defiant' and exceptional, never 'normal'. Other African groups, such as the 'Mozambican blacks' are by contrast 'dirty, greedy and without pride'. Thus here is the image of the extraordinary and 'great', providing a sense of Zulu superiority over all other Africans. In addition with the white settlers as the villains, the Zulu by extension become the heroes:

⁹³ L. Du Buisson, *The White Man Cometh* (Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg, 1987), p.14.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

‘proud, orderly, powerful and prosperous...’.⁹⁶ Du Buisson merely reverses the traditional roles.

Furthermore, there is evidence that he too has used *The Diary* in a selective manner. The reader is pointed to the issue of Nandi’s demise being controversial, yet in describing the ‘massacre’ which followed, he states ‘the king put an end to it’.⁹⁷ This is at odds with Fynn’s manuscript. (see above) Du Buisson’s version creates the impression of an officially sanctioned ‘massacre’ whereas the manuscript suggests that the event occurred outside of Shaka’s orders. Du Buisson therefore, failed to move significantly away from the television series’ perspective of events nor was he able to avoid the problems of the above-mentioned sources.

As far as Shaka Zulu is concerned however, the series’ sources were not the only source of interest - its ideological content attracted much comment. At the outset of this analysis, the power of visual imagery both on television and in the cinema was discussed. Films do not occur in a vacuum but are produced and shown in a dynamic socio-political environment. Society has to make sense of this and as result what is seen is related to one’s environment.

The series as an ideological tool

This aspect of the series came under much scrutiny from various quarters. When asked about government intervention in the script, Faure responded that he did not think the government

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 25-34.

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 81-82.

would have sat down and considered how to manipulate the film. Shaka Zulu was however manipulated by various sources.

Initially Faure wanted to utilize Kunene's poem 'Emperor Shaka the Great', which is based on the Zulu oral tradition. Here he was overruled by the South African Broadcasting Company (SABC) for two reasons. Firstly Kunene had ANC connections and secondly his poem did not emphasize white involvement (which was necessary for the American market). The script was re-written and by 1981, the SABC was in control of production and financing. Two years later, escalating costs resulted in US involvement. It was at this point that a significant change was made. Originally the series was meant to be chronological but American film distributors argued that unknown black actors and black history would have difficulties in the US market. Thus the series begins with the arrival of the whites and then employs the 'flashback' technique.⁹⁸

However ideology can be intentional or unintentional. Hill believes that films 'are largely mythicized at the subconscious level'⁹⁹, that is to say myth is not intended to be incorporated into the production. Ideology in the guise of myths may manifest itself at a subconscious level, so that both parties - producer and audience - are to all intents and purposes unaware of them. In the final analysis, however, it is the audience who is on the receiving end. The scriptwriter, once he or she has found a theme, will encode it in a certain form for public consumption. However, whether ideology is intended or unintended and in whichever form the theme is encoded, the audience still has to decode it. In this sense the meaning of the film does not lie

⁹⁸ This information is derived from Hamilton, 'A Positional Gambit'.

⁹⁹ Hill, *Illuminating Shadows*, p. 17.

in the film but in us.¹⁰⁰ Myths serve several functions. They can, for instance, govern how a group should act in a crisis because historically their ancestors acted in a certain manner. Furthermore myths present an idealized view of the past which stimulates people to live up to the noble ideals of this past.¹⁰¹ Indicative of this was Goodwill Zwelithini's 1993 warning to the Zulu that their land was being threatened, as had occurred in 1879. This time the threat was the South African Government and the African National Congress. He went on to describe how the Zulu had resisted the British invasion.¹⁰²

On the other hand, myths can cause tension between different groups and increase the possibility of conflict between them. Images of Shaka's domination over other Black groups serve to provide a feeling of national pride and heritage. The Zulu people and in particular Inkatha benefited from this. During 1985 and 1986, there were several clashes between Zulu and Pondo. The fighting started with an incident in November 1985, when a Pondo man allegedly molested a Zulu woman in Malakazi. Zulus retaliated and general fighting broke out between the two groups. The Pondo were forced to flee Malakazi and sought refuge in Umbogintwini. Skirmishes continued until Christmas Day when an estimated 5 000 Zulu and Pondo were involved in a battle, causing 60 casualties. Clashes between Pondo and Zulu continued throughout January 1986. In another incident in January 1988, after an Inkatha rally at KwaMkhulu (outside Pietermaritzburg), large groups of armed Inkatha supporters attacked the UDF-controlled Ashdown.¹⁰³ West cites an example of violence in black townships around Pietermaritzburg in October 1987. He wonders how much of this can be attributed to

¹⁰⁰ Young and Regnart, *Moving Images*, p. 107.

¹⁰¹ W. McNeill, *Mythistory and Other Essays*, p. 14.

¹⁰² 'King calls on Zulus to defend their land', *The Natal Mercury*, 12 July 1993.

¹⁰³ Minnaar, 'The Escalation of the Violence in the 1980s', p. 46.

Shaka Zulu shown in the latter part of 1986 and early 1987.¹⁰⁴ The series may have engendered the idea of ‘them and us’, that the Zulu are a war-like people and should resist their perceived opponents or be resisted. In 1989 conflict in Natal intensified and an aspect of this new round of violence was that inyangas increasingly dealt in ‘war potions’ or umuti while at the same time became the targets for attack by rival factions.¹⁰⁵ It is possible that the image of Sithayi as the all-powerful ‘witchdoctor’ may have contributed to the image of the Zulu inyanga as potentially beneficial or alternatively dangerous.

The production may also be seen as promoting the theme of the ‘few against the many’. In Shaka Zulu a handful of Whites are surrounded by thousands of Zulu, as in Zulu and Zulu Dawn. On another level it is civilization versus savagery. Zulu life is seen as being one of ritual, mass dancing and singing. A dangerous ‘mob mentality’ is depicted. The witchdoctors are unpleasant, not to mention the portrayal of excessive cruelty. The sight of hundreds of ‘warriors’ may also be regarded as frightening. Surrounded by all of this are the whites, who represent civilization and Western culture. As with Zulu Dawn this image is enhanced by camerawork. Zulu scenes in Shaka Zulu seem to have been filmed through a sepia filter. This results in yellow, brown or red colours creating an impression of olden times. These colours alternate with blue when it comes to the supernatural scenes. Scenes with whites show a wealth of bright colours, the streets of Cape Town raise no dust and everything is completely ‘civilized’.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ R. West, *The Diamonds and the Necklace: A South African Journey* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1989), pp. 116-117.

¹⁰⁵ Minnaar, ‘The Escalation of the Violence in the 1980s’, p. 49.

¹⁰⁶ Tomaselli, ‘Camera, Colour and Racism: Shaka Zulu’.

Also what emerges in Shaka Zulu is that blacks are dangerous to one another (the Mfecane) and should be kept separate. Thus what is presented is a racial view which emphasizes the need for traditionalism, ethnicity and separation. In this sense the productions could be construed as legitimating the so-called Homelands, that people should and need to be kept apart.

On the other hand, some viewers may consider the productions as pointing the way to racial harmony. The post-1976 political upheaval refocused world attention on South Africa. In addition a large number of documentaries were being produced locally during the 1980s which focused on contemporary social and political issues such as forced removals, labour conflict and resistance to apartheid.¹⁰⁷ Consequently, audio-visual material which countered such negativity was welcome. This had been one of the reasons for South African investment in Allan Quartermain and the City of Lost Gold and King Solomon's Mines, mentioned in the introduction. Images of submissive blacks living peacefully under white rule and of whites defending themselves against violent blacks were images acceptable to apartheid.¹⁰⁸ In Shaka Zulu, Bathurst, King George and Somerset are portrayed as reactionary, pompous fools and could be seen as representing the far Right. On the other hand certain Zulu elders and Shaka's Mthethwa military commander are seen as conservative and old-fashioned. The television Shaka however sees the importance of the whites, while becomes someone the reformers in South Africa would like to negotiate with. He is a dictator, yet pragmatic and realistic and is constructed as the one Zulu with vision who can see the importance of the whites.¹⁰⁹ In general, the role of the whites in the Zulu state is exaggerated to support the idea of

¹⁰⁷ See Steenveld, 'Reclaiming History' in *Movies, Moguls, Mavericks*, p. 301 for a list of these.

¹⁰⁸ Cameron, *Africa on Film*, p. 169.

¹⁰⁹ Hamilton, 'A Positional Gambit', p. 24

integration. Thus a group of well meaning moderates and liberals venture off to meet Shaka, a man who recognizes the need for communication and mutual exchange. This co-operation was necessary to avoid conflict. Hamilton suggests that in the 1980s, this 'Shaka persona' was represented by Buthelezi.¹¹⁰ Mangosuthu's Buthelezi's credibility as an influential leader not only of Inkatha but in South Africa, is thus validated. It is worth noting here that Buthelezi himself granted Faure permission to begin the project, while his political ally Prince Gideon served as an advisor and Buthelezi's mother, Princess Magogo, offered her services as a musical advisor.¹¹¹

There are events which may be perceived as a warning as to what will happen if there is a lack of harmony. Blacks are reminded that whites, although numerically inferior, are a potent force. The battle against the Ndwandwe is indicative of this. A handful of whites rout hundreds of warriors with a few muskets and a cannon. 'The ways of the whites are a dark mystery' remarks Shaka, emphasizing this white potency. In the last episode Shaka rejects co-operation with whites and the result is anarchy. This in Hamilton's view is a warning to black leaders not to go it alone but work with the government.¹¹² Blacks are also warned not to let revolutionary elements within their own ranks become a significant force, as represented by Dingane and his fellow conspirators. Zulu and Zulu Dawn by contrast, portray what occurs when racial harmony breaks down. Conflict is the result. Again the person to assist in preventing this, in modern times, is Buthelezi. His own words bear witness to this:

To rely on the fact that the white group is armed to the teeth is short - sighted if we are to go by the history of man. The mere existence of a vast military and security apparatus does not guarantee that there will be no revolution forever. Those who believe in a

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 24.

¹¹¹ *Souvenir Brochure*, p. 3.

¹¹² Hamilton, 'A Positional Gambit', p. 25.

*change through non - violent methods should explore other possibilities of averting such a danger.*¹¹³

These then, are some of the meanings which viewers may obtain. Some may have been intended, others not, but nevertheless they are effective in either case. Shaka Zulu is guilty of myth-making and in most cases exceeding the limit of dramatic licence. Visual images have different meanings for different people and misinterpretations can have serious ramifications. History, as a discipline, attempts to correct these mistaken beliefs but it would seem that television and the cinema do not have the capabilities to do this. It may be a powerful medium but at the same time, it is very limited.

The series attempt to promote itself as history was a misnomer. Had Shaka Zulu been a fictional character, it might have achieved more. The fact that such a person existed and that his existence has been controversial and surrounded by myth, meant that the production positioned itself in a political and historical minefield. Faure's ideas may have been ahead of his time¹¹⁴ but the series was quite the opposite. Had it been produced prior to the 1960s, when the Zulu were more an object of fascination than serious study, the series might have succeeded as history. Its production in the mid-1980's, a time of political flux, meant that images of the Zulu would be utilized and viewed in a different political context. Images of the Zulu were not manufactured by the series but rather existing images of the 'great man', the supernatural and the cruel were adopted and/or adapted. This was done partly for commercial purposes but more importantly the series was an example of historical discourse with the future in mind. Previous texts had been used to explain and justify the past but Shaka Zulu

¹¹³ Lecture given in January 1974, quoted in Shepherd-Smith, *Buthlezi*, p. 99.

¹¹⁴ Hamilton, 'A Positional Gambit', p. 15.

attempted to make a prophecy and thereby offer a solution to South Africa's political dilemma.

By the end of the decade, new political spaces were opened up. The National Party, with a new leader - F.W. De Klerk - at its helm, set about the process of dismantling apartheid. The unbanning of political parties and the increasing violence moved Zuluness into a more politically overt role.

CHAPTER FIVE
'PLAYING THE ETHNIC CARD'¹

There is a perception...in the minds of people that the Zulu nation, Inkatha and the king are somehow tied together.²

It was perceptions such as these which dominated the period before and after the April 1994 general election. Previously it would hardly have been necessary to state something which seemed so blatantly obvious. Certainly the public image that the Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi was the leader of the 'Zulu nation', of which the king was the symbolic embodiment, seemed justified. Chapters Three and Four indicated how this concept was carefully created and promoted by various interested parties.

The manipulation of the Zulu image in the 1990s was no less complex than it had been in the previous decades. In fact its use in this decade attained new levels of symbolic significance. It has been argued that Buthelezi's politics are those of 'deed, gesture and symbolism', for this is what his constituency is familiar with.³ If this is correct, then 'deed, gesture and symbolism' were of vital importance in this decade. In addition the apparatus which provided the engine for Zulu nationalism and imagery included the desires of both the pre-April 1994 government and its successor, the desires of the Inkatha Freedom Party (the IFP, Inkatha had formed itself into a political party in 1989), of the king as well as those of economic interests. The sustenance of the Zulu image was further assisted by a burgeoning tourist market. These images would be used in a number of different ways during this period but their prime utilisation was in respect of the general election and political control over KwaZulu-Natal.

¹ 'Playing the ethnic card' *Daily News* 4 April 1994.

² Interview, *Agenda*, TV1, February 1994.

³ 'There's a cauldron of mistrust in the belly of the beast' *Sunday Tribune* 5 March 1995.

Maré and Hamilton argue that Buthelezi's (and the king's) legitimacy was based on the promotion of the theme of continuity, that the Zulu 'nation' had a traditional claim to the region of KwaZulu-Natal.⁴ Guy for example, has pointed out that the territory of 'KwaZulu' is often not distinguished from 'kwaZulu'. The latter is a locative possessive meaning 'the place of the Zulu' - a mere geographic description, while the former refers to a political entity created in the 1970s.⁵ In March 1994, the Zulu king, Goodwill Zwelithini stated that the Zulu kingdom is a historical reality.⁶ 'Historical reality' is that KwaZulu came into being on 31 March 1972 and as such was given certain political powers. Yet the notion of 'historical reality' implied that the formation of KwaZulu was a natural step in the reconstitution of the old kingdom.

Together with continuity, a sense of Zulu unity has been promoted. Notions of absolute and uniform allegiance to the king and Inkatha have been part of the IFP's arsenal of politically-motivated images. Witness Buthelezi's words...

*King Zwelithini is unique in South Africa because he is the monarch of eight million people. There has only been one Zulu nation and there will forever only be one Zulu nation. Its indestructible unity will be discovered again and again as time after time, those who do not understand the essence of Zuluness try to set Zulu against Zulu.*⁷

These words reveal a singular view of who or what a Zulu is. By contrast 'non-Zulu' groups - such as the ANC and the Congress of South African Trade Unions - were 'outside the ethnic fold' and accordingly had no legitimate right to the area.⁸ Furthermore Maré and Gerhard have

⁴ 'Playing the ethnic card'.

⁵ J. Guy, in the SABC 'Isilo' documentary, *Agenda*, TV1, February 1994.

⁶ 'Zulu king 'did not proclaim kingdom'', *Natal Witness* 19 March 1994.

⁷ Quoted in 'Zulu king, Buthelezi embrace' *Natal Witness* 27 June 1994.

⁸ 'Playing the ethnic card' *Daily News* 4 April 1994. Also see Buthelezi's comments in an interview with the *Daily News* 26 April 1994 and his letter to the *Mercury* 28 June 1994.

shown the role of the king to be rather different from the commonly stated idea of being a unifying figure.⁹ Instead, he became part of the legitimising process, evaluating who should be admitted to the 'ethnic fold' and who should be identified as a 'foreigner'.¹⁰ Thus in effect the king's role went beyond the symbolic to an effective functionary of Zulu nationalism. Which group could most skilfully 'play this ethnic card' in the new decade would determine the victor of the power struggle, begun in the 1980s, in KwaZulu-Natal. During this latter period and before, Buthelezi had been very successful in doing this. Notwithstanding the opposition from the ANC and others, he had effectively maintained power in the region. By 1995, despite changes in the political structure of the country and its provinces, Buthelezi's position in KwaZulu-Natal was still strong. His election as chairman of the KwaZulu-Natal's House of Traditional Leaders in January 1995 was regarded both as an indication of his influence and as a means of further securing his position.¹¹

Nevertheless, Buthelezi's and Inkatha's position was seriously challenged before and after the general election. As it turned out, he himself would be identified by the Zulu royal house as a 'foreigner' and in addition the concept of who or what constituted a 'Zulu' would also seem less certain. The advent of a new political dispensation in 1989 and 1990 meant that socio-political environment in South Africa altered rapidly. The unbanning of the ANC, Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the South African Communist Party in February 1990 was followed by negotiations about the future governance of the country. The action of unbanning these organisations gave them a new sense of formal political legitimacy and the right to freely propagate their views. The position which Inkatha had enjoyed up to this point - existing at

⁹ Also see the interviews with Frank Mdlalose, *Mercury* 25 April 1994 and Jacob Zuma, *Mercury* 26 April 1994.

