(Re)reading the Narratives of Political Violence in South Africa:
Indigenous founding myths & frontier violence as discourse

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This paper is a report of work-in-progress on narratives of political violence in South Africa which in turn is part of a larger project on democracy and violence as discourse (undertaken in collaboration with David Apter). The larger project involves the theorisation of democracy and violence with reference to the master narrative of democratic inclusion; it is also concerned with applied studies including these re-readings of particular narratives of political violence in South African history.

To what extent is it possible to discern sustained narrative shapes or even some overall trajectory in the history of South African political violence? Obviously South Africa has a long and varied history of political violence, but that is a different question. The mere accumulation of a large number of incidents of violence, in a certain area, could simply amount to the proliferation of *random violence*, and not to a shared narrative of violence taken up by local communities or social movements and sustained over longer periods of time. Similarly, the *instrumental uses of violence*, even when mobilised in battles and wars wreaking large scale death and destruction, are by definition subservient to strategic purposes serving ulterior ends. This is a qualitatively different matter from that violence as discourse which is my present concern, i.e. violence which retrieve earlier events and project future outcomes, bringing about the exegetical bonding of groups or movements as discourse communities committed to overcoming projects.An investigation of possible *narratives of political violence* in South African history is thus quite different from an attempt to provide a general or comprehensive account of (political) violence in South Africa from pre-colonial times to the present. However, that more general history of (political) violence certainly provides the background and context for an investigation which needs to be situated in relation to the main periods and processes of South African history.

From pre-colonial times and even more as a colonial and post-colonial society South Africa has had a long and bitter history of political violence. That history may be traced through a number of different stages and contexts from the pre-colonial period and the colonial encounter to the partial and belated arrival of modernity along with primary industrialisation and modern state formation. A comprehensive history of political violence would include at least the following:

* an account of *pre-colonial political violence:* the uses and significance of wars and violence within and between indigenous societies;
* an account of *colonial political violence:* the ways in which colonial settlement and "encroachments" on land utilised by indigenous peoples inevitably involved force and violence, while the spread of *trekboer* communities into the interior could be secured only by the deployment of corporate violence in the form of *commandos*, including a virtual extermination campaign against the hunter-gatherer San peoples by the end of the 18th century;
* an account of the *violence of slavery:* for close on 200 years the Cape colony was a slave society based on violence as much as on a pervasive paternalism, while forced labour practices persisted much longer still;
* an account of *frontier violence and colonial conquest:* the first conflicts between *trekboers* and Xhosa on the Eastern Cape frontier in the 1780s led to a century and more of "frontier wars" (in part concurrent with the internecine "holocaust" or *Mfecane* uprooting settled communities in the interior from the 1820s) which eventually concluded with the violent conquest of the Zulu, BaSotho, Pedi, Tshwana and other indigenous communities;

* an account of the *violence of settler resistance* to British imperial rule culminating in the South African War of 1899-1902;
* an account of modern *state violence:* during the 20th century the modern South African state brought the coercive imposition of minority rule and "White supremacy" in the face of urban-based political protest as well as "hidden struggles" in the rural areas;
* an account of *apartheid violence:* the structural and systematic violence involved in the imposition of apartheid legislation as well as the overt uses of force and violence ;
* an account of the belated turn to *violence in anti-apartheid resistance:* the anti-apartheid struggles of the second half of the 20th century evolved from political protest to popular insurrection and the "armed struggle";
* an account of the *violence of the security state*:
* an account of the *violence of the transition:*
* an account of the persistence of *violence in post-apartheid democracy:*

The question is whether all of this violent history was simply that of random violence and of endemic strife, a succession of arbitrary and irrational conflicts. At a macro-level one answer is provided by the *master narrative* of violence and democratic inclusion. It is possible to discern, at least from the vantage point of the present, a certain overall shape and thrust to the sequence of violent events and conflicts which went into the making of South African history, culminating in the recent transition to post-apartheid democracy. Importantly though, this is not just a retrospective and anachronistic projection of current norms and values onto the past. Rather, it was precisely this master narrative of democratic inclusion which so long informed the mainstream of anti-apartheid opposition and resistance during the modern period, both in it's initial commitment to non-violent and constitutional politics and in it's later turn to political violence and the armed struggle. It must be added, though, that this master narrative of violence and democracy by no means covers all of the many kinds and forms of political violence we have just listed in outline above. Rather, some of these were informed by a variety of different narratives of violence, at both micro- and macro-levels. In local contexts rival versions of violent events and conflicts were sustained in communal memories and oral histories. Some of these were taken up in the larger narratives of the colonial state or incipient nationalist movements. In many ways these contested the significance of key events, or construed these in different ways, compared to the master narrative of democratic inclusion.

This raises some quite general questions: What is the genealogy of that master narrative: when and how was it articulated, and by whom? What was its relation to other and alternative narratives of political violence, both at the micro- and at macro-levels? This section will only attempt a sketch of the former questions with reference to the pre-modern and colonial period and the discourses of frontier violence.

2.Narratives of Political Violence in the Pre-Modern and Colonial Period

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2.1 Indigenous founding myths: The Xhosa story of Tshawe and the Zulu Story of Shaka

Unlike many other parts of the world the indigenous peoples of Southern Africa did not contribute some great epic celebrating heroic feats of valour and combat/warfare. This does not mean that war or violence was unknown in traditional and pre-colonial societies. Thus the Khoikhoi people of the Cape, though not a martial people "who did not admire valor nearly as much as wealth or success in the hunt ... nonetheless ... fought many wars among themselves, and these were fought vigorously and not without incidents of brutality"[1]. Notably combat also had ceremonial and expressive features: the Khoikhoi, Elphick notes,

"were very keen on mock combats" and had "a deeply ingrained zeal for vendettas ... (or) feuds that were passed down from one generation to the next"[2]. Peires gives a comparable account of warfare among the Xhosa people during the "heroic age": all Xhosa men were also warriors who learned to fight with sticks and spears and usually marked their coming-of-age by a daring exploit such as a cattle raid. "Raids and counter-raids were frequent, but wars were relatively rare ... (and) tended to be relatively bloodless"[3]. The conduct of warfare was deeply imbued by notions of magic with "wardoctors" (*ithola* or *igoga*) involved in applying appropriate charms or "war medicine". Again, Peires notes the discursive features of Xhosa warfare: "the Xhosa attempted to express themselves in war, to personalise it, to communicate with the enemy through it"[4]. Accounts of tribal clashes among the pre-Shakan Nguni give a similar depiction of ritualised confrontations by warriors which were not especially destructive or violent in extent[5].

These pre-colonial features of violence and warfare reflected the different imperatives of state-formation under African conditions of low population densities and easy access to open land. According to Jeffrey Herbst, the consolidation of state formations in Africa focused on control over people rather than territory in contrast to the European model of territorial conquest in which wars made the state, as the latter developed capacities to raise taxes and armies: "Due to low population densities and the large amount of open land in Africa, wars of territorial conquest ... have seldom been a significant aspect of the continent's history. In pre-colonial Africa, the primary object of warfare, which was continual in many places, was to capture people and treasure, not land which was available to all"[6]. In the case of the Southern and Eastern Cape, indigenous communities ranged from hunter-gatherers ('San') and transhumant pastoralists ('Khoikhoi') to pastoralist-cultivators ('Xhosa') none of which had developed concentrated urban settlements or territorial states. Crais describes a spectrum in communal identity-formation and emergent authority structures. At the one end of this spectrum we find 'San' communities: autonomous bands of hunter-gatherers typically consisting of a few families which "did not customarily pay tribute to other bands: they lived neither under a chief nor constituted the tributary appendages of a state ... Political structure remained for the most part local and egalitarian .... Everyone had equal access to a landscape filled with symbolic meaning"[7]. The transhumant pastoralists or 'Kkhoikhoi' communities likewise did not practice tribute and also gave all members equal access to available pasturage and water but unlike hunter-gatherers "Khoikhoi employed principles of unilineal descent and began to develop, in some places, the institution of chiefship"[8]. Their settlements typically were larger than the transient camps of hunter-gatherers, they exhibited marked inequalitiess of wealth and status and to varying degrees began to develop centralised authority structures though "hereditary chiefship never emerged as a powerful institution among the Khoikhoi"[9]. At the other end of this spectrum pastoralist-cultivators or 'Xhosa' communities "introduced new 'recipes' of authority which extended far beyond the confines of their patri-local settlement (*umzi*)"[10]. Elaborating on a pre-existing institution of hereditary chiefship a more centralised polity emerged around the paramountcy of the Tshawe clan during the "era of big men". However, "even during the reign of a strong paramount such as Phalo, the Xhosa polity remained, at best, a weak segmentary state"[11].

In the absence of strong centralized states monopolising the legitimate use of violence a corresponding lack of dominant narratives of political violence may be expected. In these non-literate societies the transmission of oral histories were likewise not yet institutionalised in stable and centrally coordinated ways. Even the traditional practice of praise poetry was not necessarily tied in with the position of the chief and his authority. In their definitive study of *Power and the Praise Poem* Leroy Vail and Landeg White stress that the role of praise poetry in the politically centralised societies which developed in the wake of the Zulu conquest state from the early 19th century were actually exceptions to the rule: "Court praise poets exist in only a minority of the societies of south-central Africa. ... Oral poetry is, by its very nature, public poetry and its range as wide as a society's concerns. Some of it deals directly with military

events or political hierarchies. ... Much of it deals with the moral significance of events, and hence with religious truths or assertions of identity"[12]. Given this more diffuse and egalitarian elaboration of oral traditions we may look to the *foundation myths* of indigenous societies such as the Xhosa for their narrative accounts of the role of violence in incipient state-formation. Foundation myths of this kind need to be understood as political myths; they are related to, but also distinct from, sacred myths in general[13]. While sacred myths tend to derive from ancient or primitive societies with no significant political experience, political myths, in Tudor's view, are a feature of more advanced societies. Indeed, foundation myths, such as the classic Roman Foundation Myth in the story of Romulus and Remus, are precisely concerned with the transition from traditional kinship associations or other localised communal forms to state-building with the founding of a more inclusive political society[14]. As such foundation myths provide narrative accounts of the origins of particular political societies which should be read, not as historical evidence of actual events which may or may not have taken place, but rather for the self-understanding of those societies of their own foundings as passed on from one generation to the next.

The story of Tshawe

The story of Tshawe is the foundation myth of the Xhosa kingdom. Peires describes the story of how the amaTshawe became the paramount clan among the Xhosa as "probably the best known and most widely spread of all Xhosa traditions"[15]. In terms of Xhosa genealogical lineage the story of Tshawe may at best be speculatively dated to "some time before 1675"[16], but its significance is less as evidence for historical reconstruction than in what it tells us of basic Xhosa political conceptions. In form the story belongs to a common stereotype, or what an older literature on oral traditions termed *Wandersagen,* that of the prodigal son or young prince who had fled his country but then returns, slays his enemies and takes power to found a new and more powerful dynasty. According to Vansina this motif is known throughout the Great Lakes region in Central Africa and is found among the Ganda, Nyoro, Rwanda and Rundi[17]. A summary account by a 19th century informant in the Cape Archives brings out the extent to which the story of Tshawe's conquest is crucially a tale of how Tshawe violently destroyed the autonomy of the various pre-existing clans (*izizwe)* in order to establish his kingdom:

> There were various clans *(izizwe*) who were distinct in their greatnes and their kingship. These used to rule themselves over there, like the amaTipa, the amaNgwevu, the amaQocwa, the amaCete, the amaNgqosini and the amaNkabane. These clans stood alone and were ruling themselves long ago. They were abolished by fighting (*bagqugqiswa ngokulwa)* by Tshawe, they were overcome so that they became one nation[18]

The more detailed narrative provided by the first Xhosa historian, J.H. Soga, shows that it is also a story of deception, fraternal violence and usurpation[19]. The key events in the narrative are: Tshawe's departure or flight from his father Nkosiyamntu's domain, leaving his brother Cira as rightful heir in place: the young Tshawe's training in military life among his mother's people and assumption of the customary leadership of the nucleus of a new clan; the mature Tshawe's return, "ostensibly to visit his father", to find his heir Cira in power; Tshawe's incorporation along the way of "numbers of broken men from other tribes" into his retinue; Tshawe's settling down for a while, waiting for some sufficient excuse to engage in a trial of strength with his elder brothers; Tshawe's refusal to give Cira a portion of the bluebuck he killed during a general hunt as the tribute due to the principal chief; the subsequent fraternal war between the followers of Tshawe and those of his brothers Cira and Jwara; Tshawe's overthrow of his brothers in the course of the war in alliance with neighbouring tribes such as the Pondomise; Tshawe's successful usurpation of the paramount chieftainship of the Xhosas while even the rightful chief Cira "ignobly elected to stay under the usurper's rule"; the demotion of the amaCira, though of royal blood, to a broken clan holding no position of authority among the Xhosa while the amaTshawe became recognised as the paramount clan of the Xhosa Kingdom.