¹⁰ 'Playing the ethnic card'.

¹¹ See for example 'Buthelezi's position in province restored' *Daily News* 10 January 1995 and 'Royal 'Pain in the neck'' *Sunday Tribune* 15 January 1995.

least partially under the aegis of the National Party government and viewed as an acceptable form of black politics by many whites - now found itself faced by official, black, political parties.¹² These latter groups and particularly the ANC set out to prove that the 'IFP [was] not equivalent to Zulus'.¹³

The ANC for example attacked what it called the misuse of Zulu ethnicity by the IFP¹⁴, while simultaneously duplicating Inkatha's use of images by arranging a 'Sonke Festival' in Durban in October 1993. The event, which according to reports looked like an IFP rally¹⁵, was aimed at proving that the ANC 'called the shots' in the region.¹⁶ When later interviewed about the role of the king, the then ANC contender for the position of KwaZulu-Natal premier Jacob Zuma, merely commented that the king was a unifying figure who would ensure respect amongst the people of the province.¹⁷ Nelson Mandela however, reminded the crowd at the festival that Dinuzulu, Goodwill Zwelithini's grandfather, had been named honorary president of the ANC in 1913.¹⁸ This was a clear indication that the ANC held the nationalistic influence of the Zulu king in some esteem. In declaiming the IFP's perceived sole control of the king, Mandela would later state that Goodwill Zwelithini was not only king of the Zulu but 'a king to us all'.¹⁹

Inkatha responded to these challenges in two ways. One of the more dramatic was the announcement by Zwelithini in mid-February 1994, that he would declare KwaZulu-Natal an

¹² See for example 'Fewer vital aces up IFP's sleeve' *Daily News* 14 July 1994.

¹³ 'Zulus' can't be fooled' *Daily News* 24 February 1994.

¹⁴ 'Zulu ethnicity 'misused'' *Natal Mercury* 23 November 1992.

¹⁵ 'ANC show of strength at Sonke' *Daily News* 25 October 1993.

¹⁶ 'ANC 'calls the shots' in Natal' *Mercury* 25 October 1995.

¹⁷ Interview with Jacob Zuma, *Mercury* 26 April 1994.

¹⁸ 'A good party, but no king' *Mercury* 25 October 1995.

¹⁹ 'Mandela won't go to Shaka rally' *Mercury* 20 September 1994.

independent monarchy. In a meeting with the then State President F.W. De Klerk, he argued that the failure of constitutional negotiations²⁰ meant the re-establishment of the 'Kingdom of KwaZulu' was necessary. This area he claimed was based on boundaries established in 1834. Zwelithini was accompanied by Buthelezi and his demands were well received by groups of supporters.²¹ This demand indicated the manner in which Inkatha regarded the challenge of their opponents. The secessionist tones of this meeting again pointed to the way in which Zulu nationalism and less specifically KwaZulu-Natal as a region was utilized to suggest something 'special' or unique. Indeed, De Klerk's immediate comments testified to this implication. He remarked that attention would be given to... 'the uniqueness of specific problems and specific areas'.²² This again reflects the perceived 'special status' that the province has accorded itself for more than one hundred years. The secessionist tendencies of both white and black politicians in the region culminated in this declaration by De Klerk.

A second response involved the use of Inkatha's 'big stick' - Zulu ethnicity and culture. The uKweshwana or 'First Fruits' held in January 1994 was a significant display of 'Zulu power'. The speeches made at the ceremony were concerned with the challenges facing the 'Zulu nation'. A praise singer warned the outside world not to challenge 'Zulu might', while the ceremony also involved the slaughtering of a bull by a group of men with their bare hands. These actions can be seen as a warning to opponents to be wary of the Zulu, even unarmed he is a dangerous entity.²³ These sentiments were later repeated by Buthelezi. In a statement he threatened a fight to the 'finish' if the question of Zulu sovereignty was not resolved. He stated that he had received reports of Zulus 'massing' in certain areas and warned that 'there is

²⁰ Maré, *Brothers Born of Warrior Blood*, p. 62.

²¹ Information based on articles from the *Daily News* 15 February 1994.

²² 'Three-day dilemma for FW' *Daily News* 15 February 1994.

²³ 'Hundreds join in ceremonial killing' *Mercury* 10 January 1994.

no saying what the people will do in taking the law into their own hands'.²⁴ The implication is that while other South Africans are expected to accept the new political dispensation, the Zulu may either participate or withdraw and resist, such is the unique nature of their existence. They do not have to accept the norm.

As in the past, the use of this powerful array of images by Inkatha and Buthelezi was successful, at least in the short-term. They had resulted in the issue of the position of the Zulu king becoming a national concern. The IFP finally entered the election after the National Party and the ANC agreed to recognise Goodwill Zwelithini's position. Clause Three of the Memorandum of Agreement stated that the parties agreed...

*to recognise and protect the institution, status and role of the constitutional position of the King of the Zulus and the Kingdom of KwaZulu, which institutions shall be provided for in the Provincial Constitution of KwaZulu-Natal immediately after the holding of said elections.*²⁵

It seemed that the promotion of historical continuity, propagated over time, had finally paid dividends. The position of the king and hence this most potent symbol of inter alia continuity - from Shaka to Goodwill Zwelithini - would be firmly entrenched within the official hierarchy of power in the region and the country as a whole. The above agreement implied an acceptance of the 'special status' of the Zulu. Following the election Buthelezi addressed local and international media in Ulundi. The spot he chose to do this was in front of the statue of Shaka, outside the legislative building (see the illustrations).²⁶ This symbolism was obvious. Perhaps sensing victory in the province, this 'latter-day Shaka' positioned himself in front of

²⁴ 'Buthelezi warns of fight to the finish' *Natal Mercury* 30 March 1994.

²⁵ Quoted in 'King of Zulu Kings' *Sunday Tribune* 15 May 1994.

²⁶ See the photograph *Daily News* 4 May 1994.

one of Zulu nationalism's primary symbols, thereby associating himself with the Shakan legend.

The IFP victory in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, as it became known, meant that Zulu nationalism was raised to a level it had not previously enjoyed. It gained power on a provincial scale and this seemed to be another step towards the re-creation of the nineteenth-century kingdom. The image of the indefatigable Zulu phoenix rising up was lent further credence by members of the IFP who began to call for Ulundi to replace Pietermaritzburg as the capital. A former KwaZulu Government official remarked that...

...Ulundi's rich history works strongly in its favour as the capital. Ulundi is where King Cetshwayo's forces were defeated by the British. If it becomes the capital that will symbolise the resolve of our people to rise up again. The process will be complete.²⁷

The re-location of the provincial capital to Ulundi would be a significant move for the IFP. Not only is it a centre of political power but it is also highly symbolic, the place of defeat at the hands of the British but now a place of triumph, where Zulu nationalistic efforts to promote continuity in the twentieth century can be seen to have been vindicated.²⁸ Within a year and a half of the national election, the IFP continued to take further steps in this regard. Its draft constitution for the province, issued in October 1995, envisaged autonomy for the 'Kingdom of KwaZulu Natal' with wide-ranging powers for the provincial cabinet and traditional leaders.²⁹ Members of the KwaZulu-Natal House of Traditional Leaders had earlier dedicated themselves to what they called a 'covenant' aimed at '... the just and noble cause of the restoration of our autonomous kingdom... [the Zulu nation had now]... crossed the

²⁷ Quoted in 'KwaZulu officials commend Ulundi' *Natal Witness* 4 June 1994.

²⁸ For more on this, see Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi*, Ch. 2.

²⁹ See for example 'No need to consult king' *Mercury* 21 September 1995, 'IFP gives itself an early Christmas present' *Mercury* 18 October 1995 and 'Having their cake and eating it? - IFP blueprint for Kingdom of KwaZulu Natal' *Sunday Tribune* 22 October 1995.

Rubicon'.³⁰ Buthelezi meanwhile remarked that the Zulu nation still had a price to pay, possibly a 'dear price' for some and he warned there would be 'sacrifices' to be made until 'the promised land of our freedom and prosperity' was obtained.³¹ This rhetoric provides an interesting description of the 'Zulu nation'. The years since the Anglo-Zulu War are seen to be a quest to regain that which was lost.

Significantly the 'Iso Lesizwe Society' or 'Eye of the Nation Society' was involved in many of the above activities.³² This organisation had been created after the 1994 national elections and was composed of former KwaZulu Legislative Assembly members and reportedly, aimed at promoting Zulu culture, traditions and history.³³ This society can be seen as a response to the IFP's entry into national politics. If the latter could not afford to operate as an entirely Zulu organisation, then such a society could fulfil this obligation.

Unity and Continuity ?

Furthermore and paradoxically perhaps, 'playing the ethnic card' in the 1990s had the effect of showing that familiar images of unity and continuity were not as absolute as they appeared to be. Before the 1994 April election the IFP, as noted above, identified closely with the Zulu king. However this action, while beneficial, contained two inherent risks. Firstly, it also allowed the ANC to recognise the king as a legitimate political force and secondly it inflated the position of the monarchy. It was these risks which allowed the king to demonstrate his

³⁰ Quoted in 'Zulu chiefs demand our kingdom' *SaturdayPaper* 29 July 1995.

³¹ Quoted in 'More misery' in store for the Zulus' and *Mercury* 26 September 1995.

³² See for example 'IFP chiefs to endorse new Zulu 'covenant'' *Mercury* 31 July 1995.

³³ 'Eye of the Nation' for Zulus' *Daily News* 5 May 1994.

independence.³⁴ The result of this was that this 'symbol of unity' became a symbol of political upheaval, involving the ANC, the IFP and a Royalist faction. This was a continuation of the political differences which had afflicted the Zulu monarchy in the 1970s³⁵ but in a different political environment. Much of the conflict centred, once again, on the traditions and history of the Zulu.

Members of the Zulu Royal House once more challenged Buthelezi's role as traditional prime minister, stating that it was not a hereditary position but was appointed by the king.³⁶ Buthelezi contradicted this, arguing that his family had long served the Zulu nation and had in fact 'contributed to the building of [the] kingdom from scratch'.³⁷ This was followed by one of the Royalist faction, Prince Mcwayizeni Zulu, declaring that Buthelezi was not a Zulu but simply a Buthelezi.³⁸ Questions and arguments over legitimacy and lineage continued with the emergence of Prince Sifiso Zulu as a spokesperson for Goodwill Zwelithini.³⁹ Zulu declared he was a descendant of King Mpande but in reaction, an IFP press statement alleged he was a descendant of the Mandlakazi faction. Referring to the post-1879 troubles, the statement accused Zulu's predecessors of complicity in killing King Cetshwayo.⁴⁰ Not only were certain Zulu singled out as not 'being Zulu' but the use of the word began to receive a less exclusive use. Maré suggested in 1992 that 'all members of the Zulu nation are black'⁴¹. However, in this war of words, symbols and tradition, both groups began to call on others for support.

³⁴ 'The Royal Rumpus' *Sunday Tribune* 2 October 1994.

³⁵ See for example Maré and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, pp. 36-37 and Forsythe, 'The Past in the Service of the Present', pp. 78-86.

³⁶ 'Royal Revolt' *SaturdayPaper* 25 June 1994.

³⁷ 'Zulu Royals criticised' *Daily News* 12 September 1994.

³⁸ Interview 'ANC MP returns to royal hierarchy' *Natal Witness* 24 September 1994.

³⁹ 'New man on the block' *Mercury* 27 September 1994.

⁴⁰ 'Prince Sifiso spoiling for another showdown with Buthelezi' and 'Prince Sifiso 'not of royal line'' *Sunday Tribune* 2 October 1994.

⁴¹ Maré, *Brothers Born of Warrior Blood*, p. 50.

Goodwill Zwelithini announced that ‘...My people are not just Zulus. All the people who live in traditional Zulu country are my people...’⁴², while Buthelezi has stated that ‘...The majority of Indian South Africans really belong to this kingdom more than any other part of South Africa’.⁴³ Thus notions of ‘Zuluness’ became less clear, the implication being that anyone living in KwaZulu-Natal could be a ‘Zulu’. Both groups also issued challenges to one another over who could legitimately issue orders to the ‘Zulu nation’.⁴⁴ One of the issues which became the focus of this challenge was Shaka Day in 1994 and 1995. Goodwill Zwelithini cancelled the 1994 festivities but the IFP countermanded this order, declaring that no man had the ability to cancel Shaka Day.⁴⁵ In 1995, he refused to attend IFP-organized activities for the 24 September.⁴⁶

Thus the image of a united nation as ‘unique, united, disciplined, [and] loyal’⁴⁷ seemed to have little justification amidst this conflict. ‘Playing the ethnic card’ in the first half of the 1990s had meant that images of the Zulu were not permitted to develop a sense of normality. They remained part of a contested field of politics which has, with variations and different forms, existed for more than a century. It was the period 1990 to 1995 however, which more than any before, showed the themes of continuity and unity to be less than definite concepts.

⁴² Quoted in ‘The King of Zulu Kings’ *Sunday Tribune* 15 May 1994. Also see ‘King calls for effort to change poor image’ *Daily News* 21 June 1994.

⁴³ ‘More misery’ in store for the Zulus’ *Mercury* 26 September 1995.

⁴⁴ See ‘Buthelezi challenges royal family’ *Mercury* 3 October 1994 and ‘Imbizo’ called to settle IFP - ANC feud’ 5 October 1994.

⁴⁵ ‘Shaka Day called off’ *Daily News* 20 September 1994.

⁴⁶ ‘Shaka Day to go ahead’ *SaturdayPaper* 16 September 1995.

⁴⁷ Letter to the Editor, ‘Give us our kingdom back’ *Daily News* 27 July 1995.

Correspondingly however, 'playing the ethnic card' also meant that the perceived Zulu penchant for militarism, violence and resistance was seen to persist into the 1990s as well. It was for example apparently important and useful to state that one is a proud Zulu person, whose ancestors fought in all of the Zulu's major battles.⁴⁸ Thus the implication here is that it was still prestigious to have such a 'pedigree'.

That this view persisted in the 1990s depended on a number of factors inter alia the activities of Inkatha supporters and the often sensationalized reports of the printed media. The English-medium publications of Natal Newspapers provide many examples. Indicative of this was the comment that '...Daluxulo Luthuli (an IFP member and then a Self Protection Unit commander) might yet etch his name in Zulu history as the last great commander of the once formidable Zulu army'. The article opens by observing that legends of the exploits of the Zulu armies are a source of great inspiration for a Zulu. Luthuli was the 'man poised to follow in the footsteps of the great Zulu commanders of the past...'. He is the commander of 'thousands of young men' who are being trained to defend their 'Zuluness'. After a discussion of their training and weapons, the article finishes by suggesting that the Inkatha Freedom Party could have chosen violence if it had refused to participate in the April 1994 elections.⁴⁹ The Zulu and militarism were once again inextricably woven together. The Zulu nation was viewed as a nation unable to survive without resorting to arms. In addition the image is of a nation with a legendary past. Naturally this provides a stimulus for facing new 'challenges'. They may assist in promoting the idea or myth, as discussed in the previous chapter, that the Zulu people are an all-powerful nation, thereby providing certain Zulu with a sense of identity.

⁴⁸ 'Zulus and the Zulu monarchy' *Natal Mercury*, 21 January 1994.

⁴⁹ 'Inkatha's chief of defence - an MK hero is being hailed as the heir of the great Zulu generals' *Sunday Tribune*, 23 January 1994.

If one were to take the first four months of 1994 as an example, a militaristic image of the Zulu was constantly conveyed to the public. A major event in terms of militarism came with the shootings of Zulu marchers in Johannesburg on 28 March. Headlines such as 'slaughter as Zulu marchers engage in gun battles, bloodbath on the streets'⁵⁰ and '20 die as Zulus march'⁵¹ further enhanced this image. Then on 1 April the declaration of the State of Emergency in the province had the IFP's Humphrey Ndlovu threatening civil war. He said that if the security forces attempted to stop IFP supporters, they would 'get what they are looking for'.⁵² These sorts of comments further reinforced the Zulu-violence link. The next instalment came on 6 April with the headline 'Spear-waving Zulus march through Empangeni' and an accompanying photograph of marchers with 'traditional weapons'. The article opened with '...Thousands of Inkatha supporters carrying traditional weapons marched through Empangeni yesterday in defiance of emergency regulations that prohibit carrying weapons in public'.⁵³ The Zulu were placed in a role of civil disobedience. They were perceived as people who are proud of their weapons, their military abilities and heritage and ultimately were prepared to fight for it.

These activities, articles and photographs assisted in the promotion of a specific image. When it comes to the Zulu people, such notions are taken seriously and are reported as such. Thus a pre-dominant image of the Zulu continues to be a martial one. Did African National Congress security officials respond to the march in Johannesburg in 1994 with deadly force because of this image of 'spear-waving, warrior' Zulu? Was this martial image a factor? Comments such

⁵⁰ *Mercury* 29 March 1994.

⁵¹ *Daily News* 28 March 1994.

⁵² 'The war starts now, says Inkatha leader' *Mercury* 1 April 1994.

⁵³ 'Spear - waving Zulus march through Empangeni' *Mercury* 6 April 1994.

as '...we are a warrior nation. We will fight all other nations' made by Inkatha supporters in the heat of the moment and quoted by the media⁵⁴ hardly detract from this image. Buthelezi's speeches often had militaristic undertones. In a Shaka Day speech he declared:

*I am calling on the Zulu people to hear me when I say that you are entering the final phase of the more than two century struggle by the Zulu people to establish their kingdom as a kingdom that will live on in perpetuity.*⁵⁵

The notion of the Zulu rising up was not unique to the 1990s. Tracey alludes to it⁵⁶, the previous chapter noted how Buthelezi was cast to lead it and fiction reflected it as well. The plot of the 1986 novel *We the Enemy*⁵⁷, concerned Zulu preparations for the 'messianic' successor of Shaka, who would lead the Zulu nation to greatness once more.

The 'ethnic card' was to a large extent played out in the media. It was noted above that press sensationalism assisted in promoting an image of Zulu militarism. Naturally there has been a precedent for this image and thus was not the media's creation. The manner in which newspapers report depends, in part at least, on the process and organisation of news gathering and more importantly, the set of assumptions on which it rests.⁵⁸ Thus this sensationalistic approach was the logical outcome of images which have been developed over time and to which journalists have been exposed as part of their socialisation process. In addition, newspapers have to attract readers and consequently there has to be an entertainment value attached to the news.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ 'Drama at Durban City Hall' *Daily News* 15 February 1995.

⁵⁵ Quoted in 'Final struggle' for the Zulus' *Daily News* 25 September 1995.

⁵⁶ Tracey, *Zulu Paradox*, p. 99.

⁵⁷ P. Essex, *We the Enemy* (Collins, London, 1986).

⁵⁸ G. Murdock, 'Political deviance: the press presentation of a militant mass demonstration' in S. Cohen and J. Young (eds.), *The manufacture of news: Social problems, deviance and the mass media* (London, Constable, 1973), p. 173.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

The activities of the IFP and its leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, their political conflict with the ANC and the situation with the king and the Royalist faction were covered in great detail by the media, particularly the press in KwaZulu-Natal. It has already been noted how the latter helped to promote a view of Zulu militarism. There are numerous other examples of this. Headlines such as 'Dire warnings over Shaka Day' and 'Lock yourself in'⁶⁰, concerning the possibility of violence during the Shaka Day festivities, help to associate the Zulu with perpetual violence. In other words, a Zulu gathering has the potential for violence. As with Zulu's opening sequence, Aubrey Elliot the ethnographic photographer, illustrates the danger lurking between the 'vener of Zulu cheerfulness'

*Then we began to hear a growing commotion...My heart skipped a beat because a commotion in a black gathering can mean danger. While everyone is cheerful everything is fine, but if someone is insulted or gets hurt, ugly trouble can erupt.*⁶¹

Even Zulu 'traditional weapons' can be used in a figurative sense - a headline read 'Buthelezi rattles KwaZulu spear'.⁶² The use of this phrase is of course immediately recognisable as a reference to the Zulu and their 'weapons'. The term 'warrior' is also a common description used in conjunction with articles and photographs about the Zulu. A senior Zulu for example was described as being the '...head induna of the Transvaal Zulu warrior regiments'.⁶³ The implication is that 'warrior regiments' continue to exist in modern times and thus pose a threat.⁶⁴ In early 1996, KwaZulu-Natal's cricket team was defined commercially as a group of Zulu 'warriors'. A media advertisement showed several team members wearing 'warrior outfits' (see the illustrations).⁶⁵

⁶⁰ *SaturdayPaper* 23 September 1995.

⁶¹ A. Elliot, *Sons of Zulu* (Johannesburg, Collins, 1978), p. 73.

⁶² *Mercury* 16 May 1994.

⁶³ 'Indunas reject Zwelithini call' *Daily News* 11 November 1994.

⁶⁴ Also see for e.g. 'Scores of Zulu warriors armed with AK - 47s', photograph in the *Sunday Times* 20 March 1994 and 'Welcome, Zulu warrior', photograph in the *Mercury* 18 November 1994.

⁶⁵ See for example *Daily News* 31 January 1996.

Photographs of the Zulu have a considerable precedent. There are many photographs of the Zulu dating from the nineteenth century,⁶⁶ as they were an important means of conveying images of the Zulu to the Victorian public. They offer a fascinating insight into the KwaZulu-Natal past, showing us faces of familiar names and aspects of Zulu lifestyle, including dress. On the other hand, the extent of their value is debatable as numerous nineteenth-century photographs were posed. They are in fact ethnographic portraits of individual Zulu and groups of Zulu in various types of dress and engaged in a variety of activities. Others were taken after the signing of a treaty or some other diplomatic event.

The fact that they were posed, suggests that the subject is not real. They appear as actors dressing up for a particular role. Moreover, those photographed are defined in stereotypical ways, as 'warriors', 'chiefs' or semi-naked 'maidens'. The 'nubile savage' is much in evidence.⁶⁷ Occasionally, there are photographs which transcend these limitations. A portrait of Dabulamazi kaMpande taken in 1873, shows him and his party armed with firearms. This indicates that the Zulu made use of 'Western technology' before the Anglo-Zulu War.⁶⁸

A compilation of nineteenth and twentieth-century photographs at the Killie Campbell Africana Library, reveals a majority of posed photographs. A series of undated postcards show postcard-perfect Zulu in various poses.⁶⁹ Apart from a few photographs, which appear unposed⁷⁰, most are shots of families or homestead groups gathered together for the photographer. Twentieth century pictures reveal the same intervention. Those of weddings and

⁶⁶ See for example Laband, *Rope of Sand*; Taylor, *Shaka's Children* and *Zulu Customs Book I*, KCAL.

⁶⁷ *Zulu Customs*, KCB 9721 and 9722.

⁶⁸ Laband, *Rope of Sand*, photo. 25.

⁶⁹ *Zulu Customs*, KCB 9715-9718.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, KCB 9732 and KCB 9735.

gatherings are obviously unposed but many are ethnographic portraits of the subject taken in the 1930s and 1940s.

In the twentieth-century media, photographs add 'new dimensions of meaning to the text' of an article. Reports of events such as political marches by the IFP are often accompanied by photographs. These have an ideological significance in that they have the capacity to displace a story, away from its political point, towards another aspect.⁷¹ Photographs of warriors displace the image from normative political protest to that of Zulu 'resistance'. Hall considers that the news photograph's characteristic tense is that of the 'historic instantaneous'. History is converted into the immediate and becomes 'cashable'. It undergoes an instantaneous mythification. The subject of the photograph - its image - loses its motivation, appearing to have selected itself 'naturally'.⁷² Thus the photograph of the 'warrior' in a protest march, a political rally or images of violence in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal do not appear unusual. Rather they are part of a discourse which has become well-established in South Africa.

The Shaka Zulu television series had subverted the South African past to promote a sense of black, particularly Zulu and white interaction. Buthelezi and thus Inkatha were projected as part of the solution to the socio-political problems of the 1980s. By the mid-1990s, the SABC offered another reading of the (immediate) past. This time Inkatha was viewed very differently. The production of the series led a reviewer to consider that 'those who win the election have the right to reinvent the past'.⁷³ The locally-produced television series The Line,

⁷¹ S. Hall, 'The determinations of news photographs' in Cohen and Young, *The manufacture of news*, pp.176-178.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 184.

⁷³ 'Basckin on the box' *Sunday Magazine, Sunday Tribune* 7 August 1994.

shown on the former CCV television station in July 1994, caused much controversy. The series according to a CCV press release was meant to show the futility of violence.⁷⁴ It concerned the causes and levels of violence in contemporary South Africa and in short placed the blame with the IFP and particularly the Zulu, along with the police. Shown on 13 July, it brought an immediate reaction from the IFP and as a result CCV agreed to suspend the screening of the remaining episodes.⁷⁵ The controversy over the program was worsened by the actions of IFP members. A spokesman for the National Hostel Residents' Association threatened the cast and crew of The Line.⁷⁶ This apparent manipulation of the media caused an angry response from various sectors and eventually led to the re-scheduling of the program.⁷⁷ The issue of bias towards the Zulu and the IFP was explained as being reality. A journalist suggested that the majority of South Africans already saw Inkatha as responsible for the violence and thus would regard The Line as an 'accurate reflection of the truth'.⁷⁸

The implication here is that this is not reality but rather is believed to be. Thus the logical extension of this line of thought is that The Line is myth. As such, with its showing in the strife-torn socio-political environment of South Africa, the series' implied message of non-violence was lost. As with the television series Shaka Zulu, which set out to overturn myths and stereotypes and then simply reinforced and dramatized many of them, The Line failed to develop anything more than the simplistic Zulu-violence link. In this sense it seemed to suggest that the latter group were responsible for a modern 'mfecane'. It was in fact alleged that the shooting of five people in KwaZulu-Natal on 30 July was related to the broadcast of The Line.

⁷⁴ Quoted in 'Back on line after protests' *Tonight* supplement, *Daily News* 27 July 1994.

⁷⁵ See for example 'CCV: out of line', editorial, *Sunday Tribune* 24 July 1994.

⁷⁶ 'The Line goes ahead despite death threats' *Daily News* 29 July 1994.

⁷⁷ See for example 'Back on line after protests' *Tonight* supplement, *Daily News* 27 July 1994.

⁷⁸ 'Bias issue overshadows real drama' *Daily News* 1 August 1994.

An increase in violence may indeed be a consequence of these productions. There was concern about this. In June 1993 CCV-TV were planning to screen Zulu but at the last moment the film was replaced due to the level of violence in South Africa. It was felt that the film would have a negative impact and thus its replacement was a local comedy. In the 116 years since the Anglo-Zulu War the notion of continuity is strong but not in the sense that Zulu nationalists use it. At that time Bartle Frere used the “‘menace’ of Zulu militarism”⁷⁹ to assist in provoking war. This concept is still a factor at the end of the twentieth century.

In addition, the press also participated in the construction of the image of the Zulu as ‘special’ or ‘unique’. One of the issues which according to an article concerned the Shaka Day conflict, was a ‘mystical history of treachery’ amongst the Zulu royal family.⁸⁰ Again Zulu history became associated with the supernatural. The differences between the Royalist faction and the IFP were seen to be part of ‘the intrigue in the Zulu Royal House’⁸¹, while a ‘dramatic rewriting of Zulu history and a historic moment in the story of the Zulu nation’ had occurred.⁸² These sensationalized comments provide a highly problematic view of the Zulu, portraying these events as if they were part of a television ‘soap opera’, a fictional, romanticized adventure rather than reality.

There was no attempt to demystify the Zulu. Newspapers tend to be ‘event-orientated’, they concentrate on the specific event, without attempting to analyse the situation in context.⁸³

⁷⁹ N. Etherington, ‘The ‘Shepstone system’ in the Colony of Natal and beyond’ in Duminy and Guest, *Natal and Zululand*, p. 187.

⁸⁰ ‘Battle to control the Zulu soul’ *Daily News* 19 September 1995.

⁸¹ ‘Zulu king set to act’ *Daily News* 16 September 1994.

⁸² ‘Royals cut links with Buthelezi’ and ‘Winds of change blow in the Zulu royal house’ *Daily News* 21 September 1994.

⁸³ Murdock ‘Political deviance: the press presentation of a militant mass demonstration’, p.164.

There were exceptions to this⁸⁴ and very often the press called on academics to provide this analysis. However, this was restricted to the political events of the day and in general articles, as the above examples indicate, did not move beyond traditional images of militarism and the abnormal. Journalists are after all not rewarded for analysing the social structure but for obtaining 'news'.⁸⁵

A 'profitable piece of paradise'

Another factor which has reinforced this discourse is a previously latent industry, namely tourism. The 'ethnic card' would also be dealt with the tourist in mind. Indeed press reports have suggested that tourism is set to expand and plans were being prepared to cultivate this interest. Thus there are obviously sound reasons for expanding tourism in the province. It does indeed have the potential to become a 'profitable piece of paradise'.⁸⁶ Tourism was considered to be KwaZulu-Natal's panacea for its economic problems. In 1993 for example the tourist industry's turnover was R63 million, creating 3 500 jobs, while in 1995 overseas tourism to South Africa was expected to grow by between 20% and 30%. Consequently there were plans to expand this. The Durban/Ebhodwe Joint Services Board spent R6,7 million between 1991 and 1994 supporting the promotion of tourism, while the Zululand joint services board allocated a further R1,5 million for the development of tourism in 1994. The Tourism

⁸⁴ See for example 'The Tugela: Great divide of the Zulus' *Daily News* 2 December 1994 and 'They are their master's voice' *Daily News* 17 January 1995.

⁸⁵ K. Tomaselli et al, 'The Construction of News in the South African Media' in K. Tomaselli et al (eds.), *Studies on the South African Media: The Press in South Africa* (Bellville, Cape, 1989), p. 26.

⁸⁶ Headline in the *Sunday Tribune* 27 March 1994.

Association of Natal and KwaZulu began to aim tourist development at the domestic black market, as well as overseas tourists.⁸⁷

In 1991 Witz and Hamilton noted that the business community had rapidly taken cognisance of the new interest in African culture.⁸⁸ In Durban the Elangeni Hotel re-introduced their 'Zulu warrior' doorman after an absence of six years⁸⁹ (see the illustrations), while the product 'King Corn' used as their logo 'I haven't forgotten my roots, that's why I call for the King'.⁹⁰ Organisations such as the Gooderson Leisure Corporation also moved to exploit this potential. It inter alia opened the DumaZulu cultural village (see below) and had been responsible for re-establishing one of South Africa's oldest tour operators, Zululand Tours and Safaris.⁹¹ Furthermore businesses were increasingly turning to traditional villages as conference locations. Included in the activities is 'educational entertainment', where businessmen are briefed about aspects of 'tribal life', 'traditional dancing', 'housing' and 'ethics'.⁹² Chapter Two noted that interest in the Anglo-Zulu War is also increasing. Owners of lodges in the area of the battlefields were expecting an influx of visitors as a result⁹³ and in other areas plans to attract tourists were being prepared.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ Information derived from articles 'Strategic plan for Zululand tourism has big potential' in the *Mercury*, 21 July, 1994, 'First World gateway to Africa' supplement to the *Daily News* 22 July 1994 and "Tourism to create 100 000 jobs" *Business Report*, supplement to the *Mercury* 8 November 1995.

⁸⁸ Witz and Hamilton, 'Reaping the Whirlwind', p. 193.

⁸⁹ 'Welcome, Zulu warrior', photograph in the *Mercury* 18 November 1994.

⁹⁰ Observed in 1994.

⁹¹ Information derived from 'Major tourism venture for KZN' *Mercury* 27 June 1994 and 'Eco-tour operator enjoys wild success' *Business Report*, supplement to the *Mercury* 26 September 1995.

⁹² 'In the new South Africa tribal life is on the agenda' *Sunday Finance*, supplement to the *Sunday Tribune* 17 September 1995.

⁹³ See Top Billing, TV1, 2 September 1994 and 'On the threshold of a dream' *Sunday Tribune* 24 July 1994

⁹⁴ See 'Napoleonic tours' and 'Overseas visitors flock to Dundee's feast of history' *Sunday Tribune* 26 November 1995.

In a number of these locations the desire has been to design tourist sites as 'living museums'. These would involve the local communities in the various projects, thereby stimulating employment. In this regard the KwaZulu Monuments Council had five major projects by the mid-1990s - the development of the Ondini Historical Complex in Ulundi at a cost of R500 000, the Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift battlefields, KwaBulawayo, site of Shaka's first capital and the Stanger area, site of Shaka's second capital, where he was later assassinated. Furthermore it has been the intention of the Monuments Council to develop these areas in a manner relevant to the local inhabitants as well.⁹⁵ This concept of relevance is particularly evident in the pamphlets which are available to the public at these sites. Zulu terms are used throughout, Rorke's Drift for example also being referred to by its Zulu name, Shiyane. Certain of the publications are bilingual, offering English and Zulu speakers an explanation of events.⁹⁶ In this respect then, these sites are accessible to a number of different groups, both local and foreign, as well as providing a valuable source of practical education for school groups. In 1992, the Ondini Historical Complex was visited by 1200 tourists a month, many of whom came on school tours.⁹⁷ The Monuments Council also intends to utilize the KwaBulawayo site as an educational centre.⁹⁸

Areas such as Ondini, the archaeological dig at kwaBulawayo and the battlefields represent important areas for preservation and development. The restoration of Cetshwayo's umuzi at Ondini for example, is a significant project in respect of expanding knowledge of the history

⁹⁵ See 'Making History work for deprived communities' *Natal Mercury* 13 October 1992, 'People are living and working there' 'Sunday Magazine' supplement to the *Sunday Tribune* 28 August 1994 and 'Its the real thing' 'Sunday Magazine' supplement to the *Sunday Tribune* 30 October 1994.