If the story of Tshawe poses numerous problems for the purposes of historical reconstruction[20], its significance as a foundation myth provides some fascinating themes for interpretation. Thus, as Peires also notes, it reflects a distinct consciousness of the heterogenous origins of Xhosa society which "expanded and incorporated rather than migrated"[21]. The incorporation of the "broken men from other tribes" may well refer to the fate of the San and Khoi peoples, the autochthonous inhabitants of parts of the eastern Cape. Especially notable, though, is the representation of Tshawe's accession to power not only as a story of deception and usurpation, departing from customary practice, but also one of fighting and violence, indeed of fraternal war. As the foundation myth of the Xhosa kingdom this is no straightforward legitimation of the paramount Tshawe's position as that of the original and rightful ruler; on the contrary, the story presents him as a usurper and conqueror whose ascent to power required the violent defeat of his brother, who had been the rightful heir. In more general terms, what the story of Tshawe seems to be implying is that the founding of the Xhosa kingdom was contrary to customary affiliations and also involved a violent break with natural affinities ("a war among brothers"). Unlike the customary unit of the local clan (*izizwe)*, the founding of the more inclusive political unit of the kingdom and of the Xhosa nation required a violent conflict with brothers fighting brothers; conversely, this most "unnatural" violence of fraternal warfare must retrospectively be valued as nothing less than the founding action of the kingdom itself. Strangely the story of Tshawe does not seem to be concerned at all with conventional moral and political justifications for the legitimate use of violence; instead, it appears to represent the violence of fraternal war and usurpation as constitutive in the founding of legitimate rule itself. However, if the story of Tshawe handed down in Xhosa oral history served to retrieve the constitutive significance of violence in the founding of the Xhosa kingdom, it also effectively domesticated this violence. At least, there is no indication that this narrative of political violence also served to project certain future outcomes or was harnessed to some overcoming project. No doubt this had a great deal to do with the historical fate of the Xhosa kingdom due to the external forces of colonial settlement and conquest. By the late 19th century the pre-colonial Xhosa kingdom founded by Tshawe was increasingly a memory only and no longer a viable political reality; some generations before that the relevance of these primordial events of fraternal violence in the makings of the amaTshawe paramountcy had been overtaken by the very different imperatives of frontier violence in resistance to colonial and imperial conquest (see below 2.4).

A comparison: the story of Romulus and Remus

It is difficult not to be reminded of the striking similarities between the story of Tshawe and other foundation myths, in particular the Roman foundation myth. The classic story of Romulus and Remus, too, was a narrative of political violence, and specifically of fraternal strife in the very founding of the Roman Republic. A brief comparison of some key elements in these analogous narratives may be illuminating, even more in their significant differences than in their common features. Thus, unlike Tshawe and his brothers, it is significant that Romulus and Remus actually were twins who initially cooperated in fraternal harmony; moreover, the killing of Remus amounted to fratricide while both Cira and Jwara survived, Cira in submission and Jwara moving away. Crucially the story of Tshawe was about succession, and hence about usurpation, while that of Romulus and Remus concerns the original founding of Rome antecedent to issues of succession and legitimacy. Accordingly the extreme violence of fratricide is more central to the Roman foundation myth compared to the violent usurpation at the core of the Xhosa founding story. Still, it remains a striking similarity that both stories are narratives of violent strife between brothers at the founding moment of the Kingdom / Republic. But we should be careful not to read some common archetypal and ahistoric structural motif into these narratives. Two recent critical studies have closely investigated the narrative origins of the Roman story of Romulus and Remus,

bringing out its particular (and changing) historical settings and varying political and social significance over time. In a masterful study of textual analysis and historical reconstruction, *Remus: a Roman Myth,* Wiseman dismissed any notion of a "primordial sacrifice" by "cosmic twins"as the founding moment of political society[22]. Instead he carefully locates the key elements of the story in relation to specific events in the history of the Roman Republic, in particular the Consular dual sharing of power between patricians and plebeians introduced from 360 BC followed by the events of the crisis of Roman ascendancy in 296-295 BC. The former development accounted for the answer to the primary question why the founding narrative involved a story of twins: "The establishment of explicit power-sharing between patricians and plebeians in the fourth century BC provides the necessary condition for the creation of the story of the twins"[23]. However, this still left open the more crucial question concerning the killing of Remus, especially since no other story of twins involved the killing of one while the other goes on to a heroic career[24]. Wiseman finds the answer to this most basic question of narrative significance in the events of the terrible crisis for Roman survival some decades after the introduction of patrician/plebeian power-sharing: "In the terrible crisis of 296-295 BC, the ideological tensions were still there, personified in the two consuls who fought the battle of Sentinum: Fabius Rullianus, the victor, and the plebeian Decius Mus, whose self-sacrifice allegedly turned the tide of battle"[25]. Wiseman's reading of the Roman foundation myth is thus that, during the critical decades of the final stages of the internal "struggle of the orders" which also saw the Roman conquest of Italy, a series of political events served to generate legendary analogues in the Romulus and Remus story, from the origins of the twins to the sacrificial death of Remus and Romulus' rule as sole king[26]. In a complementary study exploring the key role of social and political notions of fraternity in Roman culture, *The Brothers of Romulus*, Cynthia Bannon stresses how the different retellings of the story of Romulus and Remus focused on two events in particular representing the two poles of fraternal symbolism: their early harmonious cooperation as shepherds before they founded the city and the later violent conflict and fratricide in building the walls of the city[27]. In this regard the relevant historical context, she adds, was also that of the series of civil wars during the 1st century B.C: "As the civil wars ran their course, fratricide came to mean *the* fratricide, Romulus' murder of his brother Remus at the moment when Rome was founded. Romans saw in this original fratricide a paradigm for the civil wars which eroded what we might call the social contract among Roman citizens and the fraternal sentiments that united them. But the foundation story did not present a simple fable of discord. Because the twins' story involved both fraternal cooperation and fratricide, the foundation myth represented both the good and the bad in Rome's political experience"[28]. It will be clear that the underlying historical and political experience of the Xhosa was markedly different to that of the Roman Republic in that we find no analogues for the introduction of institutions of power-sharing, or of a sacrificial sacrifice securing political survival, or of a series of civil wars threatening the basic civic accord. Despite the ostensible similarities in the two stories of fraternal strife around the founding of the Kingdom / Republic, these differences in their respective underlying historical experiences must thus account for the distinctive features and their political significance of each founding story. What the two foundation myths do have in common, though, is a similar understanding of the constitutive significance of political violence in the making of the state.

The story of Shaka

With the story of Shaka and the founding of the Zulu kingdom we move from the domain of oral history regarding pre-colonial times to the thresholds of colonial history. While Tshawe and his brothers are known only from the accounts handed down in Xhosa oral tradition, Shaka is a historical figure whose birth (1787), accession to the Zulu chieftainship (1816) and death (1828) can be dated with some confidence. Nor do we have to rely on Zulu oral traditions only but these can be complemented with eyewitness accounts of his reign by some of the earliest European adventurers and traders to venture into

the Natal area from the 1820s, such as Henry Fynn, Nathaniel Isaacs and Charles Rawden Maclean. We might perhaps expect that this would make it easier to distinguish the material of legend and myth from documented historical events. But that is by no means the case. On the contrary, in this narrative of violence, "history" and legend have become inextricably fused. The story of Shaka has been firmly established in a substantial historical, popular and dramatic literature with a wealth of dramatic and personal details elaborating the main stages in his violent rise, reign and death[29]. But there is little, if anything, in these established accounts whose provenance and authenticity have not been contested, at the time or by later historians and critics. The literature on Shaka is in fact a peculiar hybrid: on the one hand it emphatically claims to be rooted in authentic Zulu oral traditions, while on the other hand critical scrutiny soon reveals the figure of Shaka as an evident construct of colonial and popular stereotypes serving hidden agendas and aimed at quite different audiences – though key elements of this, in turn, has been appropriated by modern Zulu nationalism. It constitutes a paradoxical symbiosis amounting, in the words of Dan Wylie, to "a projection of white mythography reabsorbed into the Zulus' own sense of identity"[30]. More recently the story of Shaka has become the object of a revisionist and deconstructive historiography which has left few stones unturned in exposing the dubious evidentiary basis as well as the hidden agendas and partisan perspectives of the material on which the established accounts rely[31]. On all sides, though, these remain narratives of the extraordinary political violence involved in the rise of the Zulu Kingdom, even if the origins, nature and significance of that violence may vary greatly in the different accounts or critical deconstructions.

Among the key themes and events in the established story of Shaka the following typically figure prominently: Shaka's illegitimate birth as the eldest son of the Zulu chief Senzangakhona and his exiled and unhappy youth among his mother Nandi's clan; Shaka's rise and feats as a young warrior in the service of the neighbouring Mthetwa chief Dingiswayo; Shaka's return to become chief of the Zulu following the death of his father and his alleged involvement in the killing of the appointed heir, his brother Sigujana; Shaka's innovations in Zulu warfare, especially the introduction of the short stabbing spear in close combat and the development of new battle formations; Shaka's development of the *amabutho* or age-regiments into a disciplined army at his disposal and their famous victories over the Mthetwa and Ndwande to establish Zulu supremacy; Shaka's systematic acts of cruelty and inhumanity in revenge on his enemies and in sustaining his arbitrary rule; Shaka's success in extending the sway of the Zulu conquest state throughout the region, crushing many communities and incorporating others; his practice of "total war" (*impi ebomvu)* unconstrained by customary moral and cultural inhibitions; his confrontation with, and exposure of, the witchdoctors; his probable involvement in the death of his own mother Nandi; his deliberate avoidance of designating heirs so as to pre-empt succession conflicts; and finally his own assassination by his brothers Dingane and Mhlangane[32] Along with the closely related narrative of the *Mfecane*, which traced the great populations migrations and the destructive spread of inter-necine conflict and violence throughout the interior of South Africa during the early decades of the 19th century back to their supposed origins in the "Shakan revolution"(see section 2.2 below), this story of Shaka and the rise of the Zulu Kingdom has become one of the mainstays in popular accounts of South African politics and history. But, just as the evidentiary basis for the prevailing historical accounts of the *Mfecane* has been challenged by revisionist historians like Julian Cobbing, so virtually every aspect of this established story of Shaka has been contested and deconstructed by critical literary analysts like Dan Wylie. Wylie concludes both that it is not possible to verify the basis of *any* of the elements of the Shakan story as a matter of historical fact[33] and that the literary and narrative portrayals of Shaka are the systematic product of colonial and white stereotypes combined with available literary tropes and genres[34].

For our purposes we may well grant this radical deconstructive challenge to the established story of Shaka in the prevailing literature and historiography. But even if it can convincingly be shown that the

various elements of the story in this literature, if not outright fiction and/or stereotypical projection, are governed by hidden political agendas, underlying cultural preconceptions and operative literary conventions, then it might still seem that there are two other ways in which we could recover the "real" story of Shaka, or verify its historical truth. Firstly, what about the contemporary eyewitness accounts that have come down to us as part of the historical record? And secondly, what about Zulu oral tradition itself? In different ways these should surely provide the benchmarks against which claims to historical truth and/or authenticity of the story of Shaka could be assessed. The surprising answers are that the supposedly primary sources are actually deeply problematic, and that there is no unmediated access available to any "authentic" Zulu oral tradition. Let us briefly consider each of these in turn. This will prepare the ground for addressing the main historical and political problems posed by the story of Shaka.

Firstly, the contemporary eyewitness accounts. Among the most influential sources for the story of Shaka are such works as Nathaniel Isaacs' *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa*, originally published in 1836, and *The Diary of Henry Francis Fynn*, only published in 1950 but purporting to be based on Fynn's experiences among the Zulus in Natal between 1824 and 1834. To these may now be added *The Natal Papers of 'John Ross'*, actually the work of Charles Rawden Maclean who had spent 10 years as a youth living in Shaka's court[35]. These accounts are presented as contemporaneous primary sources, and have long been accepted as such. However, critical investigation has now shown that Isaacs, for example, was not only a highly dubious and disreputable adventurer with ulterior motives for publication, but also that he was semi-literate, "deficient in education" and put his book together years later with the assistance of unknown ghost-writer(s)[36]. Similarly, closer examination by Julie Pridmore has shown Fynn's *Diary* to be an unreliable source, written in the 1850s rather than the 1830s, and involving other contributors apart from Fynn[37]. For his part Wylie concludes from his detailed reconstruction of the production-history of Fynn's published *Diary* that this had been fashioned by his editors almost a century later into a work quite different from the original in substance as well as in presentation[38]. Maclean's pseudonymous work offers an intriguingly different perspective to the better known publications of Isaacs and Fynn but show a pervasive "discontinuity between the memories of the ten-year-old and the maturer, better-informed reading of the man"[39] a good decade later. If these later publications are all highly problematic as putative contemporary eyewitness accounts, there remain some actual contemporaneous accounts by Fynn and James King which appeared in the Cape press during the 1820s. These have been critically investigated by Carolyn Hamilton showing that significantly different images of Shaka were presented by the traders at various times from 1824 in trying to promote their own interests in terms of their readings of the changing circumstances both in the Cape and in Natal[40]. These accounts were calculated to fashion that image of Shaka in the Cape which might best advance the traders' own projects in relation to Natal. Thus King's initial reports in the *South African Commercial Advertiser* in 1826 were notably positive, praising the Zulu king and describing Shaka as "obliging, charming, and pleasant, stern in public but good-humored in private, benevolent, and hospitable"[41]. But these were then followed by negative reports demonising Shaka, suggesting that he was a "despotic and cruel monster"[42] and dwelling on his murderous acts and violence. In large part these and subsequent vaccilations and contradictory representations can be traced to changes in the Cape traders' assessment of what their own interests required in the circumstances[43]. Hamilton is concerned to argue that "the traders' productions were not simply manifestations of the view of Shaka that most directly suited their material interests, but were also shaped by the form and content of the various African views they encountered and with which they intersected during their stay in Natal"[44]. With this we are referred back to the second possible source for contemporaneous accounts from which the "real" story of Shaka might be recovered, that of the African voices in the Zulu oral tradition itself.