⁹⁶ See for example *Inkosi uShaka/Shaka - King of the Zulus*, pamphlet produced by the KwaZulu Monuments Council, n.d. and *The Battles of Sandlwana and Rorke's Drift 22 - 23 January 1879*, pamphlet produced by the KwaZulu Monuments Council and the Natal Provincial Museum Service, n.d.

⁹⁷ 'Making History work for deprived communities'.

⁹⁸ 'Its the real thing' *Sunday Magazine* supplement to the *Sunday Tribune* 30 October 1994.

of KwaZulu-Natal and thus fulfils an important function. There is however a fine line here of which tourism developers should be aware of. In KwaZulu-Natal the Zulu have been a major focus, along with the fauna and flora. One need look no further than a postcard stand in tourist shops and newsagents to see that Zulu culture is predominantly displayed, 'traditional' culture that is. These outlets also sell numerous glossy publications which deal with the Zulu and other groups. One such publication is the full-colour eighty page *Zulu - Heritage of a Nation*.⁹⁹ A continuation of Elliot's earlier 1978 *Sons of Zulu*, the text is restricted to six pages, the rest devoted to photographs. The book is undoubtedly aimed at the tourist market. There are 'postcard perfect' Zulu, smiling, friendly, happy, affluent and perfectly comfortable in the tribal scenario.¹⁰⁰

As has already been noted, a precedent has been set for a particular image of the Zulu, one of traditionalism, an antiquarian nature and an emphasis on militarism. When tourists visit these 'living museums' and purchase associated literature, there is the continued possibility of seeing the people who live and work there in the 'ethnographic present'. A letter to the *Daily News* is worth quoting at this point:

Wouldn't it be lovely if: All our visitors to Durban were greeted with a miniature Zulu shield placed on every seat on every plane destined for Durban. This shield could advertise the position of every Tourist Information Centre in the city. On arrival at Durban Airport our visitors were greeted with a Zulu choir singing on the tarmac. Now wouldn't that be something to lift travel-weary spirits and get one in the right mood for business, holiday, or a super welcome home? Mingling with our visitors at the airport, were Zulu people suitably attired and wearing headbands advising 'Tourist Information', and trained to help on the spot or to guide the tourist to the information office...A suitably attired Zulu warrior was on duty outside the offices of Tourist Junction to open the door for visitors...The Zulus are a very large nation, but their existence in Durban is almost denied...This is Zulu country why are we making such a darned good job of hiding the fact?¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ A. Elliot, *Zulu-Heritage of a Nation* (Cape Town, Struik Publishers, 1991).

¹⁰⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 32-35 and 70-73.

¹⁰¹ Letter to the Editor, 'Durban must proclaim its Zulu heritage' *Daily News* 10 May 1995. The same letter was also published in *City Beat* July 1996.

There are problematic aspects to this letter. Much of it centres on familiar aspects of Zulu imagery - shields, the 'warrior', Zulu dress. Furthermore the Zulu existence is not 'almost denied' in the tourist sense. The tourist industry has focused on it at some length, as has already been noted. It is also a misnomer to call KwaZulu-Natal 'Zulu country'.¹⁰² The area has been settled by diverse groups since early times. It was only during a short period of time - the first decades of the nineteenth century - that the Zulu kingdom dominated the area. Moreover the Thukela River has always provided a division between north and south.¹⁰³ The letter fails to come to terms with these points, offering a view of the Zulu as an oddity.

'Traditional' Zulu life is to be found at a number of different areas including the 'culture kraal',¹⁰⁴ Shakaland and the newly-developed DumaZulu Cultural Village. Shakaland was developed from the set for the Shaka Zulu series and has been turned into an extensive tourist attraction.¹⁰⁵ DumaZulu, located near Hluhluwe in Northern KwaZulu-Natal, was officially opened by Goodwill Zwelithini in June 1994. Developed and owned by the Gooderson Leisure Corporation, the village cost half a million rand to construct. It has a staff of fifty, including a 'witchdoctor, spearmakers, pot makers, beadmakers, basket weavers and a team of Zulu traditional dancers', none of whom are permitted to wear 'Western clothing'. Designed by a 'white Zulu' Graham Stewart, it was intended that the twenty-three hectare village would be as authentic as possible. Stewart had been involved in such a venture before. He had developed a 'living museum' of Zulu culture on his own farm in the 1970s.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² This sounds not unlike the term used in Hollywood Westerns to describe dangerous territory as 'Indian country'.

¹⁰³ Laband, *Rope of Sand*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴ Referred to as such in *Fair Lady* 6 April 1994.

¹⁰⁵ For more on Shakaland, see C. Hamilton and E. Preston-Whyte, 'The Real Goat: Identity and Authenticity in Shakaland'. (Paper presented at 'Myths, Monuments, Museums' Workshop, July 1992).

¹⁰⁶ 'Museum of Zulu Life' *Mercury* 7 September 1978.

DumaZulu was an ‘instant’ Zulu village...established for the foreign tourist trade’.¹⁰⁷ It is apparent that little was spared to create an atmosphere of authenticity, the developers going so far as to have the Zulu king lend legitimacy to DumaZulu by opening it. Yet here again is the context of the nineteenth century-static culture. Significantly a journalist who attended the opening noted that some of the dancers indulged in ‘modern habits’ and ‘were seen to puff on cigarettes between performances.’¹⁰⁸ This is the crux of the matter. One cannot have an ‘authentic Zulu village’ in the twentieth century, for the Zulu are a much a part of the century as anyone else. However this has been overlooked. The Zulu are a suitable ‘product’ to commercialize in this way, since a precedent of ‘traditionalism’ has been established. It has been said that Zulu culture must be allowed to adapt to ‘modern society’¹⁰⁹ but this is a misnomer. The Zulu had contact with European or ‘modern Western’ culture long before Natal became a colony, in fact for more than 170 years. They could not have endured without some sort of response to these external influences. Zulu culture is not static, it is a myth to see it as such. Images of the Zulu, whether as ‘warriors’ or in a ‘traditional village’, are not a reflection of how many live in modern times. What people consider to be ‘tradition’ is in fact a re-invention of the past. Culture is dynamic, changing, adapting and adopting as necessary. Elaborate head-dress amongst rural women is for example being replaced by detachable pieces, more suited to modern living.¹¹⁰ Tourist attractions such as DumaZulu and the battlefields however, not only re-invent the past but also - and more importantly - the present. By providing a definition of the Zulu people as essentially culture- and time-bound, they reinforce stereotypical views of them provided by the media and politicians. In addition there

¹⁰⁷ Information derived from ‘Politicians miss village opening’ *Mercury* 20 June 1994, ‘Major tourism venture for KZN’ *Mercury* 27 June 1994 and ‘Zulu pride’ *Sunday Magazine*, supplement to the *Sunday Tribune* 3 July 1994.

¹⁰⁸ ‘King denies rumours of conflict with Buthelezi’ *Natal Witness* 20 June 1994.

¹⁰⁹ ‘Monarch must be above politics’ *Mercury* 23 February 1994.

¹¹⁰ ‘A traditional culture that’s always changing’ *Natal Witness* 24 June 1994.

is the danger that such 'synthetic history' will continue to sentimentalize the Zulu, making them into a form of entertainment and not part of the South African society. The concept of these attractions providing an insight into the past is sound but in using the Zulu as a subject, myth, history and legend become inextricably interwoven, forming a skewed view of both past and present.

The various forms of media, tourist locations and publications such as Elliot's mentioned above, are very accessible to the public and tourists. In 1991 for example, *Zulu - Heritage of a Nation* cost a reasonable R17,95 and was on sale in a number of bookshops. Its text is brief and appears authoritative but is guilty of 'tribal entrapment', incarcerating the Zulu in the rural scenario. The images it projects are supported by those in the printed and electronic media. Accordingly a comprehensive picture is developed and in this manner an unproblematic view of both past and present is disseminated to the public at large.

CHAPTER SIX
THE ZULU REASSESSED
1979 - 1996

Academic historians responded to the 'ethnic card' with a series of alternate images. Guy provides the example of a comment that described the Zulu as capable guerrilla fighters. He pointed out that the opposite is true: when engaged in battle, the Zulu never adopted guerrilla tactics.¹ Guy also cautioned against Goodwill Zwelithini's February 1994 announcement that he would declare KwaZulu-Natal an independent monarchy. He argued that the Zulu kingdom was destroyed in the 1880s and that Zulu nationalism is merely a twentieth century creation. There is no continuity of the sort envisaged by Zulu nationalists.² The media and political controversy which raged about Shaka Day also brought academic comment. Amidst the bickering and sensationalism, John Wright argued that such controversy was not new and had been occurring since the 1880s. Furthermore he offered a deconstructed image of Shaka, noting that it developed during the 1860s when the Zulu were coming under increasing pressure from white settlers. Desiring an earlier age which they perceived as one of order, stability and unity, they then started to build the myth of Shaka. The myth was also promoted by British administrators in Natal to justify authoritarian rule, arguing that the Zulu needed strong government.³

These images contrasted sharply with media and popular images. Guy noted that this led to accusations of 'ivory-tower theorising about what people know, what is in their blood'⁴ against academics. Indeed he was later criticized for arguing with 'old and mouldy facts' and

¹ 'Zulu history is being distorted for short-term political gains' *Sunday Times* 17 April 1994.

² 'The Zulu kingdom WAS destroyed in the 1880s' *Mercury* 1 March 1994.

³ 'Shaka Day wrangling nothing new' and 'Zulu conqueror shrouded in myth' *Daily News* 23 September 1994.

⁴ 'The Zulu kingdom WAS destroyed in the 1880s'.

ignoring emotion.⁵ Another analyst was attacked by the editor of the IFP-owned *Ilanga* newspaper for writing about the Zulu hierarchy when he was in fact an outsider and could therefore not understand it.⁶ Yet research did indicate that 'emotion' was not a reliable source of historical authenticity. The IFP emphasized continuity and tradition despite numerous anomalies. An illustration of this is the role of the amakhosi and the 'tribal' authorities. Under the National Party government, these authorities were placed in a subservient role and expected to introduce government policy. Under the Amakhosi and Iziphakanyiswa Act of 1990 (KwaZulu Act 9 of 1990) however, this control was given to the KwaZulu government. It has been argued that if the IFP supported the 'original system' of Zulu government and were serious about KwaZulu not being a creation of apartheid, they would have taken steps to rebuild the former. Although having full legal authority to do so, they enforced further (KwaZulu) state control over the 'tribal' authorities.⁷ This was a typical example of research providing a very different view of accepted ideas.

Along with attempts to demystify Shaka, Shaka Day and the Zulu kingdom, other, older notions were also questioned. Archaeologists examining the site of KwaBulawayo discovered that Fynn and Isaacs had exaggerated the size and number of inhabitants of Shaka's capital. Fynn claimed that it was two miles in circumference and when they first arrived at Shaka's homestead, they were reportedly met by a crowd of 80 000. He later refers to an assembled crowd of 30 000.⁸ Archaeologists however estimate it at between 250 and 350 metres in size, with no more than 1000 to 1500 inhabitants.⁹ This helped to bring the writings of these early

⁵ 'Zulu kingdom lives on', *Daily News* 30 March 1994, letter to the Editor.

⁶ 'Analysis of role played by the chiefs found to be 'nauseating'' *Daily News* 23 January 1995.

⁷ Information derived from 'They are their master's voice' *Daily News* 17 January 1995 and 'Future role of Amakhosi' *Daily News* 3 March 1995.

⁸ Stuart and Malcolm, *The Diary*, pp. 71 and 86.

⁹ 'It's the real thing' *Sunday Tribune* 30 October 1994.

English settlers into further question. Indeed, Carr's 1964 observation that one must study the historian before the history, began to be taken seriously. Dan Wylie has pointed out that Zulu historiography has ignored earlier historian's lives and the subjective nature of their authorship.¹⁰ As noted in the previous chapters, literature about the Zulu has been very dependent on the writings of inter alia Isaacs, Fynn and Ritter, the latter two sources even being used for the Shaka Zulu television series. Wylie's work on Isaacs and Julie Pridmore's work on Fynn¹¹ show that the nature of these histories and the information later authors have derived from them, remains as uncertain as the 'real nature' of the early, nineteenth-century Zulu.

These images from professional historians emphasized the divide between academic and popularly-held views. Drawing a distinction between these sets of images is difficult. It involves making a judgement about who or what produces the 'best history'. Placing academic history in a positive light implies that professional historians are immune to ideological and other subjective influences. For Roland Barthes for example, historical discourse is a product of imagination.¹² Martin, in discussing Curtin's *The Image of Africa*, makes the point that Curtin attempted to provide a respectable pedigree for professional historians, that their work had greater legitimacy and truth than popular representations.¹³ Clearly such generalisations about academia are impossible to make. Academic knowledge was the basis of European representations of the 'other'. The sciences, biology and anatomy were complicit with the various institutions of colonial power.¹⁴ The social anthropologists discussed in Chapter One

¹⁰ Wylie 'A Dangerous Admiration', pp. 99-100.

¹¹ For Isaacs, see Wylie, 'Autobiography as Alibi' and Wylie, 'Textual Incest'. For Fynn, see Pridmore, 'Henry Francis Fynn'.

¹² Oboe, *Fiction, History and Nation*, p. 11.

¹³ Martin, 'British Images of the Zulu', pp. 7-8.

¹⁴ Young, *White Mythologies*, p. 127.

were of course, also professional scholars. Yet in assessing images of the Zulu in the twentieth century, historical discourse produced by certain professional historians has attempted to investigate and understand the Zulu past, apart from the oft-used signifiers of violence and bloodshed. An attempt has been made to explain and describe the Zulu past beyond the role of Shaka and his 'impis'. While there were ideological imperatives involved, academic research from the 1960s provided major impetus for moving 'beyond the washing of the spears'.

The origins of this academic work

Chapter Three noted that for Ian Knight, 1965 was a 'good year' for Zulu War studies. He was referring to the arrival of *The Washing of the Spears* in particular. Andrew Duminy and Bill Guest of the University of Natal however, offered another opinion. They look to 1965 but instead their focus is Brooke's and Webb's academic work *A History of Natal*.¹⁵ *The Washing of the Spears* is mentioned but *A History of Natal* is their starting-point for professional histories of the region.¹⁶

A History of Natal was the first general history of the Natal region written by professional historians. Its stated aim was to bring together the African, Asian and European histories of the region.¹⁷ *A History of Natal*'s context lay in an attempt to reassert the position of the English settlers in Natal in the face of a dominating and growing Afrikaner historiography.¹⁸ The book made progress in that it avoided a primary focus on the history of one group but in

¹⁵ E. Brookes and C de B. Webb, *A History of Natal* (Durban, University of Natal Press, 1967).

¹⁶ Duminy and Guest, 'Introduction' in Duminy and Guest, *Natal and Zululand*, pp. xvii-xxvii.

¹⁷ Brookes and Webb, *A History of Natal*, p. x.

¹⁸ Pridmore, 'Henry Francis Fynn', pp. 205-206.

comparison with developments overseas, it was already dated.¹⁹ Scholars based outside South Africa infused their work with an Africanist perspective from the 1960s. A 'reorientation in South African history'²⁰ occurred, as the decolonisation process in Africa stimulated research initiatives into the African past. This reorientation included the work of anthropologists such as Max Gluckman and Monica Wilson, as well the historian, J. Omer-Cooper. Gluckman saw South Africa as a heterogeneous society but considered that its various groups were inter-dependent.²¹ Wilson's work emphasized the place of black history in South Africa, as did Omer-Cooper in his *The Zulu Aftermath*.²² Blacks were identified as agents of change within the South African past. Political developments were no longer the result of mere barbaric desire but were proactive responses to regional changes.²³ Out of these historiographical developments came Wilson and Thompson's *The Oxford History of South Africa*, the first synthesis of South African history to acknowledge the precolonial past.²⁴ *The Oxford History* was however criticized on a number of grounds, including the lack of detailed empirical research. Its critics included, unsurprisingly, the government but also the ideological left.²⁵

This group comprised scholars with a particularly materialist interest in the past. The result was tension between the so-called 'liberal' and 'radical' schools of thought. The liberal school in examining the Anglo-Zulu War for example, concentrated on inter alia personalities, such as those of Frere and Shepstone. The radical school, while not rejecting the liberal view, saw

¹⁹ See S. Marks, 'The Nguni, the Natalians, and their History' *Journal of African History*, 8, 3, (1970).

²⁰ C. Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past: Major Historians on race and class* (David Phillip, Cape Town, 1988), p. 144.

²¹ H. MacMillan, 'Return to Malungwana Drift - Max Gluckman, the Zulu Nation and the Common Society' *African Affairs: The Journal of the Royal African Society* Vol 94, No. 375, Jan 1995, p. 64.

²² J. Omer-Cooper, *The Zulu Aftermath: a nineteenth century revolution in Bantu Africa* (London, Longman, 1966).

²³ Hamilton 'Authoring Shaka', p. 34.

²⁴ Smith, *The Changing Past*, p. 139.

²⁵ For more on the criticism, see Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, pp. 154-161.

the need to understand underlying issues such as the role of capitalism.²⁶ The radical point of view then, was a response to the liberals inability, as they saw it, to fully comprehend the South African past. Consequently, the image of the Zulu was altered and re-shaped within these paradigms. The radical school arose out of research being carried out overseas but also in South Africa. Locally, research was stimulated by the desire to popularize history, such as the History Workshops held at the University of the Witwatersrand, as well as work by materialist historians such as Jeff Guy and John Wright.²⁷ The role of the Centenary is also significant. Although it cannot be seen as a starting point, it helped to move research and study about the Zulu into another, more progressive phase. The reaction by academics to the celebrations brought forth harsh criticism, a desire to more appropriately understand the Zulu and a considerable amount of research work. This provided the basis for the academic study of the Zulu which was to follow in the 1980s and 1990s. At the time of the Centenary, images of the Zulu were beginning to take on new forms. Academic historians had produced research which illustrated that much less was known about the Zulu than had seemed. Many of the views of the Zulu before 1979 were seen to be myths or complete fallacies. In rejecting the traditional historiographical view of the Zulu and ideological constraints notwithstanding, these historians made significant contributions to the understanding of the South African past.

In 1977, Emery's *The Red Soldier* was published. Although mainly concerned with British eye-witness accounts of the War - it did contain some Zulu testimony - the publication is significant in that the accounts it provides help to 'debunk' several false images of the Zulu in

²⁶ Duminy and C. Ballard, 'Introduction' and C. de B. Webb, 'Problems of interpretation' in Duminy and Ballard, *The Anglo - Zulu War*, pp. xvii-7.

²⁷ See for example J. Guy, 'Production and Exchange in the Zulu kingdom'. (Paper presented at the National University of Lesotho, July 1976) and J. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan Age-group formation among the Northern Nguni' *Natalia* 8, December 1978.

terms of weaponry and tactics.²⁸ Most importantly however, the publication of the *James Stuart Archive* and *A Zulu King Speaks* at the end of the 1970s seemed to enticingly offer the absent Zulu perspective. The *James Stuart Archive* was drawn from the evidence collected by Stuart from numerous oral informants, while *A Zulu King Speaks* was based upon the 'most important surviving records of statements' by Cetshwayo.²⁹ There has been much debate over the issue of whether these two works, collected and mediated by colonial officials and interpreters, could effectively provide a dedicated Zulu view of the South African past. This debate of course also involved arguments about the validity of oral sources generally. Although it seems to offer a view free of Eurocentrism, oral evidence is itself part of an ideological discourse.³⁰ As a terrain of struggle³¹ oral testimony has numerous methodological problems and the sources in *A Zulu King Speaks* and *The James Stuart Archive* are no exception. Moreover as noted in the Introduction, there is the question of literary stereotypes and traditions finding their way back into oral tradition. Nevertheless, the evidence that these two sources provide, has been utilized to revisit the Zulu past, to provide a new series of images and to compare other sources with.

In respect of images of the Zulu generally but the Anglo-Zulu War specifically, the *Reality* articles dealt with in previous chapters were indicative of the new wave of academic thought. They were again dealt with in the conference that followed. 'The Anglo-Zulu War: A

²⁸ Emery, *The Red Soldier*, pp. 153, 174 and 176 where the Zulu use disciplined and organized tactics.

²⁹ Webb and Wright (ed.), *The James Stuart Archive* Volume I and C. de B. Webb, and J. Wright, (eds.), *A Zulu King Speaks: Statements made by Cetshwayo kaMpande on the history and customs of his people* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press and Killie Campbell Africana Library, 1987). For more on the *James Stuart Archive*, see Wright, 'Making the James Stuart Archive'.

³⁰ Pridmore, 'Henry Francis Fynn', pp. 250-251. For differing views about the *James Stuart Archive*, see Hamilton, 'Authoring Shaka' and J. Cobbing, 'A Tainted Well. The Objectives, Historical Fantasies, and Working-Methods of James Stuart, with Counter-Argument' in the *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, XI, 1988.

³¹ C. Hamilton, 'Ideology and Oral Traditions: Listening to the Voices 'From Below' *History in Africa* 14 (1987), p. 74.

Centennial Reappraisal 1879 - 1979' aimed at establishing 'a more sober awareness' of the War among both the general public and academics. The conference was attended by some 250 delegates, of whom sixteen presented papers. It was felt that the papers presented were indicative of the debate that had surrounded the War.³² They dealt with inter alia a review of the causes of the War³³, the part played by the colonial authorities in the collapse of the Zulu kingdom³⁴ and the Zulu politics and economy before the outbreak of war. Drawing upon well used sources such as Bryant and Samuelson but also utilizing *The James Stuart Archive* and *A Zulu King Speaks*, as well as Guy's and Wright's pre-1979 research work³⁵, Colenbrander offered an analysis of the Zulu amabutho system. 'Frankenstein's monster'³⁶ became a labour force of both sexes organized to maintain the state.³⁷ These conclusions served to 'normalize' images of the Zulu, that is to move them from the realm of the supernatural and mythical, to that of a normal society. The Zulu kingdom emerged as an entity with political and economic problems and concerns. The concept of a society built around the military was firmly 'debunked'.

Colenbrander also provided a more detailed image of Cetshwayo as a leader faced with political and economic problems. These included insufficient cattle supplies, a population increase and the growing power of the izikhulu (chiefs) who often opposed the king.³⁸ This

³² Duminy and Ballard, 'Introduction' in Duminy and Ballard, *The Anglo - Zulu War: New Perspectives*, p. xvii. A selection of the conference's papers were published in this work in 1981.

³³ A. Etherington, 'Anglo-Zulu relations, 1856-78 in Duminy and Ballard, *The Anglo - Zulu War: New Perspectives*.

³⁴ J. Guy, 'The role of colonial officials in the destruction of the Zulu kingdom' in *ibid.*

³⁵ J. Guy, 'Production and Exchange in the Zulu kingdom'. (Paper presented at the National University of Lesotho, July 1976); J. Guy, 'Ecological factors in the Rise of Shaka and the Zulu kingdom'. (Paper presented at the National University of Lesotho, August 1977) and J. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan Age - group formation among the Northern Nguni' *Natalia* 8, December 1978.

³⁶ R. Furneaux, *The Zulu War: Isandhlwana and Rorke's Drift*, p. 15.

³⁷ P. Colenbrander, 'The Zulu Political Economy on the eve of the war' in Duminy and Ballard, *The Anglo - Zulu War: New Perspectives*, p. 80.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 82-89.

suggested that there was a need for a multi-dimensional analysis of Zulu society, not a mere emphasis on militarism or alleged 'bloodthirstiness'. As far as the latter is concerned, a letter by Cetshwayo in 1876 is taken by a number of sources as evidence of the risk he and the Zulu posed.³⁹ Colenbrander offers a rebuttal of this image⁴⁰, basing it upon research by Cope in 1967⁴¹ and Colenso and Durnford's 1880 publication.⁴² He suggested that Cetshwayo's 'outburst' in the letter may have been overly-impetuous or the king's words were misrepresented. These works were both available to Clammer. Why then does he dismiss the letter as 'disturbing'? Morris at least avoided this, recording that the statement was recognized as an outburst of temper⁴³ but Clammer's portrayal is more negative. He does not attempt to place it in any sort of context and thus it must be seen as part of Clammer's attempt to provide evidence of the legitimate need for war in 1879. Colenbrander clearly refutes this, Cetshwayo's outburst becoming far less significant than it has been made out to be.

Elaine Unterhalter discusses the residents of the Nquthu district before and after the War.⁴⁴ The role they played in the causes of the War and its subsequent influence upon them is discussed at some length. Trade links with the Colony are discussed at some length. Unterhalter suggested that this was indicative of the level of involvement Zulu people had with Natal and thus British Imperialism. She concludes that the 1879 invasion had a fundamental impact on the Nquthu district, altering the residents' way of life.⁴⁵ This paper

³⁹ See for example Clammer, *The Zulu War*, pp. 23-244, who calls it 'disturbing'.

⁴⁰ Colenbrander, 'The Zulu Political Economy on the eve of the war', p. 81.

⁴¹ R. Cope, 'Shepstone and Cetshwayo, 1873 - 79', (Unpl. MA thesis, University of Natal, 1967).

⁴² E. Colenso and E. Durnford, *History of the Zulu War and Its Origins*, (London, Chapman and Hall, 1880).

⁴³ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 283.

⁴⁴ E. Unterhalter, 'Confronting Imperialism: the People of the Nquthu and the Invasion of Zululand' in Duminy and Ballard, *The Anglo - Zulu War: New Perspectives*.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

was built upon a number of sources including Guy's doctoral thesis⁴⁶, Parr⁴⁷, Montague⁴⁸, and contemporary documents.⁴⁹ Using sources, many of which were available before the twentieth century, the author was able to develop a description of the Zulu during the War, not only the British. The political and social problems faced by the Zulu, emerge as integral to the study of the Anglo-Zulu War therefore.

Opposition to apartheid was another stimulus for different images of the Zulu. Of importance here, is the political context of South Africa during the 1970s and increasing resistance to apartheid. Three years before the Anglo-Zulu War Centenary, the 1976 disturbances in Soweto and elsewhere...

*...ushered in an era of enhanced black activism and militancy, manifested in a resurgence of the ANC's popularity, the development of black worker organisations, and the revival of guerrilla activity. In the immediate aftermath of the revolt the government itself cracked down on opposition movements, banning various organisations and detaining leaders.*⁵⁰

These disturbances resulted in economic problems, particularly the flight of foreign capital from the country. Furthermore the political situation was further affected by the 'Info Scandal' in 1978 and the development of the concept of 'Total Strategy', aimed at opposing foreign pressure, expanding the middle class and destabilising neighbouring countries.⁵¹ This was the political context for this revisionist research. This may explain *Reality's* entirely antithetical approach to the histories of the Zulu and the Anglo-Zulu War which had preceded it for example. As already discussed, John Wright made several significant points about the

⁴⁶ J. Guy, 'The Destruction of the Zulu kingdom: the Civil War in Zululand, 1879 - 1884', (Unpl. PhD thesis, University of London, 1975).

⁴⁷ H. Parr, *A Sketch of the Kafir and Zulu Wars* (London, Kegan Paul, 1880).

⁴⁸ W. Montague, *Campaigning in South Africa: Reminiscences of an Officer in 1879* (Edinburgh, 1880).

⁴⁹ See Unterhalter, 'Confronting Imperialism', pp. 115-119.

⁵⁰ Maylam, *A History of the African People of South Africa*, p. 195.

⁵¹ Beinart, *Twentieth-century South Africa*, p. 245.

Centenary. He felt, for example, that the commemorations served to reinforce the ideology of white superiority.⁵² Yet absent from this analysis however, is the role of Zulu nationalism. Zulu participation in the Centenary and particularly the involvement of Mangosuthu Buthelezi also needed to be considered. Wright accused white writers of hidden motives, yet at the same time the Centenary, in celebrating the militaristic images of the Zulu, was beneficial for Zulu nationalistic sentiment. Even before the Buthelezi, there were Zulu who promoted a certain perspective of the past. Chapter One noted that Solomon kaDinuzulu had used the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1925 to stress his own role and that of Zulu nationalism. This left many Zulu with monarchical and nationalistic fervour.⁵³ In the development of particular images of the Zulu, such events cannot be overlooked and Western views cannot be criticized in isolation.

By the 1980s, the above research work led to a growing number of publications about the past. Works such as *Enterprise and Exploitation in a Victorian Colony*⁵⁴ showed that there was much to investigate about the history of KwaZulu-Natal beyond the Anglo-Zulu War. Bringing together historical and economic issues, the book's articles focused on a number of different topics including trade in the Zulu kingdom.⁵⁵ Colenbrander suggested that trade had a greater impact on Zulu society. He also observed that greater research was needed. Here the Zulu were portrayed as active traders. A number including Cetshwayo, Zibhebhu kaMapitha and Dabulamanzi kaMpande engaged in high level trade with white traders. This promoted the

⁵² Wright, 'Beyond the Washing of the Spears' *Reality*, p. 3.

⁵³ Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, p. 136.

⁵⁴ B. Guest and J. Sellers (eds.), *Enterprise and Exploitation in a Victorian Colony* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1985).

⁵⁵ P. Colenbrander, 'External Exchange and the Zulu kingdom: Towards a Reassessment' in *ibid*.

image of the Zulu as businessmen, some of whom enjoyed extensive trade interests. Zibhebhu kaMapitha for example traded in Swaziland, the Eastern Transvaal, as well as Natal.⁵⁶

The investigation of these types of activities pointed to a rather different view of both Zulu and African societies. Previously...

*Africans have tended to come into the picture only when they have blocked the path of white expansion or rejected white authority. For the readers of such histories, their perception and knowledge of African history would probably amount to little more than a series of conflicts and confrontations ...the rise of Shaka, the Battle of Blood River, and the Anglo-Zulu War.*⁵⁷

It was in this regard that Zulu society came to be seen in a broader context, not only in terms of trade but also within the wider African society of South Africa. Paul Maylam's *A History of the African People of South Africa* focused on the black perspective of South African history. Furthermore by the end of the 1980s, the Zulu had also been more firmly incorporated into the history of KwaZulu-Natal. The above research, accumulating since the 1970's, suggested to the Department of Historical Studies at the University of Natal that it was time for a successor to Brookes and Webb's *A History of Natal*. The result was Duminy and Guest's *Natal and Zululand From Earliest Times to 1910*, a chronological account of the province from the Stone Age to the beginning of the twentieth century. It was hoped that 'Duminy and Guest' juxtaposed against 'Brookes and Webb' [would] generate 'the creative tension from which there will come...a brave new synthesis of the history of Natal'.⁵⁸ Amongst others, the publication reassessed the value of Bryant as a historical source, observing that his oral information and the use of the classification 'Nguni' were highly problematic.⁵⁹ Most

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 115.

⁵⁷ Maylam, *A History of the African People of South Africa*, p. vii

⁵⁸ Duminy and Guest, 'Introduction' *Natal and Zululand*, p. x.

⁵⁹ Wright and Hamilton, 'Traditions and Transformations' in Duminy and Guest, *Natal and Zululand*

significantly there was an attempt to re-examine the development of the 'Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region' sans the concept of the Mfecane and Shaka as the main protagonists.⁶⁰ Instead changes were viewed in terms of ecological factors, advocated earlier in the decade⁶¹, although Wright and Hamilton warned that there was much left to 'untangle'.⁶² The image of the mysterious, threatening warrior hovering on Natal's border was replaced by one that fixed the history of the Zulu firmly within the context of the development of the province. Moreover *Natal and Zululand* clearly indicated that historians, using sources such as the *James Stuart Archive* and researching Zulu society in depth, could effectively dispel much myth and ultimately show that... 'The ingredients that made up the various societies that inhabited Natal and Zululand were no different from those of other societies'.⁶³

These publications firmly rejected the notion of a one, Western, dimension to South African history. Implicit in this rejection was an acknowledgement of the desire for a more popularly available history. It is interesting that both Maylam and Duminy and Guest admitted that among the aims of their respective publications, the desire to popularize recent research was present.⁶⁴ In this sense, the influence of the politics and the ideologies of the 1980s also influenced academic work. Ballard's *The House of Shaka*⁶⁵ for example was regarded by some as an example of a 'royalist history' concerned with the 'partisan treatments' of Buthelezi and Inkatha.⁶⁶

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 57-74. Ideas about the Mfecane have been developed further in C. Hamilton (ed.), *The Mfecane Aftermath: Reconstructive Debates in Southern African History* (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1995).

⁶¹ J. Guy, 'Ecological factors in the rise of Shaka and the Zulu kingdom' in Marks and Atmore, *Economy and society in pre - industrial South Africa*.

⁶² Wright and Hamilton, 'Traditions and Transformations', p. 68.

⁶³ Duminy and Guest, 'Introduction', p. xxvii.

⁶⁴ Maylam, *A History of the African People*, p. vii and Duminy and Guest 'Introduction', p. xxiv.

⁶⁵ C. Ballard, *The House of Shaka* (Durban, Emoyeni Books, 1988).

⁶⁶ M. Wright, 'Zulu Woman: Between Literature, Autobiography and History'. Seminar delivered 20 June 1995, The Department of History Seminar Series, University of Durban-Westville. For criticism of *The House of Shaka*, see Hamilton, 'An Appetite for the Past'.