The basic problem with referring to Zulu oral tradition as an authentic source for the story of Shaka is

that, by the nature of things, we do not have any direct access to this tradition at the time of Shaka himself, but at best to recorded versions of the praise poems (*izibongo*) which came about at later times, and in variously mediated ways. Even though the content of these *izibongo* were committed to memory by the praise-singer (*imbongi*) and passed on from one generation to the next, and the *imbongi* were not supposed to vary the praises associated with particular chiefs[45], the recorded versions can not be taken at face value as time capsules pristinely delivered from the distant past but inevitably also reflect the concerns of the recorder and the conditions under which they were recorded.[46] Shaka's *izibongo* were not recorded during his own lifetime. Vail and White points out that in the published record of Zulu *izibongo* Shaka first appeared in the praises of Dingane recorded in 1842 and that "unsurprisingly, Shaka is execrated as a tyrant, while Dingane, his assassin, is hailed as a deliverer"[47]. Other instances of the Shakan oral tradition were recorded by Grout in the 1850s, by Samuelson during the reign of Cetshwayo, by Bryant and most systematically by James Stuart around 1900. The "standard" version of Shaka's praise poems published by Trevor Cope, *Izibongo: Zulu Praise-poems* (1968), is actually a compilation of over thirty different performances collected by Stuart[48]. Critical analysis shows that this oral tradition can by no means be collapsed into a single "Zulu voice" surviving unchanged from the 1820s into the 20th century[49]. On the contrary, there is ample evidence of the impact, directly and indirectly, of the various succession crises marking Zulu history over this period while Stuart's recording of the oral tradition also includes some hostile voices and perspectives derived from communities such as the Qwabe who had been brutally vanquished and incorporated by Shaka. Taking all this into account, Hamilton argues that it remains possible to identify and reconstruct elements of distinctive Zulu oral traditions dating back to the time of Shaka's reign in the 1820s. The three accounts analysed by Hamilton (including the hostile version derived from a Qwabe informant) differ in significant ways from each other but also demonstrate substantial areas of agreement, not least on Shaka being the son of Senzangakhosa though offering different accounts of his precise "illegitimate" status. Significantly, too, none of these accounts, including those from informants with more positive allegiances to Shaka, sought to deny the "atrocity incidents", though offering different explanations for them[50]. Hamilton's conclusions are that Shaka-the-monster was not just a colonial invention: "Shaka was portrayed in the 1820s as a tyrant and even an inhuman monster both by oral historians who supported him and by those who opposed him"[51]. Already at this time the Zulu oral traditions shared a profound ambivalence in their depiction of him: "In all the versions, Shaka is always the embodiment of both [order and chaos]: at once `the violently unrestrained one' who fathered no children, and the highly accomplished leader who imposed rigorous discipline ... The equation of Shaka's `monstrous' features with transcendent political authority was a shared characteristic of all the traditions"[52]. What Hamilton's reconstructions demonstrate is that, even if it may be possible to recover some elements or versions of the story of Shaka rooted in oral traditions going back to his own time, then these are essentially contested and ambivalent: they do *not* amount to anything like an "original" version of the story of Shaka authenticated by Zulu oral tradition itself.

This brings us to the main problems posed by the story of Shaka as a narrative of political violence. For our purposes the question is not that of the "historical" truth of this story, i.e. what particular events, or aspects of Shaka's personality and reign, can be verified on the basis of the available evidence. Our question rather concerns the discursive significance of this story of Shaka itself, and its continuing relevance and implications for later Zulu and South African history. The first thing that needs to be said, is that this founding story of the Zulu kingdom is crucially a narrative of violence, indeed of an extreme violence transcending the bounds of custom and civility. Compared to the story of Tshawe, which also recognised the constitutive significance of violence in the founding of the Xhosa kingdom, the story of Shaka is not one in which that founding violence has been domesticated. On the contrary, the terrifying Shakan *Izibongo* are vivid testimony of the disruptive and destructive force of the violence represented by Shaka:

"The young viper grows as it sits,
Always in a great rage,
With a shield on its knees.
He who while devouring some devoured others,
And as he devoured others he devoured some more;
He who while devouring some devoured others,
And as he devoured others he devoured some more;
He who while devouring some devoured others,
And as he devoured others he devoured some more;
He who while devouring some devoured others,
And as he devoured others he devoured some more;
He who while devouring some devoured others,
And as he devoured others he devoured some more ...[53]

Or, with more specific reference to actual campaigns and battles of Shaka:

The attacker has long been attacking them:
He attacked Phungashe of the Buthelezi clan,
He attacked Sondaba of Mthanda as he sat in council,
He attacked Macingwane at Ngonyameni,
He attacked Mangcengeza of the Mbatha clan,
He attacked Dladlama of the Majolas,
He attacked Nxaba son of Mbhekane,
He attacked Gambushe in Pondoland,
He attacked Faku in Pondoland.[54]

Shaka's violence is represented as like that of some great natural disaster. "He is described most often as a `roaring fire' and a `rushing wind'"[55] Equally evident is the destructive impact of this great violence on other human beings and social relations:

He who traveled across to Ndima and Mgovu
And women who were with child gave birth easily;
The newly planted crops they left still short,
The seed they left amongst the maize-stalks,
The old women were left in the abandoned sites,
The old men were left along the tracks,
The roots of the trees looked up at the sky[56].

In one place the *Izibongo* even includes a momentary protest of Shaka's indiscriminate violence even against his own mother's people:

King, you are wrong because you do not discriminate,
Because even those of your maternal uncle's family you kill[57].

But this is not sustained, and is swept aside by the ongoing torrent of death and destruction being recounted. Evidently this Shakan violence was understood as quite beyond any possible instrumental or strategic significance, and as impervious to all moral justifications or social critique. The elemental Shakan violence disrupted and overwhelmed customary order to establish its own universe of meaning: it was a primary instance of *violence as discourse*. But what did it say, and how was that discursive significance elaborated and sustained? What past did it retrieve, beyond that of the unhappy youth of Shaka himself? What future outcomes did this narrative of Shakan violence project? Here we come to the most basic problems posed by the story of Shaka and its enduring significance. For Shaka himself, *the* central figure of this narrative, was assassinated and his violent reign brought to an end. And with him that oral tradition, which he was fashioning through his court *imbongi,* and their celebration in the Shakan *Izibongo* of his great deeds in founding the Zulu kingdom*,* also lost its capacity to generate and sustain an

authoritative version of itself with its own interiority.

It is possible to show the exterior signs of the impact of the Shakan irruption on the development of the Zulu oral tradition. Even the formal development of the Zulu *Izibongo* readily breaks down into three main periods, the pre-Shakan, the Shakan, and the post-Shakan[58]. The content of the *Izibongo* likewise reflects the impact of the Shakan revolution: "The eighteenth-century praise poems reflect the old system and its values ... {After Shaka] chiefs were no longer portrayed by the images of small animals, representing beauty, brightness, quickness, craftiness, ingenuity, but by large animals such as elephants, lions, and leopards, representing force and brute strength. They were no longer praised for their shrewdness and diplomacy, but for their direct attacks and prowess in war"[59] At the same time there was a shift in the function and focus of the *Izibongo*, which with Shaka become more especially the prerogative of the chief and requires a specialist *imbongi* for its composition and proper performance. With Shaka's founding of the Zulu kingdom the general character of the *Izibongo* became transformed: "Those of the eighteenth century [i.e. pre-Shakan] tend to be more lyric and ode-like and also more personal, and those of the nineteenth century [i.e Shakan and post-Shakan] tend to be mor heroic and epic-like and also more national. This reflects the change in political structure, from a large number of independent tribes consisting mostly of clans of blood relations, to a single state incorporating these tribes"[60] But if the Shakan period thus emphatically marks the difference between the older and the later form and content of the *Izibongo*, it is a different matter if we attempt to identify the Shakan *Izibongo* itself, and in its own terms, and to disentangle these from later accretions and modifications and/or external projections. How should we read and interpret the account of Shakan violence offered by the Shakan *Izibongo*? Here we enter onto the terrain of those catalogues of "cruelties and atrocities" of the monster-Shaka which are one of the staples of the established story of Shaka. We can readily see the significance and implications of these accounts when they function as part of colonial narratives or enter into the popular white literary imagination. But what might their significance have been in the original context of the Shakan oral tradition itself? There is no authoritative answer available on this score. At best we can note that the incidents of Shakan violence and cruelty demonstrate not just extreme forms of violence, but violence calculated to shatter all customary constraints and inhibitions in the conduct of politics and war. Shaka's violence in revenge on those who had made his youth a misery can still be readily understood in conventional terms, but even his innovations in warfare, such as the deadly use of the short stabbing spear in close combat, has significance largely in terms of its transgression of long established norms and customs. Similarly the development of the Shakan notion and practice of "total war"(*impi ebomvu)*, wreaking indiscriminate carnage on enemy combatants and non-combatants alike[61], derives its significance largely from the deliberate transgression of customary restraints as much as "natural morality". And the accounts of quite arbitrary torture and killing, especially of innocent bystanders and/or children, together with gruesome acts on their bodies can only be understood negatively, in terms of what they deny and disrupt. J.H.Soga, the Xhosa historian, on recounting the standard litany of atrocities and cruelties, can only comment that "thus he [Shaka] trifled with the lives of human beings, disregarding the sacred ties of human affection"[62].These are evidently external perspectives, relying on different normative frames of reference. The unanswered question remains: what might have been the significance and understanding of this violence in terms of the Shakan oral tradition itself? In the absence of any authoritative answer, we can only observe that if there had been such an authentic understanding of the story of Shaka, then it did not have the capacity to sustain and reproduce itself in ways accessible to later generations.

At this point it may be relevant and helpful to refer to our discussion of political discourse theory, and to see to what extent its application might have relevance here. If Shaka was the central and predominant figure in this narrative, he was not a political cosmocrat able to articulate some doctrine or message

enshrining the significance of his violent actions that could survive his own demise. There are indications in the narrative itself of the fashioning of a new and powerful discourse community in Shaka's confrontation with, and exposure of, the witchdoctors, repositories of customary ritual and beliefs, and in the installation of his own Shakan *imbongi*. But this story of Shaka was not consensually validated around a central text, nor did it develop its own mytho-logics, an implicit logic explaining its own projected outcomes as a body of self-evident truths. In part this was due to the circumstance that Zulu society in Shaka's day was still entirely that of an oral culture in which *written texts*, and the permanence these can endow to shared narratives and popular memory beyond the passing moment, did not yet figure. To the extent that the story of Shaka thus generated some kind of *symbolic capital*, its use and control was not tied into one discourse community only; rather, elements of this story became available for the different purposes of a range of overlapping narratives. Some elements were retained or adapted in later Zulu oral history, along with elements of hostile counter-narratives; some elements were taken up by colonial traders and travelers and exploited for their very different purposes; various elements were elaborated in the popular Shakan literature and historiography driven by unconscious racial stereotypes and colonial projections. In the case of the American political theorist E.V. Walter the story of Shaka would even serve to provide the material for an ideal-typical model of pure "terroristic despotism" as an arch-typal form of political rule[63] More to the point the story of Shaka as a potent narrative of political violence also remained available to be taken up again by the Inkatha movement in the context of modern politics, especially in Natal and KwaZulu, first in the 1920s[64] and then from the 1970s .

2.3 Frontier violence as discourse: archetypes of violence on the colonizing frontier

The colonizing frontier has been closely associated with the roots of political violence in South Africa. This should not be overstated, or too much simplified: the frontier was not the scene of violent conflict only, but also of complex patterns of interaction through trade and barter and of partial incorporation through labour and tribute[65]. Still, the fact remains that for a century and more, from the closing decades of the 18th century to the end of the 19th century, indigenous resistance to colonization and conquest issued in a long series of frontier wars, first on the Eastern Cape frontier and then in the interior of Southern Africa. The telling and retelling of these violent events constitute a staple of the narratives of violence during the colonial period. (Indeed, as Noel Mostert has demonstrated, much of the story of South Africa until 1870 can persuasively be told by focusing on the frontier[66]). Liberal historiography notoriously stressed the decisive contribution of this "frontier tradition" to the making of modern South Africa, in particular tracing the racist attitudes and ideologies of 20th century white South Africa to the formative experiences of violent conflict on the frontier[67] . More recently this view has been strongly challenged by a radical and revisionist historiography[68] insisting on capitalist development and urban industrialization after 1870 as crucial to the making of modern South Africa, including the socio-economic and ideological origins of apartheid. However, while they may disagree on the relation of apartheid to capitalism and modernization, both liberal and radical historians agree that the frontier period itself should be conceived as essentially *pre-modern*. This has significant consequences for the understanding of frontier violence.