Nevertheless, despite all of this material, popular or amateur histories continued to make contributions to KwaZulu-Natal history and South African history generally, in a form readily accessible to the general public: straightforward, authoritative and 'action-packed'. Their success needs no other measure than the fact that a number of these texts - including Morris' - provided the sources not only for the Shaka Zulu television series (See Chapter 5) but continue to be used as sources of fact.⁶⁷ *A History of Natal* had been superseded but works such as *The Washing of the Spears* have maintained a constancy over the decades. Indeed a recent newspaper article declared Morris to be an expert on Zulu history.⁶⁸

Throughout the decade of the 1980s the Anglo-Zulu War continued to attract attention. There remained an inability to come to terms with the Zulu victory at Isandlwana. A number of works followed the 1970s material in producing sensationall- and market-driven histories. The 1982 edition of the journal *Soldiers of the Queen*⁶⁹, was devoted to a debate between Donald Morris and F.W.D. Jackson. Their respective views of the battle had led to different schools of thought and Morris was given an opportunity to defend his. The following year, Jackson replied to Morris' comments.⁷⁰ In the main however, all of this was concerned with arguing about why the British lost the battle. Much was written about the positions of the British units⁷¹, British rate of fire⁷² and so on but such arguments tend to overshadow the Zulu victory. Morris and Jackson were concerned with searching for reasons for this victory and the place they looked was the British role in the battle. One article did offer a more practical view

⁶⁷ See for example Wylie 'A Dangerous Admiration', p. 98 and The Grolier Multimedia Encyclopaedia on CD-ROM.

⁶⁸ 'Donald R. Morris - Zulu expert extraordinaire' *Daily News*, 23 June 1994.

⁶⁹ I. Knight, (ed.) *Soldiers of the Queen*, 1982.

⁷⁰ I. Knight, (ed.) *Soldiers of the Queen*, 1983 and 1984.

⁷¹ I. Knight 'Editor's Introduction' *Soldiers of the Queen*, 1982, p. 4 and *ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

⁷² Knight, *Soldiers of the Queen* 1982, p. 6 and 1983, p. 15.

of matters. The Zulu won on the day as their tactics, abilities and courage stood them in good stead, together with British mistakes and failures.⁷³

The fact that the Zulu had no literate historians at the time of the War is no excuse for ignoring the Zulu participation. Certainly it may make the gathering of Zulu evidence more difficult, yet the methodological problems of oral evidence are not worse than historiographically problematic literary material which appeared after the War. Apparently the umPunga unit typifies the problems 'besetting a serious study of the Zulu Army'. Confusion over its proper name and its location during the battle, make it difficult to describe its composition and activities.⁷⁴ Yet the author overlooked the fact that this was the very same problem Morris and Jackson argued about. Despite the literature which deals with the British, there was still a debate about British unit dispositions, strengths and respective leaders. Anything definitive in nature is difficult to arrive at, as much for the British as the Zulu. Nevertheless the inadequate coverage of Zulu participation is explained away by such difficulties and problems. This can only be understood as a persistent inability to come to terms with the Zulu view of the War. The image of the Zulu 'warrior' as victor or as worthy opponent continued to be a difficult one.

This was evident in two other publications of the 1980s. They showed that despite the academic material which became available at the end of the 1970s, there remained a market for books which concentrated on two aspects of the War - the British role and the 'popular' and sensationalistic. Written in much the same style as 'popular' books of the 1970s, they represented the incapability of some to see the Anglo-Zulu War in any other context than that

⁷³ D. Langley, 'A Note on the Assumptions' *Soldiers of the Queen* 1983, pp. 22-23.

⁷⁴ I. Knight, 'A Note on the umPunga', *Soldiers of the Queen* 1983, p. 20.

of an 'African adventure'. Furthermore, their respective sources were based mainly on secondary material and thus the myths which appeared in these, were perpetuated. Barthorp's *The Zulu War - A Pictorial History*⁷⁵ and Bancroft's *Rorke's Drift*⁷⁶ were able successors of the sensationalistic tradition. Zulu military tactics were to all intents and purposes non-existent. They had learnt no lessons from their defeat at Blood River, implemented no deception plan nor did they exploit their victories. In fact a planned campaign was unknown and Zulu warfare was simply a series of bloody encounters.⁷⁷ As a leader and tactician, Cetshwayo's orders were 'simple in the extreme'.⁷⁸ After such comments, one is left to wonder how the Zulu managed to fight at all or indeed how they earned their military reputation. In Barthorp's estimation they appear as little more than street hoodlums. These descriptions are however significant, in that they again underlie an ambiguous aspect of Zulu imagery. On the one hand the Zulu 'warrior' is the perfect fighting machine, on the other he is disorganized, inflexible, intent on hacking and stabbing. Again on the one hand he is brave and fearless, on the other he retreats in disarray, not bothering to resist pursuers. This latter observation is also made by Emery. He explains this by using the theme of cowardice or misconduct resulting in execution, rather than looking at exhaustion or the futility of fleeing cavalry on foot. Thus the concept of a brutal Zulu system of justice is accordingly invoked.⁷⁹ Barthorp also believes that it is curious that the Zulu attack with great courage but retreat with little resistance.⁸⁰ Far from trying to understand this phenomenon or go beyond Emery's explanation, Barthorp seems happy to accept the idea of inflexible, simple tactics and inadequate skills. There are other examples of such reliance. Barthorp's assertion of little or

⁷⁵ M. Barthorp, *The Zulu War - A Pictorial History* (Dorset, Blandford Press, 1984). Originally published in 1980.

⁷⁶ J. Bancroft, *Rorke's Drift* (Rivonia, Ashanti Publishing, 1991). Originally published in 1988.

⁷⁷ Barthorp, *The Zulu War*, p. 18.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁷⁹ Emery, *The Red Soldier*, p. 51.

⁸⁰ Barthorp, *The Zulu War*, p. 118.

no Zulu tactical ability was also referred to in Wilkinson-Latham, one of Barthorp's sources.⁸¹ Thus the perpetuation of numerous myths and stereotypes continued.

Furthermore, what emerges is the concept that the Zulu were fiercesome fighters but only when confronting an opponent of a similar capacity, that is to say a 'native foe'. Against 'modern civilization', the Zulu 'warrior' is seen as being at a disadvantage. Their courage and bravery - for this is all they are alleged to have, their weapons being 'laughable' - are insufficient to defeat sophisticated Western armaments as Zulu so clearly shows. Apart from the British 'catastrophe' at Isandlwana, Khambula, Gingindlovu and Ulundi are seen to show the futility of attacking British troops.

Insofar as learning from Blood River is concerned, not taking heed of previous battle experience cannot be attributed to the Zulu alone. Twentieth-century European armies have also failed to do this.⁸² At the same time however, evidence suggests that the Zulu did learn from experience. Firearms provide a useful example. Morris, a source Barthorp used, points out that Cetshwayo was already procuring firearms from John Dunn before the 'Coronation' in 1873 and by 1879 had acquired a large number.⁸³ The quality may have been questionable, yet the Zulu had realized the value of guns. If any of these authors had bothered to consult the February 1880 edition of 'Macmillan's magazine', they would have found that Cetshwayo was displeased that captured British rifles from Isandlwana had not been brought to him.⁸⁴ This is an indication of the significance the Zulu placed on firearms. Admittedly they were not used to their full potential, nor were they properly integrated into the Zulu battle plan but this is

⁸¹ See Wilkinson-Latham, *Uniforms and Weapons*, p. 77.

⁸² See for example L. Hart, *History of the Second World War* (London, Papermac, 1992), p. 20.

⁸³ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, p. 209 and 293.

⁸⁴ Webb and Wright, *A Zulu King Speaks*, p. 35.

related to problems within the Zulu units themselves. Rather it is more useful to note that there were times when firearms were used efficiently by Zulu marksmen. There is evidence of this in the many letters of *The Red Soldier*⁸⁵ but neither Barthorp nor Bancroft acknowledge this ability. Even the secondary works of Morris and Clammer give examples of Zulu firepower being utilized successfully.⁸⁶ These episodes however are overlooked or ignored in favour of a stereotyped view of the Zulu.

Barthorp and Bancroft failed to provide anything more than a British military history. First published the year after the Centenary, it contained many valuable photographs from the War but most were of British participants.⁸⁷ There could be no argument that photographs of the Zulu were unavailable. Knight's *The Zulus*⁸⁸ contained a considerable number of photographs of Zulu participants. Again, Barthorp ignores these. Bancroft unashamedly celebrates the British activities, highlighting 'the fighting spirit of the British soldier'.⁸⁹ Both authors also provide legitimacy for the British invasion. Barthorp considered that, although unjustified by modern standards, the attack was undertaken as a protective measure for both black and white, the Zulu threatening the stability of Natal.⁹⁰ Terms like 'powder keg' are used to describe the Zulu kingdom.⁹¹ This situation was aggravated by Zulu raids into Swaziland and restlessness among the 'impis'.⁹² Frere by contrast was a naive European civil servant out of place in volatile Africa.⁹³ Even the use of logic by the Zulu is denied. Bancroft sees Cetshwayo's

⁸⁵ Emery, *The Red Soldier*, pp. 23 and 169.

⁸⁶ See Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, pp. 404 and 494 and Clammer, *The Zulu War*, pp. 107 and 162.

⁸⁷ Between pp. 147 and 164 for example, there are fourteen photographs and pictures - only one, a water-colour, shows the Zulu.

⁸⁸ I. Knight, *Osprey Elite Series No 21 - The Zulus* (London, Osprey Publishing, 1989).

⁸⁹ Bancroft, *Rorke's Drift*, Front flap.

⁹⁰ Barthorp, *The Zulu War*, p. vii.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁹² Bancroft, *Rorke's Drift*, p. 17.

⁹³ Barthorp, *The Zulu War*, p. 8.

attempt to avoid a quarrel with the British by showing no hostility towards them, as an indication of the king's failure to understand 'European law'.⁹⁴ This makes little sense since not showing hostility could be considered logical in the face of such a threat. Yet Bancroft portrays this in a negative light.

Publications working within the 'popular' framework, continued to generate the types of images which had been introduced in the 1820's and 1830's. At best the Zulu were the stereotyped 'warrior', at worst the cruel tyrant. Even among more serious studies, such conceptions remained. Ian Knight's *The Zulus* saw Shaka's birth as having 'all the elements of a dark fairy story'.⁹⁵ For a book published in 1989, this comment is hopelessly inadequate as history. The fact that Shaka's existence is myth-bound does not mean that it is mythological. In addition, the series of which the book was a part, was designed to examine famous fighting men of the past and present. The Zulu are in the company of inter alia the US Marine Corps and the Israeli Defence Force.⁹⁶ It is strange to rank the Zulu alongside professional army units. There was no edition in the series dealing with 'the Americans' but rather their military units, to which a percentage of the population belongs. Yet 'Zulu' implies militarism and consequently they take their place in the company of regular fighting units. The text examines them from their nineteenth-century origins until the Bambatha 'Rebellion', the emphasis always being military activities. The 1888 disturbances are also cast in a legendary, gallant mould with the Zulu 'once more meeting British soldiers in the field'.⁹⁷ In his conclusion, Knight notes that international renown and the memory of 'the warrior past' are a source of pride to today's six million Zulu, all of whom acknowledge Goodwill Zwelithini as their

⁹⁴ Bancroft, *Rorke's Drift*, p. 17.

⁹⁵ Knight, *The Zulus*, p. 10.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, Rear Cover,

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

king.⁹⁸ The image of Zulu unity and allegiance to the king however, was and is a fallacy, as Chapter Five shows.

Robert Edgerton's *Like Lions They Fought* bears a resemblance to *The Washing of the Spears* in that it is a wide-ranging study of the 1879 War, providing a history of the Zulu before the War and a brief account of events afterwards. His 'Preface' is promising. He points out that Morris' book contained many problems, notably seeing the War from the British perspective. Consequently he realized that more had to be written about the conflict, particularly from the Zulu point of view.⁹⁹ Edgerton's bibliography testifies to the amount of sources that were consulted. These include academic works such as *The Anglo-Zulu War: New Perspectives*, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, *A Field Guide*, *The James Stuart Archive* and *A Zulu King Speaks*, as well as the more 'popular' histories.¹⁰⁰ Much of this, however, does not translate into anything concrete. *Like Lions They Fought* is marred by sensationalism and flights of fancy.

This does not mean that Edgerton did not utilize the above sources. He moved away to some extent from the image of Cetshwayo's kingdom as a united political entity, noting that it was a loose confederation of different groups. He also observed that there was no standing army, he includes the Zulu role in the battle of Isandlwana (using inter alia *The James Stuart Archive* Volume III and Zulu accounts from Mitford¹⁰¹) and even goes some way in mentioning the role of Zulu women. Nevertheless Edgerton chose to write about the Zulu in a simplistic and restrictive manner. Issues such as bodily functions enjoy the same emphasis as political and

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 54.

⁹⁹ Edgerton, *Like Lions They Fought*, pp. ix-xi.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 227-236.

¹⁰¹ Bertram Mitford travelled extensively throughout South Africa and Africa. From the 1880s, he produced numerous stories and novels including *Through the Zulu Country: Its Battlefields and its People* in 1883.

economic matters. Zulu sexual activities are constantly referred to. There are discussions of erotic dances and how the Zulu loved to talk about sexual matters.¹⁰² Edgerton's source for these is Lugg's *Life Under a Zulu Shield*. Lugg however, notes that isiZulu is a language with many euphemisms for sex.¹⁰³ This does not imply enjoyment about discussing sex but rather quite the opposite. The use of euphemisms suggest a reluctance to engage with the subject directly. Edgerton also provides details of the apparent role of body parts in Zulu society¹⁰⁴, particularly involving cannibalism. According to Edgerton, human flesh was a potent part of the ritual preparation for War and before the battle of Isandlwana, the flesh of a certain O'Neal was eaten. Edgerton acknowledges Krige's *The Social System of the Zulus* here. Krige's source for this information is Stuart's *A History of the Zulu Rebellion 1906*.¹⁰⁵ Tracing this back to Stuart, it becomes clear that Krige has made an error, something which Edgerton compounds. Stuart discusses the murder of an Oliver Veal, not O'Neal, in July 1906, not 1879.¹⁰⁶ Thus the preparation before Isandlwana appears infinitely more barbaric and primeval and once more the role of the body is associated with the Zulu. It becomes a metaphor, which contextualizes the level of progress the 'other' has achieved or failed to achieve.

The familiar image of Zulu cruelty is also present. The author, while trying to understand the Zulu view of matters, does not hesitate to state that the Zulu killed their enemies 'with relish', strangling a woman until 'her eyes popped out'. He then goes on to comment that the Zulu were more complex than this description. Why then does he include it? It further reinforces a view of an abnormal and brutal society. Even when he attempts to show 'normal' aspects, the

¹⁰² Edgerton, *Like Lions They Fought*, pp. 24-91.

¹⁰³ H.Lugg, *Life under a Zulu Shield* (Pietermaritzburg, Shuter and Shooter, 1975), p. 19.

¹⁰⁴ Edgerton, *Like Lions They Fought*, pp. 40, 42 and 45.

¹⁰⁵ Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus*, p. 270.

¹⁰⁶ J. Stuart, *A History of the Zulu Rebellion 1906 and of Dinuzulu's Arrest, Trial and Expatriation* (London, MacMillan and Co Ltd, 1913), pp. 377-378.

words he uses are couched in silly and often inane terms. Examples include: men becoming 'decidedly tiddly' after drinking beer, while at various rituals, the assembled group would shout 'ooh ooh ooh'. The War itself is also described in these terms. It is said to be an 'epic of misunderstanding', which is simplistic to say the least. The attack on Sihayo's umuzi at the beginning of the War, is discussed as if it were a humorous event. In Edgerton's view much of the 'frolicsome fracas', as he calls it, involved the antics of Lieutenant Harford. There is no serious interpretation of this event and the destruction of 'jolly' Chief Sihayo's home is dismissed as being of anecdotal importance.

While Edgerton was critical of Haggard's romanticized view of the Zulu, his contribution to Zulu history was influenced by fictional accounts. The influence of the Shaka Zulu series can also be seen in the section where the role of Princess Mkabayi in Zulu society, is discussed.¹⁰⁷

As a result *Like Lions They Fought* fails to comprehensively deal with the Zulu. The image of the Zulu society as savage and/or primitive is replaced by one which shows it to be peculiar, if not strange. In addition the book is reductionist, simplifying the Zulu to the level of a group of people who behave according to ritual and tradition. They are not seen as creative or proactive in any way. They merely react to events, be they rituals, the British invasion or battle. Perhaps he thought this style would assist in the book's commercial appeal but it merely serves to submerge Edgerton's attempt to understand the Zulu in a mass of trivialities. *Like Lions They Fought* really reflects little more than the primitive ethnography of the early American films about the Zulu, discussed in Chapter One.

¹⁰⁷ Edgerton, *Like Lions They Fought*, pp. 5-214.

This was further evidence of how writers working within the popular framework have neglected the Zulu perspective, conjuring up a series of remarkable and often bizarre images instead. They have chosen to view the Zulu in a fictional light, as if they were man-made creations, rather than real human beings. In this sense these images represent the authors' view of what the Zulu should be, how they should behave and think. The Zulu in literature and film become an imaginary construct, belonging to the world of legend and fairy tale. Such notions were prevalent in the nineteenth century, yet they have endured in the twentieth century in the above-mentioned works. It is of course true that such judgement is passed retrospectively. The academic position of the 1990s offers one the ability to assess such works in the light of more recent findings. Nevertheless the emphasis on hindsight is largely a spurious argument when the issue of the Anglo-Zulu War is raised. Although the two primary sources of the Zulu 'perspective', however much a tainted well they are, were available from 1978, the testimony in *A Zulu King Speaks* and *The James Stuart Archive* had been available almost one hundred years before. The first section of *A Zulu King Speaks*, 'Cetywayo's Story', was printed in *Macmillan's Magazine* in February 1880 and the second 'Cetshwayo's Evidence', was available in the 'Cape of Good Hope Blue Book' G.4. - '83 (part 1) in 1883.¹⁰⁸ Thus these sources were available, if not in published form. Morris for example, did consult magazines and newspapers from the nineteenth century but his search was selective. The emphasis was on British testimony. Research such as it was in the above literature and film, was confined to certain parameters. Trevor-Roper's unfortunate comment that apart from the role of Europeans, African history was darkness - a point which Hegel also alluded to¹⁰⁹ - is the assumption upon which all these studies rest. The many works which followed Morris',

¹⁰⁸ Webb and Wright, *A Zulu King Speaks*, p. vii.

¹⁰⁹ See H. Trevor-Roper, 'The Rise of Christian Europe' *The Listener*, November 28 1963, pp. 871-875 and Young, *White Mythologies*, p. 2.

unashamedly emphasized story-telling. They become a thematic space without limitation, in which writers could discharge popular fantasies about warrior myths and legends. The point is that there was very little attempt at serious research. There was and is instead the flavour of sensationalism, commercialism or simple ignorance rather than blatant racism.

Nevertheless, this did not mean that there was no further need to examine the War from the perspective of the military historian. Generally-speaking, viewing the War as such had received criticism from academic historians. Images of the Zulu that emerged in these military histories were not positive ones. Guy remarked that many of the publications about the War were sad distortions where many myths about the Zulu were best represented.¹¹⁰ The previous chapters have shown how this occurred and what form these images took. However, despite this reaction to the military historian's point of view, there were indications that there was much that could be investigated about the War itself. At the time of the Centenary, work by John Laband and Paul Thompson showed that the War was not only the domain of the popular military historian but also that of the academic historian. Utilizing the methodology of 'war and society studies'¹¹¹, Laband pointed out that much less was known about the War than it might have seemed. War and society studies had developed in Anglo-American historiography during the 1970s and was a reaction against examining the purely military aspects of conflict. Instead its socio-economic and political contexts gained in significance.¹¹² In analysing sources about the Zulu role in the War, he observed that they have major disadvantages, including being tampered with, having only been collected in relation to specific events such as Isandlwana and the problem of fragmented evidence.¹¹³ Laband negated the image of the

¹¹⁰ Guy, 'The British Invasion of Zululand', p. 8.

¹¹¹ Laband, *Kingdom in Crisis*, p. 2.

¹¹² Grundlingh, 'Black Men in a White Man's War', p. 1.

¹¹³ J. Laband, 'The Zulu Army in the War of 1879: Some cautionary notes' *The Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, II, 1979.

Zulu army as a professional institution. Indeed in Zulu testimony, it emerged as a militia, an informal organisation. In fact to call it an army is a misnomer. To formalize it - as is obvious in the previous chapters - by listing its alleged components and strengths is to promote a fallacy. An example of this is Wilkinson-Latham's book¹¹⁴ which was based on Fynney's 1879 publication designed to provide intelligence for the British about their opponents.¹¹⁵ The latter was used to create an image which, Laband believes, was totally misleading.

Thus the formalisation of this military image was a process undertaken by writers with a particular need in mind. During the war, the British exaggerated the numbers of their Zulu opponents to enhance their victories. Writers after the war continued these themes but here it was important to promote the notion of attacking a nation or group which has an organized force of arms. This is far better to contemplate than the thought of attacking informal militia units. The Anglo-Zulu war then, emerges not simply as another 'colonial war' but as a historical tool. Its function was to establish a conceptual framework in which to understand an aspect of South African history from a Western perspective. The role of the whites and the role of the Zulu has, to a very large extent, been defined by this paradigm.

1979 would see Laband set about altering this conception of the past, by attempting to provide a Zulu perspective of the war. The aim was to bring the Zulu from their allotted place on the periphery of interest in the War, to centre stage. A significant step in this direction was the publishing of the *A Field Guide to the war in Zululand 1879*¹¹⁶ in 1979. Making use of Zulu evidence from *A Zulu King Speaks*, the *James Stuart Archive*, which had only become widely

¹¹⁴ Wilkinson-Latham, *Uniforms and Weapons of the Zulu War*, pp. 91-92.

¹¹⁵ F. Fynney, *The Zulu Army and Zulu Headmen. Published by Direction of the Lieut.-General Commanding (Pietermaritzburg, 1879)*

¹¹⁶ J. Laband, and P. Thompson, *A Field Guide To The War In Zululand 1879* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1979).

available then, as well as academic work by Guy and Wright mentioned above¹¹⁷, its chapters on the Zulu military system¹¹⁸ and strategy offered an insight which was not available in many Anglo-Zulu war works. For a book published in the Centenary year, it contained descriptions of Zulu military activities which were major improvements over predecessors. The Zulu military system was placed in perspective and it became apparent that the Zulu did employ a strategy. The Zulu emerged as active participants in the war and the usual stereotypical description of the 'Zulu warrior' was avoided. Laband and Thompson also made the point that defeat for the Zulu was by no means inevitable. In fact, it was not so much the British who defeated them but rather it was they themselves who simplified the task for the British by adopting a conservative strategy.¹¹⁹ These were major changes to the image of the Zulu in war. For Furneaux, defeat was inevitable because of European gunpowder.¹²⁰ Zulu tactical ability is accordingly dismissed as being of little consequence. However, the *Field Guide* pointed to the fact that at the outset of war and contrary to popular opinion, the outcome was not definite. Even those activities which in *Zulu* appear frighteningly primitive and are the preamble to the attack on Rorke's Drift - that is singing and dancing - emerge as a form of exercise.¹²¹ Therefore this aspect of Zulu life was not performed merely to act upon primeval desires nor only for enjoyment but it had a far more practical nature. Zulu society then, emerges as considerably more complex than the more simplistic views discussed in the previous chapters.

For the serious tourist, the *Field Guide* offered a revised image of the Zulu. This was important for a book which would have had popular appeal with its maps and diagrams describing the various battles of the War. The revised and enlarged fourth edition in 1987,

¹¹⁷ See 'References' in *ibid.*, pp. 82-84.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-7.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹²⁰ Furneaux, *The Zulu War*, p. 7.

¹²¹ Laband and Thompson, *Field Guide.*, p. 4.

looked back upon the 1979 edition as being 'instantly recognized as the indispensable handbook to the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879'.¹²² At the same time however its form as a 'guide' meant certain limitations. While various opinions about the causes of the war were listed, the publication did not really offer a judgement concerning these. Accordingly these may have been perceived as academics arguing among themselves, rather than defining the causes. Furthermore the Zulu still appeared as a threat, in the sense that Laband and Thompson described Frere's perceptions of the Zulu, without offering a counter-argument.¹²³ Nevertheless, in a book of this type which was of necessity textually brief, the Zulu participation emerged as fundamental to the study of the War.

In 1985, Laband produced *Fight Us in the Open*.¹²⁴ The second in a series co-produced by the KwaZulu Monuments Council, its subtitle and theme was the 'Anglo-Zulu War through Zulu Eyes'. The publication was also affected by ideological interference, this time from Zulu nationalists. *Fight Us in the Open* was censored by the KwaZulu Monuments Council after consultation with KwaZulu officials¹²⁵. It is the opposite extreme of seeing the War through British eyes. The ideal would be a study of the combined perspectives of the War. *Fight Us in the Open* is a commentary on the way the War has been viewed. To amend this situation, the publication concentrated solely on the Zulu perspective of the War. In addition the book looks at the Zulu in the War and thus the military image recurs. On the other hand these aspects make for a fascinating publication. The idea of non-existent Zulu sources is shown to be quite wrong. While there may be no Zulu regimental histories nor written orders, there is sufficient

¹²² J. Laband and P. Thompson, *A Field Guide To The War In Zululand 1879 and the Defence of Natal* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1987), blurb.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

¹²⁴ J. Laband, *Fight Us in the Open* (Pietermaritzburg and Ulundi, Shuter and Shooter and the KwaZulu Monuments Council, 1985).

¹²⁵ Forsythe, 'The Past in the Service of the Present', p. 89.

testimony to provide a Zulu insight into the War. Based on material from *The James Stuart Archive*, *A Zulu King Speaks* and Mitford, amongst others, Laband provides details of political disagreements among members of the king's council, Cetshwayo's orders and the Zulu strategy involved in various battles. When discussing the Zulu decisions before Isandlwana, Laband uses the word 'conference' to describe senior Zulu's activities.¹²⁶ Gone is the concept of the headlong savage charge at the British. Replacing it is a view of normalcy, the Zulu held 'conferences', discussions' and took decisions based on gathered intelligence. Thus Zulu warfare was not a series of bloody encounters, planning was involved at all times. Rather it was the command and control system which broke down at a tactical level, resulting in uncoordinated and unsuccessful attacks, as at Gingindlovu.¹²⁷

What is the result of the use of this testimony? Does the book succeed in 'seeing the Anglo-Zulu War through Zulu Eyes'? Can a historian successfully hope to do this one hundred years later, using material which has colonial interpreters acting as intermediaries between the past and the present? *Fight Us in the Open* certainly succeeds in moving a step nearer the Zulu perspective of events. It does this because primary material about the British view of the War is no less problematic and secondly works such as *A Zulu King Speaks* and *The James Stuart Archive* offer detailed sources of primary Zulu eyewitness accounts. With the assistance of these, Laband's Zulu are emotional, proactive deliberators who show normative responses to conflict and crisis.

¹²⁶ Ibid., pp. 3-10.

¹²⁷ Ibid., pp. 29-31.

The most important work to emerge was his *Kingdom in Crisis*.¹²⁸ Based on Laband's doctoral dissertation, the book proved that there was much to be stated and concluded from the Zulu participation in the war. For those who advocate one of two extremes, either that the Zulu state responded in a coherent, unified manner to the British threat (authors such as Endfield, Clammer and Barthorp and the producers of *Zulu* and *Zulu Dawn*) or alternatively that Cetshwayo was totally confused and disorganized, being dominated by his 'warlike regiments'¹²⁹, *Kingdom in Crisis* has very different images to offer. It becomes apparent that the Zulu were not superhuman, nor were they suicidal extremists. Their tactics were not totally antiquated (they had learnt from Blood River for example), morale did decline, they were shocked at their casualties and when defeat was obvious, they were prepared to negotiate with the British. Cetshwayo did procrastinate at times but there were logical reasons for this.¹³⁰

Laband also reaffirms the importance of the war itself, as opposed to merely concentrating on the causes and repercussions. It assumes a new significance, in that *Kingdom in Crisis*' analysis showed how the Zulu polity gained and lost from the war. It assisted various senior officials to gain greater autonomy and brought Cetshwayo's senior council into disagreement with him and among themselves. Laband shows that while the Sihayo affair was of great significance as far as the British were concerned, it was also of much importance for the Zulu.¹³¹ Indeed he overturns Edgerton's notion that the war was 'an epic of misunderstanding'¹³², which simplifies the conflict and suggests that in-depth analysis is unnecessary. Significantly, Laband also argues against the notions of continuity expressed

¹²⁸ J. Laband, *Kingdom in Crisis: The Zulu Response to the British invasion of 1879* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1992).

¹²⁹ Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, pp. 273 and 282.

¹³⁰ Laband, *Kingdom in Crisis*, pp. 2-252

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-252.

¹³² Edgerton, *Like Lions They Fought*, p. 5.

above but disagrees fundamentally with Guy and Shula Marks in that he considers the war to have destroyed the Zulu state. For him, the battle of Ulundi had devastating consequences for Cetshwayo's authority and the Zulu war effort¹³³ and modern expressions of Zulu nationalism therefore become a twentieth-century phenomenon. *Kingdom in Crisis* has been criticized on several grounds including failing to come to terms with who the Zulu actually were and not dealing with the role of Zulu women in the war effort adequately.¹³⁴ Indeed it has been suggested that gender tensions within the Zulu state require greater attention.¹³⁵ This notwithstanding, the publication is a very important addition to the analysis of the Zulu during the 1879 war and in the nineteenth century generally.

Since the 1970s then, a body of knowledge about the Zulu has developed in contrast to other representations. As I have already noted above, stressing the differences between different types of knowledge is difficult and of course, future historians will look back at this period of historical production in the academy with a critical perspective. However, in comparison with what was produced before and continues to be used - information derived only from early colonial sources - the reorientation in South African history provided a new means to investigate and debate South African history.

To what extent however, has this debate influenced popular perceptions? Edgerton provides an example of a text which missed the opportunity of breaking away from a traditional approach to the study of the Zulu. It has been argued that the consumer market for academic

¹³³ Laband, *Kingdom in Crisis*, pp. 207-208.

¹³⁴ See for e.g. R. Morrell, Review of *Kingdom in Crisis* in *Journal of Natal and Zulu History* Vol. XIV, 1992-93.

¹³⁵ D. Golan, 'The Life Story of King Shaka and Gender Tensions in the Zulu State' *History in Africa* Vol. 17 (1990).

history is small, while the desire for more popular, public history is growing.¹³⁶ Laband responded to this with his 1995 *Rope of Sand*. His aim with the book was to 'make history accessible' by writing for a wider audience.¹³⁷ The previous year, a non-professional historian utilized the academic research of the preceding decades to write about the Zulu in the twentieth century. Taylor's *Shaka's Children*¹³⁸ made use of the *James Stuart Archive*, as well as ideas of representation drawn from Golan and Martin. Notably it also examined a period of the Zulu past which has often been ignored, namely the mid-twentieth century. Both *Rope of Sand* and *Shaka's Children* aimed at providing a context for the political situation in KwaZulu-Natal in the mid-1990s.¹³⁹

Naturally such works will be perceived by some as merely Eurocentric accounts and that an Afrocentric approach or more specifically an African-authored approach will pay greater dividends in uncovering the Zulu past.¹⁴⁰ The extent to which this notion can be made reality is questionable however. The danger is that it will operate only as a new 'universal paradigm', merely an antithesis of white-centred perspective¹⁴¹ and moreover, if it is viable in the fullest sense, an Afrocentric approach will ignore the academic research discussed above at its peril. The influence of the latter can be seen in certain recently-produced Anglo-Zulu War literature. Anglo-Zulu war literature and military history¹⁴² generally has enjoyed a 'renaissance' in the 1990s and a major reason for this revival is of course the altered political situation but also a

¹³⁶ P. Maylam, 'Tensions within the Practice of History' in *South African Historical Journal* 23 (1995), pp. 10-11.

¹³⁷ 'You can't escape the past' *Sunday Tribune* 5 November 1995.

¹³⁸ S. Taylor, *Shaka's Children: A History of the Zulu People* (London, Harper Collins, 1994).

¹³⁹ See J. Lambert 'Unravelling the Past to Explain the Present? Two Studies in Zulu History' *South African Historical Journal* (34) May 1996 for a comparative review of both books.

¹⁴⁰ See for example J. Maphalala, 'The origin of violence in South Africa with special reference to the Kingdom of Kwazulu (renamed 'KwaZulu-Natal'): a broad perspective'. (Paper presented at the Sixteenth Biennial Conference of the South African Historical Society, July 1997).

¹⁴¹ B. Ashcroft et al, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (London, Routledge, 1989), p. 21.

¹⁴² Parsons 'Imperial History in the Ukay', p. 212.

new level of sophistication among such publications. Greenhill Books for example, has been responsible for producing a growing series of new publications and reprints, an aspect of a renewed interest in Imperial and Colonial Britain.¹⁴³ In July 1996, a computer game *Zuluwar!* was released. It is a combat simulation which allows the player to command either the British or Zulu forces.¹⁴⁴ Working in the same field as Laband but from a more popular perspective is the British author Ian Knight, who has produced a considerable number of books about the war. Knight has acknowledged that popular histories have neglected much of the source material about the war, as well as academic research.¹⁴⁵ Consequently it has been his desire to produce analyses of the war and the Zulu generally with the perspective of both sides.¹⁴⁶ *Brave Men's Blood* for example, is a general work about the Zulu with a focus on the Anglo-Zulu war. Knight avoids beginning his discussion with Shaka, rather he alludes to the arrival of the first inhabitants and the importance of land and resources. In addition Knight offers something of a revised view of Fynn and his colleagues, he includes the names of various Zulu participants in the war and the Zulu approach during the battle of Hlobane in March 1879 is told from the perspective of the approaching Zulu.¹⁴⁷ In his *Nothing Remains but to Fight* an entire chapter is devoted to the Zulu and Knight offers a sound discussion of Zulu tactics.¹⁴⁸

At the same time however, features of earlier popular discourse can be found in Knight's work. He has been criticized for attempting a balanced assessment of both the British and Zulu sides but neglecting Zulu political and strategic options.¹⁴⁹ Moreover there are continued allusions to the more mythological aspects of the Zulu. Shaka continues to be dealt with as the

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 211.