Colonizing frontiers may best be conceptualized as zones where processes of interspersed colonization occurred in conditions marked by weak political authority and the relative absence of institutionalized social constraints and resources[69]. Though involving interaction by people from different communities, frontiers should by no means be confused with modern boundaries between states. The colonizing frontiers were rarely stable conditions, and we may distinguish between the period of the "open" or pioneering frontier, and that of the "closing" frontier as colonization was consolidated. On the pioneering or open frontier conflicting claims to the land, or disputes regarding cattle, game or barter, had perforce to

be settled with the limited coercive resources locally available to individuals or groups. In individual cases this meant that frontiersmen, relatively unconstrained by institutionalized norms or government controls, could literally get away with assaulting their workers or hunting down their foes with few questions asked (though they also had to face any repercussions on their own). At the level of corporate or collective violence it was the calling of "general commandos" which evolved as the major colonial response under these conditions. On the open frontier the commandos operated with a fair amount of local autonomy and at a remove from effective control by the colonial government[70]. If, as Mostert observes, "the commando often was to be simply a means for frontiersmen to take the law into their own hands", it was also the case that the *trekboers* "were quarrelsome amongst themselves ... and lacked all discipline, or even any strong sense of mutual obligation: they tried every means of avoiding commando duty, and where possible sent their Khoikhoi servants or `Bastaard' sons"[71] In the absence of a recognized authority capable of settling such disputes as might develop, the frontier was thus often the scene of "violence and annoyances"[72], but the extent of violence was also constrained by the limited powers of coercion available to individuals and groups, as well as by the risks of open conflict. On the early South African frontier violent confrontations still occurred in a context of a relative balance of power: the colonists' advantages in having horses and guns were largely neutralized by the prevailing demographic ratios. More than with effectively organised violence or wars, the frontier was rife with rumours of war, threats and taunts of violence; frontier violence, at least on the open frontier, thus tended to be at once unconstrained and of limited extent[73].

On both counts this was to change on the closing frontier with the consolidation of settlement and the extension of colonial and imperial authority. On the one hand much greater resources for corporate violence and military action became available, decisively changing the balance of power in the favour of the colonial forces. On the other hand the extension of imperial and colonial authority increasingly subjected frontier communities to the instruments of law and order while also establishing institutionalized social constraints. Thus on the Eastern Cape frontier, for instance, the previous balance of power was decisively tilted in favour of the colonial forces by the introduction, at the time of the 4th Frontier War in 1811-12, of the imperial British army, with its overwhelming resources of manpower and superior weaponry. However, this also meant that the colonial commandos, henceforth under imperial direction and control, were no longer able to operate on their own account as semi-autonomous forces with essentially discretionary powers[74]. Still, in South Africa, compared to their North American counterparts, the period of the open frontier tended to last considerably longer in relative isolation of the centres of capitalist expansion and industrial development. But eventually, if successively and unequally, the various frontiers did close, and we can trace the different processes of economic closure (i.e. no more abundance of land and a shift from a subsistence economy to intensive agricultural cultivation and commercial farming), growing social stratification, and political closure (i.e. the imposition of a single source of authority)[75]. This transition from the open and pioneering frontier to the closing and more settled frontier thus provides the historical context for understanding violence on the colonizing frontier.

From Van Jaarsveld's "tobacco trick" to the massacre of the elder Stockenström:

Narratives of frontier violence are much contested and highly ambiguous; if violence was a pervasive feature of life on the colonizing frontier, these were not just random clashes and killings but issued out of complex exchanges and misapprehensions rooted in divergent cultural and social practices. Local communities each had their own stories to tell construing the same events of frontier violence in different and often incompatible ways. Nor did the various narratives, at least to begin with, share in any master narrative of violence and democratic inclusion. A marked characteristic of violence and strife in the context of the open frontier was its systematic *ambiguity* and uncertainty[76]. Individual and communal

disputes might concern specific issues or events, but they typically had unclear and complex roots. Conflicting claims on land, like disputes about trading or labour practices, were complicated by different and unfamiliar cultural traditions (e.g. the individual or communal notions of land and ownership respectively assumed by the colonists and by the indigenous peoples) and further compounded by divergent practices and conceptions of social and political incorporation (e.g. the Xhosas' characteristic tendency towards incorporation through inclusive acculturation as against the colonial custom of kinship exclusion and differential incorporation). The ambiguities inherent in social exchanges shading off into ethnic or communal disputes are well caught in a letter by the elder Landdrost Stockenström in 1810, describing the practice of the Xhosas' `wandering visits' to the farmers. He remarked that the visiting Xhosas regarded receiving hospitality and food as a `sign of amity', but

> "not satisfied with staying a single day at one farm, they often remained several days, insisting upon having victuals furnished to them, and watching their opportunity to carry off something for their journey into the bargain. It often happens that one of the party makes off with some booty, while the rest remain to prevent suspicion. Sometimes the thieves, when afraid of being discovered, restore the booty themselves, pretending that they have recovered it from others, and demanding ample recompense for their trouble"[77].

With amicable exchanges liable to be perceived as unwelcome impositions or veiled threats and taunts, incidental disputes easily became the occasion for serious hostilities to be resolved with recourse to coercive force or violence though perforce only with the limited resources locally available[78].

In the absence of recognized authority structures local disputes more often than not had to be settled by negotiating ad hoc accommodations but on occasion also generated vigilante actions, i.e. corporate uses of coercive and discretionary force seeking to resolve the multiplying uncertainties and ambiguities by decisive action. In these circumstances one *archetypal theme* of frontier conflict became that of the attempted negotiation resulting in (pre-emptive) massacre: much the same dynamics recur in a series of different variations from the beginnings of the "First Frontier War" of 1781 to the opening of new frontiers in the interior following the Great Trek in the 1830s and the beginning of Trekker settlements in the Transvaal by the 1850s. Though occurring in quite different locations and spanning several generations, these incidents are in fact linked in various ways and became part of a sustained narrative of frontier violence. As such they provide interesting and relevant material for the analysis of frontier violence as discourse. The paradigmatic event was the massacre of a Xhosa clan following the "tobacco trick" of Commandant van Jaarsveld in 1781 at the outset of the earliest in the series of wars on the Cape Eastern frontier. Van Jaarsveld's own official report on the massacre stressed the inherent ambiguities of the circumstances and the considerable risks under which his general commando operated. Following an investigation of allegations that Xhosas had "again moved in among our people with all their property", he had to decide whether the alleged wrongful occupations and "molestations" committed by the Xhosa were just the usual "violence and annoyances" or evidence of something much more serious, indeed a threat of war ("this evidently impending violence"). At the head of his assembled commando Van Jaarsveld several times instructed the Xhosa chiefs that they and their people should remove from the disputed territory of the Zuurveld and go back to "their own country", but to no avail. On Van Jaarsveld's own version of the subsequent events, he was forced to take pre-emptive measures to avoid his own men being massacred:

> "As I clearly saw that if we allowed the Kafirs to make the first attack, it could not be otherwise than that many must fall on my side, I hastily collected all the tobacco the men had with them, and having cut it into small bits, I went about twelve paces in front, and threw it to the Kafirs, calling to them to pick it up; they ran out from amongst us and forgot their plan. I then gave the word to fire, when the said three Captains and all their fencible men were overthrown and slain, and part of their cattle, to the number of 800, taken"[79].

Van Jaarsveld's version of the events should not necessarily be taken at face value (in Xhosa tradition a rather different story is told about the events preceding the massacre[80]). His report was evidently meant to exculpate him as responsible officer should the Council of Policy want to hold anyone accountable for the massacre. Most likely the "tobacco trick" was a ruthless and calculated pre-emptive measure given the ambiguous circumstances of great risk and perceived threat. As such the massacre was not so much an arbitrary act of irrational violence; rather, its significance may be construed in terms of a rational and strategic use of *instrumental violence.* But in the unfolding narrative of frontier violence this massacre also acquired further and more potent significance.

To begin with it should be noted that the "tobacco trick" was not unrelated to earlier incidents of a similar kind in which Van Jaarsveld had also played a leading part. Some years earlier he had first come into prominence as a Commandant on the northern or San frontier, quite literally engaged in campaigns of extermination directed against the much despised and hated "Bushmen". Van Jaarsveld's commandos in the Sneeuberg found that running down the elusive and hostile San in open country was no easy task, and he devised a ruse for trapping them: "He had twelve hippopotamuses shot and left as bait on the banks of the Zeekoe River. His commando fell upon the enemy in the midst of their feasting, killed 122 of them and captured 21. Only five escaped"[81]. In the narrative of frontier violence Van Jaarsveld's "tobacco trick" recalled his earlier stratagem for calculated massacre, now in the different context of confrontations with Xhosas. In turn, this massacre at the outset of the "first frontier war" would itself be long remembered on the Eastern frontier, not least by the amaDange, the Xhosa clan who had been its primary victims. More than a generation later the missionary John Brownlee recorded this among the first items of his notes on the history and culture of the amaXhosa[82]. A century later J.H Soga, the first Xhosa historian, singled out Van Jaarsveld's "tobacco trick"as demonstrating the spirit of "the lawless Boers ... of holding Native life cheaply"[83]. Soga added that even in the twentieth century "the incident lives in the memory of the Ama-Ntinde (sic) to the present day, and it created among the Xosas (sic) a feeling of bitterness which destroyed their faith in the whites"[84]

Nor was this historical memory without violent consequences of its own. It can hardly bea coincidence that members of the same Dange clan, who had been the victims of Van Jaarsveld's ruthless violence, were also involved some thirty years later in the massacre of the elder Landdrost Stockenström and his men, in the midst of ongoing negotiations, at the start of the frontier war of 1811-12. With Colonial Graham as commander in chief a joint force of colonial troops and Boer Commandos had been charged to evict the Xhosas from the disputed area of the Zuurveld. On the eve of open hostilities, though, some still felt that further negotiations, not war, were needed. Andries Stockenström, who participated in the campaign as a newly enlisted Ensign, later recorded that there had been some debates among the frontiersmen regarding both the wisdom and the justification for the proposed attempt to evict the Xhosa from the Zuurveld by force[85]. Accordingly his father, the elder Landdrost Stockenström, decided to seek an interview with Colonel Graham at the place where he had established his headquarters before complying with the order. Accompanied by a party of Boers Stockenström crossed the Zuurberg pass and on the approach to Slagtersnek encountered numbers of Xhosa warriors on both sides of the narrow ravine. Though some of his party suspected a possible ambush and others urged pre-emptive attack, Stockenström in a disarming display of confidence rode into the midst of the Xhosa warriors and engaged them in amicable negotiations. For some time they all sat down to talk and smoke, but then things went desperately wrong and the Xhosas present, many of whom were from the Dange clan, availed themselves of the opportunity and fell on the unsuspecting Stockenström, massacring him and 14 others of his party. According to the younger Stockenström's later account "the Kafirs have invariably alleged that the massacre was the result of an instantaneous impulse, and not a preconcerted plot. It was pretended that whilst the discussion was going on in the midst of the great mass, news reached the outside that the war

had begun, and that in the Addo a number of Kaffirs had been killed, a shout was set up, and a rush made without consultation"[86]. Indeed, the relevant issue was not so much whether or not there had been a "preconcerted plot" by the Xhosas to ambush or massacre the elder Stockenström and his men, but that they participated in a shared history of frontier violence going back to that earlier massacre. Mostert comments that "most of the Xhosa present were of the Dange chiefdom, and they had never forgotten the occasion in 1781 when the Boer Commandant Adriaan van Jaarsveld had tossed tobacco in the midst of a group of warriors and then, as they scrambled for it, shot them down. The murder of Stockenström senior and his companions was to be regarded in the colony as an act of reprisal for that earlier atrocity"[87] In short, this frontier narrative of violence had acquired some significant force on its own account, providing a discursive frame within which current acts of violence both recalled earlier atrocities and also projected certain kinds of violent outcomes for the future. Thus the younger Stockenström, a notable exponent of the politics of negotiation and the ideals of truth and justice as the only just basis of frontier policy, would later find his own career framed and eventually ruined by prevailing expectations that he was bound to seek violent revenge for his father's death. Some 25 years later, when he had been appointed Lieutenant Governor of the Cape Colony with a mandate to implement the Colonial Secretary Lord Glenelg's "Treaty Policy", Stockenström found himself the target of a scurrilous but effective colonial campaign of rumour and innuendo to the effect that he himself had shot an unarmed Xhosa man in the course of a frontier campaign in supposed vengeance for his own father's death at the hands of the Xhosa in the massacre at Slagtersnek[88]. Despite Stockenström's attempted refutations the factual truth regarding the alleged incident mattered less than the powerful narrative which had come to frame such key events of frontier violence.

From the perspective of political discourse theory this case study in the development of frontier violence as discourse offers intriguing material. On the open frontier people not infrequently found themselves under ambiguous conditions of high risk. In such circumstances of random dangers risk-pronenes invited a tendency to metaphorical thinking and situations were sized up and perceived in terms of other similar situations[89]. To begin with, in the context of the open frontier the *rationality* of the attempted negotiation was as ambiguous as that of the pre-emptive use of overwhelming force: "Both the massacre of the unsuspecting adversary and the brave and trusting venture to continue discussions in the midst of possibly extreme danger are rooted in the same ambiguities"[90]. But once these ambiguities had been violently resolved in a particular brutal and decisive way, that massacre became a meaningful political and historical reality in its own right, casting shadows both before and behind. It should thus not come as a surprise that there are further linkages of different kinds between the massacre of the elder Stockenström and his men in 1811, which had itself been rooted in Van Jaarsveld's massacre of the amaDange in 1781, and the most famous massacre of all in South African history, that of the Trekker leader Piet Retief and his company at the hands of the Zulu chief Dingane in 1838. Some linkages were contingent and personal: the widow of Field Cornet Greyling, who had been murdered along with the elder Stockenström at Slagtersnek, in 1814 married Piet Retief.[91] But other linkages concern the structural similarities in these ambiguous confrontations on the open frontier and the shared elements in the narratives of political violence which increasingly served as discursive frameworks for interpreting the significance of these violent events.

The Retief / Dingane encounter: frontier violence as discourse:

The fateful confrontation between Retief as "Governor" of substantial parties of the Dutch/Afrikaans "Emigrants"who had left the Cape Colony and were moving into the area of Natal by 1837/38 in what would later come to be known as "the Great Trek", on the one hand, and Dingane, successor to Shaka as supreme ruler of the Zulu conquest state, on the other hand, has been endlessly rehearsed in South African

historical and political discourse. The encounter played itself out on a number of different levels, all of which were marked by systematic ambiguities in which attempts to negotiate amicable agreements were hard to tell from veiled threats of violence and/or shows of force. At the first opportunity, in November 1837, Retief visited Dingane on a "diplomatic" mission to his royal seat at uMgungundlovu in order to convey the Emigrants' intention of establishing themselves in an "uninhabited" area of Natal adjacent to the territory of the Zulus. In a prior letter to Dingane Retief assured him that "our anxious wish is to live at peace with the Zulu nation". But these words were immediately followed by a pointed reminder of the momentous defeats, first at their capital Mosega and then in a 9-day rout at eGabeni, which the powerful Ndebele under Mzilikazi, whose violent feats on the Highveld rivalled that of the Zulu impis themselves, had recently suffered at the hands of Emigrant commandos:

> "You will, doubtless, have heard of our last rupture with Umsilikazi, resulting from the frequent and ruinous robberies committed habitually by his tribe; in consequence of which it had become absolutely necessary to declare war against him, after having in the first instance failed in every attempt to arrange our differences". Somewhat ominously the letter concluded: "I shall set out in a few days for the country of the Zulus, in order to settle with you our future relations. The hope of always living on terms of peace and amity with the Zulu nation is the sincere hope of your true friend, Retief : Governor, etc"[92]

Retief's letter was thus at once a declaration of the Trekkers' peaceful intentions and an implicit threat. "With its veiled threat of the use of force", a recent historian comments, "this superficially conciliatory missive set the tone for Retief's ambiguous dealings with Dingane"[93] For his part, Dingane's response was no less ambivalent. To begin with he chose not to respond directly to Retief's territorial ambitions, but charged that "people having clothes, horses, and guns" had been guilty of stealing Zulu cattle, and insisted on recompense as a condition for any further dealings.[94] Though Retief denied all responsibility for the cattle thefts, he nevertheless agreed to recover the stolen cattle from the alleged culprits, the Mokotleng Tlokwa and their chief Sekonyela. He saw an opportunity to establish his "good intentions" to Dingane by going along with the latter's property claims in a way which forcefully projected the Emigrants' ability to intimidate and coerce local chiefs. In practice Retief proceeded to fulfil his part of the "bargain" in a way designed less to show any recognition of Dingane's sovereign authority or Zulu property rights than as a demonstration that, if they chose to do so, the Emigrants could forcefully impose their will on friend and foe alike. Chief Sekonyela, who had recently agreed to a treaty of friendship with the Emigrants, was engaged in a meeting to discuss the allegations of cattle thefts. In the course of the meeting he was captured in a ruse by inveigling him to put his hands through a pair of handcuffs, unexpectedly clasping these, and then holding him hostage for three days until the Tlokwa had paid a ransom equivalent to the alleged number of stolen cattle (plus an additional booty of 53 horses and 33 guns)[95]. One of the Zulu indunas, who had accompanied Retief's party, was shocked at Sikonyela's treatment: "Is this the way in which you treat the chiefs of the people?", he is reported to have enquired in some alarm. When answered in the affirmative, he asked, "`Would you treat Dingane in this way were he in your power?' To this they made the reply: `we shall treat Dingane in the same manner should we find him a rogue' From that moment Dingane's councillor became restless and uneasy ..."[96]

It was on the strength of these power plays, then, that Retief resumed his pressures on Dingane to acquiesce in the Emigrants' intention of settling in Natal. As a founding document supposedly conferring some right of settlement on the trekking parties in Natal the "Retief / Dingane Treaty" would later become an intensely disputed text. During the 1920s the authenticity of the document with Dingane's "mark", claimed to have been found with Retief's remains at his place of execution, was challenged by the Settler historian George Cory, calling forth compulsive "vindications" by Afrikaner nationalist historians such as Gustav Preller[97]. But the entire dispute concerning the authenticity of the "treaty" actually begged some basic questions as to the significance of *any* such written document in the context

of the Dingane / Retief encounter. An exchange of letters was a notable feature of their interactions from the outset, but the actual function and status of the various documents drawn up in the process remained highly ambiguous. If Retief evidently needed some sort of "document" which he could then utilise in justification of Emigrant land claims and settlement in the context of colonial politics or even international law, it was much less clear what this might mean from a Zulu perspective. Written contracts of any kind were, of course, unknown in an oral culture such as that of Zulu society while customary notions and law did not make provision for the permanent alienation of communally owned land held in trust by the Zulu king[98]. Dingane indicated as much during his interactions with various white interlocutors by ceding the same territories several times over to different parties, first to Capt. Gardiner and then to Retief, signalling that whatever "treaties" had been agreed or "documents" signed, this remained a matter within his sovereign dispensation. (The missionary Francis Owen had little success in his repeated efforts to explain to Dingane that this was contrary to the principles of private property, not least because Dingane in terms of the Zulu customary norms of communal ownership simply did not subscribe to these principles in the first place[99]). Indeed, in stead of taking the various "treaty" proposals at face value, they need to be seen as ambiguous attempts by those still rooted in an oral culture to get to grips with unfamiliar instruments of literacy. Dingane, though illiterate and dependent on the mediated services of others, was very intrigued by everything to do with writing. His resident missionary Owen noted that "he is indeed wonderfully taken with this sure mode of communication by writing and resorts to it at every opportunity. Whenever he sends a message to or by a white man it is always on paper"[100]. But the fact that Dingane tried to put written documentation to his own uses did not mean that he also subscribed to all the norms and conventions associated with this unfamiliar practice. When he agreed to put his "mark" to written documents -- drawn up in Dutch by Retief and translated into English for Owen who himself required a translator to convey them in Zulu to Dingane – this must have functioned as just one of the various ambivalent ploys and stratagems employed in the course of a highly charged encounter which might equally well have issued in some kind of amicable accord, or in deadly violence. In this encounter forceful interventions and threats and/or mimicry of violence would come to speak more decisively than words or written documents.

With the letter confirming that he would undertake the mission to recover the "stolen" cattle from Sekonyela Retief had also implicitly threatened Dingane with a fate similar to that which Mzilikazi had suffered at the hands of the Emigrant commandos:

> "Umsilikazi, I have no doubt, has fled to a distance, for he must think and feel that I shall punish his misconduct. Have I not already reason to complain that I have been constrained to kill so many men of his nation because they had been bound to execute his cruel orders? That which has just befallen Umsilikazi gives me reason to believe thet the Almighty, that God who knows all, will not permit him to live much longer. The great Book of God teaches us that kings who conduct themselves as Umsilikazi does are severely punished, and that it is not granted to them to live or reign long; and if you desire to learn at greater length how God deals with such bad kings, you must enquire concerning it from the missionaries in your country"[101]

Retief's biographer comments that with this letter Retief unknowingly signed his "death warrant"[102]. This is probably an overstatement; it would be more accurate to say that with his letter Retief consciously through down the gauntlet – and that in words and actions Dingane responded in kind.
From the outset a large part of Dingane and Retief's interchanges had consisted in theatrical presentations of military might, often in the format of mock battles. On the occasion of Retief's first visit in November 1837 Dingane had mounted an elaborate staging of his formidable forces of war and great wealth in cattle in ways calculated to impress and intimidate. There had been "magnificent displays of dancing and military exercises, first by 2 000 young *amabutho*, and on the following day by 4 000 older ones. Dingane himself, arrayed in all his finery, took part in the review. A great herd of 2 224 red cattle with white backs

(which Dingane had deliberately collected to astonish the Boers) was driven before them and counted"[103]. Subsequently Retief himself reported, in a letter published in the *Graham's Town Journal*, that "during two days [Dingane's] people were engaged in exhibiting their national dances, and in warlike manoeuvres ... Their dances and manoeuvres were extremely imposing and interesting. Their sham fights are terrific exhibitions. They make a great noise with their shields and kerries (sic), uttering at the same time the most discordant yells and cries ..."[104] But if Retief was suitably impressed, he was not intimidated, and evidently resolved to respond with the same language of force and violence which Dingane understood only too well.

When Retief was to return with Sikonyela's cattle for his second visit to Dingane he was set on doing this, not as another "diplomatic" visit accompanied by a handful of other emissaries, but with a substantial mounted armed force of some 200 burghers to the very seat of Dingane's power. The proposal proved controversial amongst his fellow Emigrant leaders and was debated for more than a week. Gerrit Maritz and others opposed Retief's idea of taking a full commando and thus mounting a show of force on Zulu home ground.[105] In retrospect, and with the knowledge of the fateful outcome, these debates were remembered as premonitions of possible risk and disaster[106]. At the time, though, and especially on Retief's part, there had been no question of naivity, or lack or realism. Significantly, it was in this context that Maritz invoked the massacre of the elder Landdrost Stockenström by the amaDange in the frontier war of 1811. On the eve of Retief's departure to Dingane Maritz wrote to him once again in a final effort to dissuade him from this course, specifically citing the cautionary example of Stockenström's fate[107]. Knowing this, Retief persisted with taking a substantial armed force, though on a volunteer basis he could muster only 70 men and their 30 non-white assistants. Retief remained confident that he could prevail in reaching an accord with Dingane precisely by upping the stakes of violent confrontation[108].

Initially the wary Dingane tried to avoid an open confrontation and requested the Emigrant force to approach without their horses and guns. When they refused, he accepted the implicit challenge and asked Owen to "tell them that they must bring their horses and dance upon their horses in the middle of the town, that it be known who can dance best, the Zooloos or the Abalongo"[109]. The tone was set by the manner in which Retief's party announced their arrival at uMgungundlovu: the armed horsemen provocatively galloped into the midst of the *ikhanda*, the royal enclosure – a space in which no weapons were ever allowed to come in the presence of the king – and fired several volleys of blanks into the air as their "salute" to Dingane. Without so much as asking for Dingane's permission "the Boers immediately shewed Dingarn (sic) the way in which they danced on horseback by making a sham charge at one another making the air resound with their guns. This was something the Zoolu chief had never witnessed. In their turn the Zooloos exhibited their agility in dancing"[110] Over the following three days there was an elaborate ritual presentation of armed forces and mock combat. A key moment occurred when Dingane requested Retief to deliver not only the cattle recovered from Sikonyela, but also the guns and horses. Owen noted in his *Diary* that "the answer [Retief] gave to Dingarn (sic) was to shew the messenger his grey hairs and bid him to tell his master that he was not dealing with a child"[111]. It was in the context of this dramatic choreography of war and violence that Retief then made further attempts to get Dingane to put his "mark" on a prepared document ceding major parts of Natal to Emigrant settlement. Neither Owen nor the other eye-witnesses present recorded how or when the famed "treaty" was eventually signed, and serious doubts have been raised regarding both the dating and the authenticity of the document claimed to have been found with Retief's remains[112] However, after the third day Retief and his men were satisfied that their mission had been accomplished; this time they were also confident and relaxed enough to leave their weapons outside the royal enclosure as required when acceding to a request from Dingane to participate in a final round of drinking beer with the king before their departure. Once more Dingane staged further Zulu war dances, first by the regiments of the Umhlanga-Inhlope (white

shields) and then by the regiments of the Umhlanga-Mjama (black shields). But this time the dramatic mimicry of battles were for real: at a signal from Dingane and his command to "kill the wizards" Retief and his men were seized to be executed. Since no blood could be spilled in the royal enclosure they were dragged off to kwaMatiwane, the notorious "hill of the vultures" where Matiwane and so many others had been put to death on Dingane's command. Retief had to watch while all his men, including his own son and other children as well as the non-white assistants, were clubbed to death[113]. When at last, in Owen's words, the "deed of blood (was) accomplished", Dingane ordered Retief's heart and liver to be buried in the path of the Emigrants to make strong magic against them[114]. Horrified as he was by witnessing the massacre at first hand, Owen also well understood that this violence would call for more: "Certain it is .... we shall speedily hear either of the massacre of the whole company of Boers, or what is scarcely less terrible of wars and bloodshed, of which there will be no end till either the Boers or the Zoolu nation cease to be"[115]