¹⁴⁴ See <http://members.gnn.com/isigames/isiweb> for more information.

¹⁴⁵ See for example Knight, *Brave Men's Blood*, p. 6 and Knight, *Nothing Remains but to Fight*, p. 6.

¹⁴⁶ Knight, *Brave Men's Blood*, p. 9.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 18-166.

¹⁴⁸ See Knight, *Nothing Remains but to Fight*, Ch 5 and pp. 63-105 respectively.

¹⁴⁹ Laband, *Kingdom in Crisis*, p. 1.

'great man'¹⁵⁰, while as noted in Chapter Three, Isandlwana retains its pejorative connotation in the sinister nature of the eclipse and the premonitions of various officers and men in *The Sun Turned Black: Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift - 1879*. Even a painting of the battle specially commissioned for Knight's *The Zulu War Then and Now* offers a heroic, British interpretation of the battle. Fripp's 'Last Stand of the 24th' is replaced by a scene depicting the 'last stand' made by Durnford. The painting and in fact Durnford himself, bear a strong resemblance to heroic portraits of Custer's 'last stand' at the Battle of Little Big Horn three years before Isandlwana¹⁵¹ and subsequently a part of American historical mythology. These aspects of Knight's work suggest that the more mythical conceptions of the Zulu will continue to play a major role in the production of South African history. Nevertheless, although Knight does not incorporate South African historiographical debate into his work directly, he does acknowledge it and consequently his work becomes part of the 'brave new synthesis' of the history of Natal envisaged by Colin Webb in 1989.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ See for e.g. Knight, *Brave Men's Blood*, Ch 17 and Knight and Castle, *Campaign Series No 14 - Zulu War 1879*, p. 6.

¹⁵¹ I. Knight and I. Castle, *The Zulu War Then and Now* (Battle of Britain Prints International, London, 1993), pp. 2-4.

¹⁵² Duminy and Guest, 'Introduction' in *Natal and Zululand*, p. x.

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters, the purpose of this dissertation has been to examine representations of the Zulu as reflected in various types of political, media and literary discourse. The production of images of the Zulu began from the moment of the first Anglo-Zulu encounter in the early nineteenth century. This was expanded by various agencies, including the white settlers themselves. In 1879, the Anglo-Zulu War served to magnify the reputation of the Zulu, setting a trend for image-making which would be developed further in the twentieth century.

During the first part of the twentieth century, the 'native question' dominated the politics of South Africa. A suitable 'native policy' was seen in terms of the formation of a proletariat. The biological racism of this period greatly influenced solutions to this 'question'.

The Anglo-Zulu War meanwhile, stimulated enormous interest, grounded as it was in ideas of heroic masculinity and fascination with warfare. The appearance of Donald Morris' *The Washing of the Spears* and the film Zulu, initiated another chapter in the study of the Zulu, giving rise to a series of publications concentrating specifically on the Anglo-Zulu War. An example here is David Clammer's 1973 book *The Zulu War*. Such works were unconcerned with the historiographical problems of sources. For the most part they merely replicated *The Washing of the Spears* and its predecessors. In so doing, they created often startling images of the Zulu in war. These included concepts of 'savagery and barbarism' which had their origins in Western notions of the danger of 'primitive man'. Moreover the Zulu were only shown in military terms and accordingly were never seen to do anything 'normal'. Every act was abnormal or unusual, designed to assist in waging war.

The deposit of violent and savage images was added to by the film Zulu Dawn and the television series Shaka Zulu and The Line. Despite the appearance of sources such as the *James Stuart Archive* and *A Zulu King Speaks*, as well as more serious academic studies of the War and the Zulu, authors continued to use the same popular interpretations of the War and Zulu 'militarism' into the 1980s and 1990s.

The dissertation has also taken the role of black nationalisms into account and their part in the construction of a Zuluist discourse. The kholwa, the Zulu Royal Family, the first and second Inkatha, Buthelezi and the ANC have all made extensive use of representations of the Zulu in the search for political power.

In the 1990s, normative political protest in KwaZulu-Natal and indeed elsewhere in South Africa, was conceptualized by the media as aggressive marches by 'warrior' groups or 'impis'. Thus the perceived Zulu capacity for violence and resistance was seen to endure into the 1990s. Articles and photographs persistently fostered a view of Zulu belligerence.

Along with the work of academic historians, the continuing investigation of aspects of Zulu history and the history of KwaZulu-Natal - some of it qualifiable research, other shrewd conjecture - has become a necessity in post-apartheid South Africa. Previously such research had argued against Western myth and racial stereotypes but as the country moves towards the next century, it is juxtaposed with commercial image-making. This latter form of 'history' - this ethnic card - has become a profitable 'commodity', a discourse which can be 'traded' in various ways. In the political context of the first half of the 1990s, it was firmly established as

a weapon with which to cajole, persuade, threaten or act, while for the media it was a 'news event' *par excellence* - an opportunity to gather and disseminate information and entertainment at great length. As Guy has observed:

*Responsible research and careful historical judgement has never been more important: generations of history, written for racist political ends, has left a space into which has moved the instant commentator, the foreign expert, the deadline-chasing journalist, the market-driven consultant, the ambitious politician, who try to turn history to their own short term advantage.*¹

This comment is a generalisation and perhaps fails to acknowledge the legitimacy of other historical discourses but the sentiment it expresses, summarises the condition of much of the historical production in contemporary South Africa.

During his February 1994 meeting with De Klerk, Zwelithini stated that the Zulu kingdom had not been formed by white people, the latter had merely found it.² Ostensibly this seemed perfectly true. The nineteenth-century kingdom was not of course created when whites arrived but in another sense, one is led to wonder how much of the original kingdom and the history or myth associated with it, is a textual construct. Moreover, this situation is complicated by the fact that even in 1997, very little can be stated authoritatively about the Zulu before the twentieth century. The media, politicians and business are free to state whatever is appropriate to their cause. The result has been a series of constructions of the South African past. Textuality acquires its own authority and is repeated, despite historical evidence to the contrary.³ This has drawn upon a narrative of the Zulu people created in the nineteenth century and sustained during the twentieth century. 'Militarism'- summed up by images of the bloodbath on the streets - as well as notions of tribalism are, it seems, enduring qualities.

¹ 'Zulu history is being distorted for short-term political gains' *Sunday Times* 17 April 1994.

² 'Three-day dilemma for FW' *Daily News* 15 February 1994.

³ Wylie, 'Violently Representing Shaka', p. 3.

Whether the 'ethnic card' will remain as profitable into the twenty-first century is of course not certain but in the dynamic and fluid political climate of contemporary South Africa, it remains, for the time being at least, a factor not to be underestimated. As the decade draws to a close, moves are underway for reconciliation in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Calls for a greater sense of unity among the IFP, the ANC, Zwelithini and Buthelezi seem to have led to a decline in political representations of the Zulu and in general the hysteria, media and otherwise, surrounding these four roleplayers has quietened.⁴ Moreover, the provinces' newspapers have communicated less about Buthelezi, since he accepted the position of Minister of Home Affairs in the national government. This depoliticization, it was argued, has led to a revival of Zulu traditions. A 'Zulu Renaissance' is bringing former political rivals together and stimulating Zulu culture. The *Mail and Guardian* devoted a lengthy article to this⁵ but this apparent 'revival' of Zuluness was not merely a spontaneous occurrence. The 'revival' was also connected to tourism.

'Tribal' and tourist images have expanded. The Zulu continue to be a source of entertainment. Economically there was a need to move away from the image of the Zulu as 'menacing, spear-carrying warriors' and instead 'project a new, positive image of Zulus [as] peace loving, progressive, outward-looking and, above all, politically mature...'.⁶ In 1996, international tourism was estimated to be worth R800 million per annum for Durban, constituting approximately 50% of its income. KwaZulu-Natal's share of the country's domestic tourist market was the highest of all provinces, a 25% share.⁷ The province's most effective marketing tool is, apparently, its history and culture. In a talk to the province's Hospitality

⁴ See 'Zulu unity call made' *Daily News* 30 September 1996, 'King and IFP move to bury the hatchet' 16 October 1996 and 'Right Royal Reunion' *Sunday Tribune* 20 October 1996.

⁵ 'New culture of hope in KwaZulu' *Mail and Guardian* 18 to 24 July 1997.

⁶ 'Dhlomo urges Zulus to tidy up image' *Daily News* 9 July 1996.

⁷ 'Solution seekers' Supplement to the *Daily News* 25 October 1996.

Hospitality Association, an official of the Hilton Hotel group commented that the Zulu are known throughout the world from images conveyed in the media and film and this should be exploited. He noted that Austria had exploited portrayals of itself in the film The Sound of Music and that culture and heritage were highly effective promotional media. Significantly, these comments confuse culture with its portrayals. As the previous chapters have noted, these sets of images are at odds with one another. The Hilton had been involved in organizing special festivals in target markets overseas, such as one in Egypt with a troupe of Zulu dancers.⁸ A team of South African Police Services Zulu dancers had also traveled overseas, to appear in the 1996 Edinburgh Festival in Scotland.⁹ One of the dancers was a white policeman, reminiscent of Stuart's appearance in the 1924 Wembley Festival. In early 1997, Singapore Airlines flew Zulu dancers to Singapore for a performance.¹⁰ The call to market KwaZulu-Natal's heritage and culture was echoed by Goodwill Zwelithini. He saw interest in Zulu traditions as providing an income for rural areas. The annual Festival of the First Fruits - 'at which [note] nubile young maidens are honoured' - was an example of a tradition which could be integrated into a tourist package.¹¹ In a similar, if more irreverent vein, Zwelithini was apparently supporting moves to build a Zulu royal theme park 'on the scale of Disneyland'. Members of the Royal family would, for example, act as tour guides. The preliminary plans included the construction of the theme park, which was estimated at more than R500 million.¹² Synthetic history continues to be created. This point has not gone unnoticed. Simunye homestead, near Melmoth in Northern Natal, was created as a tourist attraction by Barry Leitch, co-founder of Shakaland. Here he attempted to allow for a better understanding of the local culture. This involved taking its nature, being both contemporary

⁸ 'KwaZulu-Natal's history and culture are its best marketing tools' *Sunday Tribune* 27 October 1996.

⁹ 'The Zulu Bravehearts' *Sunday Tribune* 25 August 1996.

¹⁰ 'Zulu dance features in celebration' *Daily News* 12 March 1997.

¹¹ 'Monarch wants Tourism: Call for Zulu traditions to be marketed' *Mercury* 6 September 1997.

¹² 'Move over Disneyland, welcome Zululand' *Sunday Tribune* 23 February 1997.

and dynamic, into account.¹³ Whether this will succeed and whether it will do so, surrounded by many other attractions, remains to be seen.

Military interest continues unabated. In a number of bookstores and tourist sites, a new documentary, The Zulu Wars, 1879 can be purchased. Part of a military history series, it makes use of computer-generated graphics and re-enactments and attempts to take both British and Zulu perspectives into account. Sensitivity to issues of the Zulu role does apparently exist. In January 1997, in Portsmouth England, an amateur theatre company was banned from staging 'For Valour', a play based on the Battle of Rorke's Drift. It was considered insensitive to 'multi-cultural audiences' as it did not have any black actors in it.¹⁴

In November 1996, Ian Knight was in Durban to give a series of weekly public lectures on the Anglo-Zulu War and to help prepare an exhibition on the war at the Old Court House museum in Aliwal Street. He also led three weekend tours of the battlefields and had assisted in the production of a three part documentary on the Zulu for the Learning Channel in the United States. He commented to the *Sunday Tribune*:

*Overseas interest continues unabated. There are obviously all sorts of problems with overseas tourists - like the violence - but your history and culture are what people want. They can get sunshine and scenery in many other countries, and wildlife in places like Kenya but your history and people are unique. Here I am back again for the umpteenth time, and the phones not stopped ringing, the interest is local as well. There are new books coming out all the time...*¹⁵

The image of Shaka of course lives on. In 1997, the story of Shaka was used in a motivational advert by *Business Day*¹⁶, at least one trainee *isangoma* is possessed by his spirit¹⁷, a proposal

¹³ 'We are one' *Sunday Tribune* 9 April 1995.

¹⁴ 'Big row over Zulu play ban' *Daily News* 7 January 1997.

¹⁵ 'Interest in culture and history of KwaZulu-Natal is strong' *Sunday Tribune* 10 November 1996.

¹⁶ See *Sunday Times* 7 September 1997.

¹⁷ 'Possessed by Shaka's spirit' *UDW Update*, Vol. 1, No. 7, 1997.

has been made to place a large statue of him overlooking Durban harbour as a tourist attraction¹⁸ and he has been revisited by film. In November 1997, the SABC has been rebroadcasting the Shaka Zulu television series. Perhaps the apparent decline in the direct political usage of the Zulu image suggested to the SABC that rebroadcasting the series - at a time when the corporation is rebroadcasting a number of television series to reduce costs - would avoid political tensions. Plans were also underway for a new 'Shaka film', The Citadel. In 1993 Bill Faure had been approached by an American company to produce a new feature film based on the television series.¹⁹ By 1996 plans were in an advanced stage. The plot according to newspaper reports will take a fresh slant on the story, following Shaka's capture by slave traders, his escape and his efforts to avert war between his 'tribe' and the white colonists.²⁰ In June 1997 Josh Sinclair, involved in this project as well, visited KwaZulu-Natal's southern coast in search of suitable locations.²¹ Should this come to fruition it will be most interesting to see if the criticism levelled against the previous series has been heeded and alterations made. However with a US company in charge and the film destined for the box office, the likelihood of problems being repeated remains very high.²²

There is even a fictional Zulu detective. The character of Jon Zulu was created for a series of books about a black detective based in New York. Thought was also being given to filming the books by an American company.²³ Having the name 'Zulu' would have meant good sales.

¹⁸ 'Giant King Shaka statue' *Gateway to Tourism Supplement, Daily News* 20 November 1997.

¹⁹ *The Sunday Tribune*, 18 July 1993.

²⁰ 'Network to attempt Shaka' *Timeout Supplement Daily News* 11 March 1996.

²¹ 'Shaka Zulu sequel planned' *Mercury* 23 June 1997.

²² For more on these issues, see 'Return of the loincloth' *Mail and Guardian* 15 to 21 August 1997. By October 1997, the production had already run into financial difficulties, see 'Shaka Zulu grinds to a halt' *Sunday Tribune* 5 October 1997.

²³ 'Zulu's the name - Jon Zulu' *Timeout Supplement Daily News* 29 January 1996.

When preparing to publish his *The Zulu Aftermath*, Omer-Cooper had been advised to include the name 'Zulu' in the title, as this would ensure it sold well.²⁴

In September 1997, the *Sunday Tribune* reported on the annual reed dance at Nongoma, near Ulundi.²⁵ The article began with the words 'Time seems to stand still in rural Zululand'. Written by a black journalist, these words reflect the extent to which the traditional image of the Zulu is omnipresent. Quite clearly time does not stand still but the lure of the ethnographic present with its bare-breasted dancers (as shown in a photograph accompanying the article, see the illustrations) and 'warriors', shows the continuity of 'Zooluology', not in the sense that Zulu nationalists use it but in the way the Zulu continue to be portrayed.

²⁴ Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, p. 151.

²⁵ 'Reeds and rites' *Sunday Tribune* 28 September 1997.

APPENDIX A

R.C.A. Samuelson's poem, translated by Harry Lugg.

FORWARD! FORWARD! FORWARD!

Bayede, King George, Where is he?
The Black House of Zulu. Where is it?
You greet those of the Zulu, but what has become of them?
Useless braggarts, loafers, self seekers and the worthless.

Ye waverers, irresolute in attack.
Are you satisfied to be with them?
This is the voice of Zulu.

The rallying call of Bayede, King George,
Has reached all parts of the world seen by the sun.
All have responded.
But the Zulus and Natal remain.

Answer an urgent call,
Manhood of Zulu and Natal,
That disgrace may not befall you,
You scions of a Black race.

Old women wallow (with grief) in ashes,
Churls, cowards, shirkers, and the worthless,
Only the brave share royal honours.

The sons of Malandela's Zulus were wont to declare:-

"Awo! Awo! Awo!"

"The King's cattle are with the Basutos". (In the hands of the enemy demanding recovery).

We should now declare:-

"The Germans, the filth of the earth. Destroy them".

FORWARD! FORWARD! FORWARD!

Sons of Zulu and Malandela.

A country's welfare is sustained only by fealty to one's King.
Nothing less is the reward of slackers.

This is for you, our warring men!
Bayede, King George is calling you.

(Source: J.S. Marwick Papers)

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