The ensuing acts in this narrative of violence would become equally potent symbolic figures in the later memorialisation of Afrikaner nationalism. First there were the attacks on the unsuspecting Emigrant encampments dispersed along the foothills of the Drakensberg by the Zulu impis despatched from uMgungundlovu. Though only the initial surprise attacks were entirely successful, and subsequent attacks were beaten off, several hundred men, women and children were killed in an extension of the primary massacre of Retief and his men [116]. From a Zulu perspective these attacks conformed to established patterns of post-Shakan warfare: "What they were about to do was no different in essence from the usual comprehensive `eating up' of a disgraced and executed chief's homestead, family, adherents and livestock"[117]. But in the historical experience of the Emigrants the massacres of women and children constituted a qualitative and traumatic difference to what they had known during the wars on the Cape Eastern frontier: "This was war of a very different order from that with the Xhosa, who never slaughtered women and children and maintained a chivalrous sense of fairness, humanity and openness in their dealing"[118]. As such it also brought about a major shift in the basic narrative of frontier violence. To the archetypal ambiguities – recourse to pre-emptive violence to the unsuspecting adversaries and/or risking negotiations in the midst of possibly extreme danger – were now added a further potent element, the massacre of innocent victims, not warriors but women and children as targets of extreme violence. This, more than the primary massacre of Retief and his men, transformed this narrative of violence from the aggressive and confident power plays by Retief on his mission to Dingane to a sustained focus on suffering and victimhood. The locale where the secondary attacks on the Emigrant encampments took place would become known as *Weenen* ("Crying"). Mostert comments that "the rage over slain wives and daughters, and the image of white infants having their brains bashed against the wheels of burning wagons, was sustained by their descendants, and determinedly engraved within and without the vast brooding monument to the trekkers ..."[119]

The final stages of this engagement in violence and counter-violence between the Emigrant and Zulu forces are amongst the most celebrated events in South African history. It took the Emigrant parties the better part of a year to regroup, including several abortive commandos (known as the *Vlugkommando*, or "fleeing commando") against the Zulu forces, and it was only after the arrival and installation of Andries Pretorius as the new Emigrant leader that a better organised force (known as the *Wenkommando*, or "victorious commando") could be mounted for an attack on Dingane and his capital at uMgungundlovu. It was in the course of this campaign that Pretorius and Sarel Cilliers assembled their forces to enter into a special *Covenant* with God a week prior to their decisive victory at the battle of Blood River on 16 December 1838. Making effective use of a defensive laager formation combined with offensive mounted sorties against the much more numerous Zulu forces, they suffered no fatal casualties themselves while the Zulu dead numbered more than 3 000, the largest number of casualties in any single battle in South

African history [120]. The commando proceeded to enter and sack Dingane's capital at uMgungundlovu, where they found the skeletal remains of Retief and his party on the place of execution, kwaMatiwane, including the "miraculously preserved" treaty with Dingane's mark in Retief's pouch[121].

The considerable significance of this military victory in the course of the series of frontier wars spanning the colonial history of 19th century South Africa should not be confused with the discursive impact of the Retief/Dingane violence as discourse. To a large extent the significance of the decisive victory at Blood River can be accounted for in terms of instrumental violence. In this sense Blood River merely confirmed what the Emigrant battles against Mzilikazi and the Ndebele on the Highveld had already demonstrated, "the superiority in the open field of mobile, mounted gunmen against the classic horn formation and mass frontal attacks ... the effectiveness both of their defensive wagon laagers and of their offensive mounted commandos. ... The battle [of Blood River] was undoubtedly a classic exemplar of the devastating superiority of controlled fire by resolute men from an all-round defensive position over warriors armed with spears, whatever their numerical superiority and courage"[122]. Yet, in this sense, the decisive significance of the military outcome at Blood River was also a relative one. Laband points out that "the battle has been remembered more prosaically by the Zulu as one in which they suffered a severe, though not terminal defeat", and that this history would be repeated 40 years later in the battle of Khambula in 1879, which was to prove the crucial turning point of the Anglo-Zulu war following the initial British defeat at Isandlwana[123]. For their part, much of the Emigrant gains in Natal would shortly be undone by the British annexation of the Colony of Natal, persuading the majority of Emigrants to remove to the interior and the Highveld
where the open frontier would persist for some decades to come. The enduring significance of the massacre of Retief closely followed by that of Emigrant women and children at *Weenen*, as much as that of the Covenant and the victory of Blood River, is of a different discursive order. Above all that significance relates to how this narrative of violence would be taken up by later discourse communities and then redefined as central to the birth of the Afrikaner nation. This did not happen all at once. Significantly even the Covenant, which explicitly committed participants to its regular observance as a Sabbath day, was only privately commemorated by Cilliers and a few others, if at all, during the following years and decades[124]. The first concerted attempts to revive the Covenant took place by the late 1860s, with limited effect, and it was only by the closing decades of the 19th century that "Dingaan's Day" became established as a public commemorative ritual. In retrospect it was not Retief the confident enforcer of "peaceful" agreements at the head of his mounted gunmen that was remembered but the bleached bones of the unsuspecting negotiator massacred by a ruthless Dingane[125]. (Interestingly, it was this representation of a need for negotiations which might well end in massacres which would acquire new relevance in the context of the radical uncertainties and many ambiguities of the democratic transition at the end of the 20th century, though sometimes with surprising role reversals, e.g. Mandela-as-Retief venturing into the lair of de Klerk-as-Dingane![126]).

Frontier violence as discourse: the legend of the Makapansgat siege

If the massacre of Piet Retief by Dingane and the battle of Blood River would become potent episodes in the retrospective story of the difficult birth of the Afrikaner nation, the significance of other narratives of frontier violence had a more regional or local base. The legend of the cave of Gwaša or Makapansgat siege of 1854, recounting a key episode of frontier violence in the Northern Transvaal, would in time become intertwined with popular memories of the massacre of "Voortrekker" women and children at *Weenen* and the victory of Blood River, not least through the work of Afrikaner nationalist historians like Gustav Preller. But the incident itself was very much rooted in the uncertain risks and profound ambiguities of conflict on the Northern Transvaal frontier which opened with Boer incursions into

Ndebele territories from the 1840s and which only closed with the defeat of the Ndzundza in the "third war of Mapoch" in the 1890s [check Hans Pienaar]. Over that period various African chiefdoms in the area maintained a rough balance of power and the Boer incursions suffered significant setbacks; even in the 1860s established settlements at Schoemansdal (?) and Pietpotgietersrust had to be abandoned while the Republic's military forces had considerable difficulties through the 1870s and 1880s to prevail over the militant resistance mounted by various local chiefdoms. At an early stage of these violent encounters, in September 1854, some 28 Boers were massacred and their bodies mutilated at Moorddrift and in two other incidents. This was part of an attempt by two local Ndebele leaders "to force matters in an attempt to frighten the Boers back to Pretoria ... [by] ... messages of mutilation on Boer subjects and cattle"[127]

In retaliation the Boers mounted two commandos, assisted by their Kgatla allies, which unsuccessfully stormed the dolomite caves at Gwaša or Makapansgat into which the Ndebele had retreated behind prepared defences. A protracted siege of the thousands of Ndebele inside the caves followed over the ensuing weeks. Boer attempts to blast the roofs of the dolomite caves or to suffocate those within by setting alight large amounts of wood at the entrances to the caves both failed. The beleaguered Ndebele were denied food and water. After about two weeks people in the cave began to surrender but many had already died. In his report M. W. Pretorius, who had been in command of the Boer forces, wrote that 733 people had been shot down while trying to get to the stream outside the cave while 900 bodies lay in front of the caves; he estimated that a further 3 000 were inside[128]. On the Boer side there was one notable fatality, that of the Boer general, Piet Potgieter, who had been shot from below while peering into the cave[129].

The violence and mutilations of the initial massacres as well as the traumatic experience and gruesome outcome of the siege of Makapansgat became staples of local popular memory and oral history for both the Ndebele people and the Boer community. The respective historical narratives have been comprehensively reconstructed by Isabel Hofmeyr in a masterful study, "We Spend Our Years As A Tale That Is Told" (1993). What Hofmeyr meticulously demonstrates in considerable detail is not only the significant differences between the Ndebele and the Boer versions of these violent events, but also how these oral histories developed over time, taking on board the changes in context and circumstances of successive generations and putting the material of the legend to new uses. In the oral history of the Ndebele the violent and traumatic events of the massacre and siege are subordinated in a narrative primarily concerned with the survival of the Ndebele chieftainship. Three core episodes are typically singled out. The first of these concerns the Boer / Ndebele encounter with the massacre at Moorddrift and tells how a Boer woman was seized by the Ndebele and transformed "by various methods that include mutilation; dressing her in Ndebele dress; shaving her head; or smearing her with red ochre ... (features of initiation procedures for women)"[130]. Hofmeyr comments that this account has considerable symbolic depth: "By seizing [the Boer woman], the Ndebele issue a major challenge to Boer authority. By cutting off her breasts, the Ndebele soldiers degenderise and so neutralise her as a symbol of Boer authority. Having been neutralised, she is then remade or initiated into an Ndebele woman by having her head shaved and by being dressed in blankets. The refashioning of the woman not only challenges the Boer social order, it also proclaims a symbolic suzerainty over them"[131]. The second core episode typically concerns the killing of the Boer general Piet Potgieter, shot from below while he was peering into the cave by a Ndebele marksman. As Hofmeyr observes, "what this Potgieter episode most obviously does is to record the memory of one victorious aspect of the siege in which the Ndebele claim the life of a Boer military leader. ... the killing of Potgieter, a Boer chieftain, carries a huge symbolic weight ... the relationship of powerful and powerless is reversed since it is the mighty who fall and the weak who triumph"[132]. The third and final core episode concerns the ruse which ensured the survival of the chiefly family faced with certain death in the cave[133] In these re-tellings, the emphasis has shifted from the

violence of the original events to themes of Ndebele cunning and deceit linked to the ability of the chieftainship to endure[134]. The narrative of frontier violence has been transformed into the story of the cunning survival of the Ndebele chieftainship.

On the part of the Boer community popular memories above all focussed on the massacre and mutilation of the Boers murdered at Moordenaarsdrift. Pretorius' report, compiled some time afterwards, reflected the Boer outrage and angry rumours suggesting elements of cannibalism: "Pretorius wrote that the two parties of Boers murdered in the vicinity of Moorddrift were severely mutilated. Bodies were decapitated, hands had been cleaved open and baked in pots of human fat. Several male genitals were tied together and suspended in a tre, while the cooked limbs of children were found in corn baskets"[135]. The centrepiece of these popular memories concerned the fate of the most prominent figure of those massacred at Moordenaarsdrift, Hermanus Potgieter who reputedly had been skinned alive and had his heart removed still beating from his body[136]. Hofmeyr records that in later generations many people who did not know the story in detail "will often remember that Hermanus Potgieter was skinned alive and that this event in turn led to the siege in the caves[137]. On this account the story of the siege then became a parable of white conquest and punishment of those guilty of these atrocities. In later years another prominent element grafted onto the legend of the siege of Makapansgat concerned the heroic exploits of the young Paul Kruger, the future President of the South African Republic. According to Kruger's Memoirs he had entered the caves to retrieve the body of the fallen General Piet Potgieter under furious fire from the entrenched Ndebele[138] Other accounts indicate that the heroism did not belong only to Kruger and that Potgieter's body may actually have been retrieved by some of the Kgatla auxiliaries ordered into the cave by their Boer commanders. But it was Kruger's account which was immortalised on one of the panels of his statue by Anton van Wouw now standing in Church Square in Pretoria[139]. The most lasting format for Afrikaner folk memories, though, resulted from the popular accounts by the Nationalist historian Gustav Peller during the opening decades of the 20th century. In a fictionalised version entitled "Baanbrekers", Preller effectively fused his retelling of the Makapaansgat legend with elements of the massacre of Retief by Dingane[140] On Preller's account the central theme of the Makapaansgat legend became the Ndebele's deceitful exploitation of the Boers' unsuspecting hospitality in their dealings with them, leading to the massacres of Hermanus Potgieter and others in what is presented as cannibalistic practices, offensive to all known law and custom. As Hofmeyr points out, this closely echoed Preller's account of the murder of Piet Retief by Dingane as "an episode of betrayed hospitality and unprovoked violence in which the Zulu invite the Boers into their midst and then kill them", calling forth the Boers' retribution in the battle of Blood River (paralleled by the punitive siege of Makapansgat)[141]. Hofmeyr concludes that Preller "was trying to build up a Transvaal equivalent of the Blood River mythology. ... The atrocity scenes... are virtually identical, with their battered baby skulls, dead women and drifting feathers from the ripped and stabbed mattresses"[142] Effectively these became the emblematic images in popular Afrikaner memories of frontier violence and bloodshed. Thus when in 1938 a local journalist conducted interviews in search of popular memories of the story of the siege of Makapansgat, he elicited the following response from an Afrikaner woman: "Is it possible for you to grasp how we loathe the kaffirs when it was their very own fathers and grandfathers that committed those terrible atrocities at Moorddrift? My father who was together with General Potgieter, told me that the kaffirs tore small, helpless children from their mothers' arms and smashed their heads to bits against the wagon wheels"[143]. Hofmeyr comments that "in this account, the woman is grasping the past through a cluster of Preller-type images which by 1938, the year of the Great Trek centenary, had reached quite frenzied heights. The mythical version through which she experiences both the past and the present is derived from that popular haze of images that Preller's work on Makapansgat had helped create and perpetuate"[144]. In Afrikaner popular memory, as well, the local narrative of frontier violence had been transformed in line with the dominant narrative of Afrikaner nationalism.

To what extent is it still possible to retrieve something of the significance of the historical events involved in the massacre at Moorddrift and the siege of Makapansgat as a narrative of pre-modern frontier violence, i.e. to grasp the significance of such frontier violence as discourse? In her historical reconstruction Hofmeyr provides suggestive and relevant material. Thus it appears that the main target of the massacre at Moorddrift, Hermanus Potgieter, had been a notorious and ruthless "slave raider", imposing his demands for cattle and labour on local communities with calculated intimidation and violence. This is how J.M. Orpen described Potgieter's practice:

> "They [Potgieter and his party] spanned out their wagons at the foot of a rise on which their stood a native village. Presently a couple of natives came down the hill to the encampment and greeted Potgieter. Upon this, he drew out a ramrod and stuck it upright in aneighbouring antheap and pointed to it, but said nothing. The two natives returned to the village and came back presently bringing a couple of slaughter goats. H.Potgieter said never a word bu looked sternly at them and pointed to the ramrod. They went back and fetched an ox. H. Potgieter still pointed to the ramrod. Then they went and fetched a couple of tusks of ivory and put them down, but the ramrod remained erect ... Hermanus Potgieter and his men mount[ed] their horses, [rode] around the hill and up to the kraal and [shot] some natives. Presently they came back driving the cattle to the camp and a number of captured children ... that was the requirement when the ramrod was stuck upright"[145]

As a frontiersman Potgieter relied on the violence of his actions to speak for him in his encounters with the Ndebele. Notably this was not merely an instrumental use of guns and other means of coercion to obtain his objectives by force; rather, he deliberately employed ambiguous acts of violence as a metaphor calculated to terrorise his interlocutors into submission. The targeting of Potgieter and his people in the massacre at Moorddrift may be similarly understood as the Ndebele's response in a similar language of violence. Some elements of this may still be discerned in the Ndebele oral history of the massacre recorded by Hofmeyr:

> "What cause that war was, you see, when the Boers ... came here. ... When they came here they provoked them, our people. They [the Ndebele] went to fetch sheep. .... The whites came out, they came out with their women, to see the sheep. They left their guns behind. When they were looking the blacks said, `let's kill these whites'. They fell on them, they killed them, and killed them. They took one white woman and cut her breasts, they shaved her head. After they shaved her head, they said, `Go and tell the others' ... The Boers were surprised to see a woman dressed in blankets..."[146]

The Ndebele violence in retaliation was not merely aimed at finding effective ways of killing; instead the mutilations of the victims were designed to speak across the cultural divides even if the vocabulary of this violence remained rooted in indigenous ritual practices. The Boer retaliation with the siege of Makapansgat similarly constituted a discourse of ruthless violence going well beyond likely strategic or instrumental considerations. However, if these amount to frontier violence as a form of discourse then it remained at a rudimentary level of local significance only. These violent events were could serve as metaphors of sorts; they recalled earlier massacres in similar encounters on the open frontier; they called forth retaliatory outcomes of even greater violence and brutality. But they did not generate any sustained narrative driven by the significance of this particular violence; at most these violent events became incorporated with, and subordinated to, the oral histories of the survival of chieftainships or the story of the birth of the afrikaner nation.

Conclusion: narratives of violence on the pre-modern frontier

We have traced an interlinked narrative of violence on the open frontier from the "tobacco trick" of Van

Jaarsveld in 1781, recalling his own earlier ruses in massacring the San on the Cape Northern frontier, through the massacre of the elder Stockenström by the amaDange, who had themselves been the victims of the Van Jaarsveld massacre 30 years earlier, to the Retief / Dingane encounter and the massacre at Moorddrift leading to the siege of Makapansgat in 1854 on the new frontier opening in the Northern Transvaal. In the radically uncertain circumstances of the open frontier, where ambiguous confrontations of potentially grave risk were hard to tell from opportunities for amicable agreements, recourse to corporate violence did not only have instrumental or strategic uses. Pre-emptive and retaliatory massacres, mutilations and intimations of cannibalism became constituted in a narrative of frontier violence a discourse. However, from the perspective of political discourse theory the distinct limitations of such frontier violence as discourse are notable. Though acts of violence might take on metaphorical significance these did not develop into fully-fledged mimetic narratives with elaborate mytho-logics sustained by distinct discourse communities. They are not marked by the emergence of charismatic leaders as political cosmocrats delivering a body of self-evident truths as doctrine. At most a figure like that of Retief became symbolically marked as an archetypal victim and martyr in the cause of the Afrikaner proto-nation. Most importantly, though these violent events on the open frontier would live on in popular memories and oral narratives their discursive significance did not become fixated in key texts. The only text to function in these cases was the "Retief / Dingane treaty" but its purported significance was of a different order. In short, on the pre-modern open frontier there could not be any question as yet of the emergence of some master narrative linking violence and development or even democracy in a more comprehensive perspective.

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1. Elphick, Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa. (1985), p.53

2. Elphick, op. cit., pp.53-55

3. Peires, The House of Phalo: A History of the Xhosa People (1981), pp 135-138

4. Peires, op. cit., p.139

5. Bryant, The Zulu People as they were before the white man came (1949), p. 499

6. Herbst, States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control (2000), p. 20; cf. Tilly, Coercion, Capital and European States, A.D. 990-1990 (1990).

7. Crais, The Making of the Colonial Order: White Supremacy and Black Resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865 (1992), p.14.

8. Crais, op. cit., p.15.

9. Crais, op. cit., p. 16

10. Crais, op. cit.

11. Crais, op. cit., pp. 24-25

12. Vail & White, Power and the Praise Poem: Southern African Voices in History 1(991), pp.56-57.

13. Tudor, Political Myth (1972), p.14; cf. Flood, Political Myth: A Theoretical Introduction (1996) p. 41

14. Tudor, op. cit., p. 65.

15. Peires, The House of Phalo: A History of the Xhosa People (1981) p. 13.

16. Peires, op. cit., p.17

17. Vansina, Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology (1965), pp. 74, 211 n.48.

18. Cited in Peires, op. cit., p.15.

19. J.H.Soga, The South-Eastern Bantu (1930), pp. 104-106.

20. Peires, op. cit., pp.15-19.

21. Ibid., p.19.

22. Wiseman, Remus: A Roman Myth (1995), pp.18ff.

23. Wiseman, op. cit., p.107, cf. p.126.

24. Ibid., p. 16.

25. Ibid., p. 140.

26. Ibid., p.128.

27. Bannon, The Brothers of Romulus: Fraternal *Pietas* in Roman Law, Literature and Society (1997), pp. 3-4, 158.

28. Bannon, op. cit., p. 137.

29. See, e.g., A.T. Bryant, The Zulu People as they were before the white man came (1949); E.A Ritter, Shaka Zulu: The Rise of the Zulu Empire (1955); Donald Morris, The Washing of the Spears (1966); John Omer-Cooper, The Zulu Aftermath (1966), Charles Ballard, The House of shaka (1988), Stephen Taylor, Shaka's Children: A History of the Zulu People (1994), John Laband, Rope of Sand: The Rise and Fall of the Zulu Kingdom in the Nineteenth Century (1995); Alan Mountain, The Rise and Fall of the Zulu Empire (1999) etc.

30. Dan Wylie, Savage Delight: White Myths of Shaka (2000), p. 244.

31. See, e.g. Carolyn Hamilton, Terrific Majesty: The Powers of Shaka zulu and the Limits of Historical Invention (1998); Dafna Golan, Inventing Shaka: Using History in the Construction of Zulu Nationalism (1994); Dan Wylie, Savage Delight: White Myths of Shaka (2000) etc

32.For a similar brief summary, see Wylie, Savage Delight, pp.3-4. A concise version of the established story of Shaka is provided by Trevor Cope, "The History of the Zulus" in: Izibongo" Zulu Praise Poems (1968), pp.3-8. The most elaborate and influential treatment of these themes is in Ritter (1955), in large part based on Bryant (1949); a clear and systematic recent summary account is provided in Mountain (1999) but variations occur throughout the literature, see above n.29.

33. Wylie, Savage Delight , pp. 197, 241 etc

34. Ibid., Chs 8, 9 & Conclusion.

35.Nathaniel Isaacs, Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa (1936); The Diary of Henry Francis Fynn (1950); Charles Rawden Maclean, The Natal Papers of 'John Ross' (1992)

36. Dan Wylie, Savage Delight (2000), Ch.4 especially pp. 94 ff. In an 1832 letter to Fynn, Isaacs had encouraged him to embellish his accounts of Shaka and Dingane with a view to possible British annexation of Natal from which both of them might then greatly profit: "Make them out to be as bloodthirsty as you can and endeavour to give an estimation of the number of people they have murdered during their reign, and describe the frivolous crimes people lost their lives for. Introduce as many anecdotes relating to Chaka as you can; it all tends to swell up the work and make it interesting" (Wylie, op. cit. pp.94-95, cited from Kirby, Unpublished Documents relating to the career of Nathaniel Isaacs, the Natal Pioneer", *Africana Notes and*

News 18 (1969).

37. Julie Pridmore, "Henry Fynn and the Construction of Natal's History: Oral Recorder or Myth Maker?" (1991), p.30

38. Dan Wylie, Savage Delight, pp.120 ff. Cf. p.125: "Fynn's editors [James Stuart and Malcolm] proffer a fraudulent view of what Fynn's papers are: contradictorily fragmented, deeply tinted by Fynn's personal agendas, stylistically clumsy and incomplete. They conceal their own selectivity, their role in making the account a coherent narrative, and the stylistic polishing which projects an authority and learnedness clearly very different from the original Fynn's".

39. Dan Wylie, Savage Delight, p.209.

40. Carolyn Hamilton, Terrific Majesty (1998), pp.36-48

41. Hamilton, op.cit., p.40.

42. *South African Commercial Advertiser* June 11, 1826, cited by Hamilton, op.cit., p.40.

43. Cf. Hamilton, op. cit., p.47: "It was only after the death of Shaka that the traders began for the first time to talk about the colonization of Natal and to employ a rhetoric critical of Shaka. Their monopoly over Natal trade, which had prvailed since 1824, was finally coming to an end. ... The vilification of Shaka that began at this time was as specific to the conditions that prevailed in early 1829 as King's earlier remarks in 1826 and early 1828 were specific to his particular circumstances at the time".

44. Hamilton, op. cit., p.37

45. Trevor Cope, Introduction to Izibongo: Zulu Praise-Poems (1968), pp.27-28.

46. Cf. Vansina, Oral Tradition as History (1985), Ch.2: "Performance, Tradition and Text", pp.54 ff.; also Hamilton, op.cit., p.52 and n. 94.

47. Leroy Vail & Landeg White, Power and the Praise Poem, p. 66. The recording was by T.Arbousset and F.Daumas, Narrative of an Exploratory Tour to the Cape of Good Hope (1846). Cf. D.Rycroft, "An 1842 Version of Dingana Eulogies", *African Studies Journal* 43 (1984) pp.249-274.

48. Vail & White, op. cit., p.66; cf. Hamilton, op.cit., Ch.4.

49. Hamilton, op. cit., p.52 with reference to Julian Cobbing, "A Tainted Well. The Objectives, Historical Fantasies and Working Methods of James Stuart, with Counter-Argument", *Journal of Natal and Zulu History* 11 (1988) pp.115-54

50. Hamilton, op. cit., pp.53 -67

51. Ibid., p.50, cf.p.48.

52. Ibid., pp.68-69.

53. Izibongo: Zulu Praise-Poems, translated by Daniel Malcolm, p. 96, lines 130-142; cf. Also lines 276-284:

> Bird that eats others,
> As it was still eating others it destroyed some more;
> Still eating some it destroyed others
> As it was still eating others it destroyed some more;
> Still eating some it destroyed others
> As it was still eating others it destroyed some more.

54. Ibid., p. 96, lines 121-129; lines 185-196, 219-229, 321-335, 378-394 etc contain similar litanies of those who had been "devoured", "killed", "eaten up" etc.

55. Trevor Cope, Introduction to Izibongo: Zulu Praise-Poems, p.34

56. Izibongo: Zulu Praise-Poems, pp.90-92, lines 49-55.

57. Ibid., p.110, lines 348-349. Vail and White notes the suggestion that this particular passage may date from Shaka's actual reign, in view of the nature of the address, *Nkosi* ("King"), retained in the recorded version, Power and the Praise Poem, p.67 with reference to Malaba, "Shaka as a Literary Theme".

58. Trevor Cope, Introduction to Izibongo: Zulu Praise-Poems, p.50 with reference to Raymond Kunene, An Analytical Survey of Zulu Poetry, both Traditional and Modern (1962)

59. Cope, op.cit., pp.22, 31-32.

60. Ibid., p.34.

61. Cf. Mountain, The Rise and Fall of the Zulu Empire, p.24

62. J.H.Soga, The South-Eastern Bantu, p.457. The only positive explanation that Soga can offer invokes Shaka's "insatiable lust for blood".

63. E.V. Walter, Terror and Resistance: A Study of Political Violence (1969)

64. Vail & White describe a performance of the *isibongo* of Shaka by Gwebisa at the royal court near Nongema in 1927 which reflects the new political alliances and might be termed "the first *Inkatha* version of Shaka's praises" (op. cit., p.66)

65. Monica Wilson, "Co-operation and Conflict: The Eastern Cape Frontier", in: L.Thompson & M.Wilson (eds.), History of South Africa to 1870 (1982)

66. Neil Mostert, Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People (1992).

67. I.D. MacCrone, Race Attitudes in South Africa (1937); ibid., "The Frontier Tradition and Race Attitudes in South Africa", Race Relations Journal, 28 (1961) 19-30; Eric Walker, The Frontier Tradition in South African History, (1933).

68. Martin Legassick, "The Frontier Tradition in South African Historiography", in: S. Marks & A.Atmore (eds), Economy and Society in Pre-industrial South Africa, (1980)

69. Hermann Giliomee, "Processes in Development of the South African Frontier", in: H.Lamar & L.M.Thompson (eds.), The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa Compared (1981)

70. Martin Legasick, "The Northern Frontier to 1820", in: Richard Elphick & Hermann Giliomee (eds), The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840 , 2nd edition (1989); Nigel Penn, "The Beast of the Bokkeveld", in: Rogues, Rebels and Runaways: Eighteenth Century Cape Characters (1999), pp.132ff.

71. Mostert, Frontiers, pp. 219, 231.

72. Letter from Landdrost O.G de Wet of Stellenbosch to Governor Van Plettenberg and council, 13 March 1780, cited in André du Toit & Hermann Giliomee, Afrikaner Political Thought p.

73. André du Toit & Hermann Giliomee, Afrikaner Political Thought: Documents and Analyses. Vol.1: 1780-1850 (1983), Ch.4

74. Ben MacLennan, A Proper Degree of Terror: John Graham and the Eastern Cape Frontier (1986)

75. Hermann Giliomee, "Processes in Development of the South African Frontier"; also ibid., "The Eastern Frontier, 1770-1812", in: R.Elphick & H.Giliomee (eds.), The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840 (1989)

76. André du Toit & Hermann Giliomee, Afrikaner Political Thought , pp.

77. Letter from Landdrost Anders Stockenström to Governor Caledon, August 1810, cited in du Toit & Giliomee, op. cit., pp.

78. The previous passage is taken from du Toit & Giliomee, op. cit., p.

79. Report of Commandant A. Van Jaarsveld to the Cape Council of Policy, 20 July 1781 (from the translation in Moodie, The Record, III, p.110) as published in du Toit and Giliomee, op.cit., pp. 144-145. Van Jaarsveld's account of the run-up to his decision were as follows: "Having come to them as before, I found that they had not made the least preparation to depart, and they conducted themselves towards me as before, and said they would not go. On this the interpreter, Karkotie, secretly warned me to be well on my guard ... because he had heard them, with his own ears , encouraging each other to push in boldly among us, and pretend to ask for tobacco, when we could do nothing to them lest we shoot our own men. I reflected upon this, and remarked, with some uneasiness, that the Kafirs kept me surrounded by ten or twelve of their armed men, which I had before thought was that they might listen to what I was saying, when I formed a sudden resolution, and again ordered them, for the last time, to remove within two days, otherwise that on my return they must expect a battle ... [On my subsequent return] as we approached them, they were again ready to push in among us with their weapons, but were forbidden by me with sharp threats ... but the Kafirs, following quickly, again pressed in among men. ..." Cf. Mostert, Frontiers, p.230

80. *"Account of the Amakosae, or Southern Caffers" (*extracted from the manuscript notes of the Rev. Mr. Brownlee, who has resided as a missionary among the Caffers..): " ... The boors of Bruintjes-hoogte invited the Mandankae clan of Caffers, of whom Jalumba was then chief, to meet them on the western bank of the Great Fish River, for the purpose of holding a consultation on some public matter. The Mandankae attended the meeting, where a palaver was held, and they were entertained with tobacco. After which the boors said they had brought a costly present for their good friends the Caffers; and having spread some rush mats on the ground, they covered them with beads, and invited their visitors to make a scramble, and display their activity in picking them up, upon a signal to be given. The boors then retired a little distance to where their gund were lying ready loaded with two or three bullets each. The signal was given by the Veld-Cornet Botman. The Caffers rushed upon the beads, overturning each other in their eagerness. The boors at the same instant seized their guns and poured in a volley upon their unsuspecting visitors; and so destructive was their murderous aim, that very few, it is said, escaped the massacre!" (Appendix 1 of George Thompson, Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa (1827), pp.337-338).

81. J.S. Marais, Maynier and the First Boer Republic (1944), p. 8; cf. Moodie, The Record (1841, reprint 1959) pp. 44-45; Mostert, Frontiers, p.222.

82. See above n.16: Brownlee, *"Account of the Amakosae, or Southern Caffers"* Appendix 1 of

George Thompson, Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa (1827), pp.337-338; cf Thomas Pringle, Narrative of a Residence in South Africa (1835), p.102 note

83. Soga, The South-Eastern Bantu, p.137.

84. Ibid., pp.137-138; cf Theal, History of South Africa Vol.4: The Cape Colony to 1795, (1897, reprint 1964), pp."One monstrous deed, of which the tradition was long preserved by the Imidange (sic) clan, was brought home to Adriaan van Jaarsveld ..."

85. Stockenström, The Autobiography of Sir Andries Stockenström, (1887) pp. 57-58

86. Ibid., p.67. The fullest account of the Stockenström massacre is provided by Thomas Pringle, Narrative of a Residence in South Africa, pp.99-102; cf Mostert, Frontiers, p .384

87. Mostert, Frontiers, p.385. Mostert, p.384 also refers to an account later obtained from the Xhosas "that they had every intention of ambushing the Boers as they passed, but that this open and confident gesture had undermined their intention and all sat down to talk and smoke"

88. André du Toit, "Experiments with Truth and Justice in South Africa: Stockenström, Gandhi and the TRC"; G.E Cory, The Rise of South africa Vol.3, pp.286 ff; John Galbraith, Reluctant empire, p.138f; The Autobiography of Sir Andries Stockenström, Vol. II, Ch XXII, pp.65ff

89. See above Part 1: Democracy and Violence as Discourse, 1.2: "Political Discourse Theory as an Analytical Framework", pp.

90. Ibid., p.131

91. R.U.Kenny, Piet Retief (1976), p. 44

92. John Bird, The Annals of Natal: 1495-1845 (1888) Vol. 1, pp.359-360: Retief to Dingane 19 October 1837; cf Laband, Rope of Sand, p.81: "the battles of the emigrants against the Ndebele had thoroughly vindicated the effectiveness both of their defensive wagon laagers and of their offensive mounted commandos"

93. Laband, Rope of Sand, p.82

94. John Bird, The Annals of Natal: 1495-1845 , Vol. 1, pp.361-362: Dingane to Retief, 8 November, 1837

95. Bird, Annals of Natal, Vol. I, pp.368-9: D.P. Bezuidenhout's narrative; Owen, The Diary of the Rev. Francis Owen (1926), pp. 168-170: Azareele Sekese's account translated by Rev D. Ellenberger; cf Laband, op. cit., p.84f.

96. W.M. McMillan, Bantu, Boer and Briton, p.176 n2., cf Mostert, Frontiers, p.813; Meintjes,

The Voortrekkers, pp.101-102

97. Jay Naidoo, "Was the Retief Dingane Treaty a Fake?", Tracking Down Historical Myths, (1989) pp.82-106; G.E Cory, "Retief Dingane Treaty", *The Cape Times*, 12 July 1923; G.S Preller, "Cory bewerings ontsenuw", *Die Volkstem* 12 July 1923; J du Plessis, "Het Raadsel van het Retief Traktaat', *Het Zoeklicht* August 1923; S.F.N Gie (ed), Ooreenkoms, *Annals of the University of Stellenbosch,* IIB1, 1924; G.S Preller*,* Sketse en Opstelle (1928), pp.166-219.

98. Cf Jay Naidoo, "Was Retief Really an Innocent Victim?", op. cit., pp.107, 114 with reference to A.T Bryant, The Zulu People, p.464, E Walker, The Great Trek, p.149

99. Owen, Diary, November 9, 1837 pp.64-65.

100. Owen, Diary, October 31, 1837, p.59; cf. pp.48, 55, 6o

101. Bird, Annals of Natal, Vol. I, p.362: Retief to Dingane, 8 November 1837; cf Laband, op. cit., p. 83.

102. Kenny, Piet Retief, p.151.

103. Laband, op. cit., p.82; cf. Francis Owen, Diary, pp. 61-68;

104. Letter from Retief, *Graham's Town Journal*, 18 November 1837

105. Cf Laband, op. cit., p.85; Meintjes, The Voortrekkers, p.103

106. Cf J.H. Malan, Boer en Barbaar, of die Geskiedenis van die Voortrekkers tussen die jare 1835-1840 (1918), pp.272ff; Gustav.S. Preller, Piet Retief (1920), pp.221ff

107.H.B.Thom, Die Lewe van Gert Maritz (1965), p.201; cf. Kenny, Piet Retief, p.161; Meintjes, The Voortrekkers, p.104

108. Cf Naidoo, "Was Retief Really an Innocent Victim?", p.110; cf R.U Kenny, Piet Retief (1976), p.148: warning by American missionary Rev. G Champion against "so dangerous an undertaking"

109. Owen, Diary, p.104; cf. Naidoo, op. cit., p.112. Cf. Laband, Rope of Sand, p.79f for a description of the techniques and routines developed by Trekker mounted commando's.

110. Owen, Diary, 3 February 1838, pp.104-105; cf Naidoo, op. cit., p. 111; Laband, op. cit., p.86 referring to testimony by Mmemi, James Stuart Archives Vol III, p. 258

111. Owen, Diary, 3 February 1838, p. 105 , Preller, Piet Retief, p.249

112. Naidoo, “Was the Retief Dingane Treaty a Fake?”, op.cit., pp.88ff.

113. William Wood, Statements respecting Dingaan , King of the Zoolahs, with some particulars relative to the Massacres of Messrs. Retief and Biggars, and their Parties Cape Town (1840), pp.25-26; Owen, Diary, 6 February 1838, p.107f., p.111.

114. Owen, Diary, 6 February 1838, p.107; Laband, op. cit., p. 88.

115. Owen, Diary, 6 February 1838, pp. 108-109

116. The casualty counts cited even in recent literature varies: “Some 40 white men, 56 white women, 185 white children and 250 coloured servants lay dead, and there were many more wounded” (Laband, op. cit., p.91); “85 Boer men and women and 148 children, as well as 250 Khoikhoi servants, died that day” (Mostert, op. cit., p.815)

117. Laband, op. cit., p.89

118. Mostert, op. cit., p. 814

119. Mostert, op. cit., p.815

120. Laband, op. cit., p.101; B.J. Liebenberg, Andries Pretorius in Natal (1977), pp. 38-40

121. Cf. Naidoo, “Was the Retief Dingane Treaty a Fake?”; Laband, op.cit., p.102; Mostert, op. cit., p.816

122. Laband., op. cit., pp. 79-81, 102

123. Ibid., p.102

124. L.M. Thompson, The Political Mythology of Apartheid (1985), Ch.5

125. Cf. E.g., C.W.H van der Post, Piet Uijs of Lijden en Strijd der Voortrekkers in Natal (1897), pp. 45-53; J.H. Malan, Boer en Barbaar (1918), pp.273-289; G.S. Preller, Piet Retief (1920), pp. 247-268

126. Tony Karon, "Negotiations become a site of struggle", Die Suid-Afrikaan, 33 (1990).

127. Isabel Hofmeyr, “We Spend Our Years As A Tale That Is Told”: Oral Historical Narrative in a South African Chiefdom (1993), p.110

128. Hofmeyr, “We Spend Our Years As A Tale That Is Told”, p.111, p.297 n.24

129. Ibid.

130. Ibid., p.113.

131. Ibid., p.114.

132. Ibid., pp.115-116.

133. Ibid., p.116: “Sensing that he and his followers face certain death, the chief sends out a group of women and children in the knowledge that the Boers will indenture them as labourers. Included in the party is the legitimate heir to the chieftaincy, and by apparently playing into the hands of the enemy, the chief plans to pursue his own agenda of keeping the dynastic line intact. The young chief does, in fact, survive, and is later discovered by his subjects and returned to his domain”.

134. Ibid., p.117.

135. Ibid., p.140.

136. Ibid., with reference to the testimony of Willem Pretorius in the 1890s based on an eye-witness account: “They skinned Hermaans alive while he begged for God’s help. When they broke him open (the breastbones from each other), his heart was still beating”.

137. Ibid., p.141.

138. Paul Kruger, The Memoirs of Paul Kruger, pp.49-51

139. Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp. 145 ff, 139ff. With reference to J.M. Orpen, Reminiscences (1908), p.255.

140. Gustav S. Preller, “Baanbrekers”, in: Oorlogsoormag en ander Sketse (1931), originally published in *Die Brandwag* 10/12/1914 & 15/1/1915; cf. Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp.150ff

141. Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp.151-152.

142. Ibid., p.152.

143. N.Courtney Acutt, “Makapan se Gruweldade”, *Die Huisgenoot* 6 / 5 / 1938, cited in Hofmeyr, ibid..

144. Hofmeyr, op. cit.

145. J.M. Orpen, Reminiscences, p.250, cf. p. 254; cf. Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp.109-110, 143.

146. Hofmeyr, op. cit., pp.113-114.