



JOHN DUNN

(Courtesy of the Local History Museum, Durban)

THE TRANSFRONTIERSMAN:
THE CAREER OF JOHN DUNN IN
NATAL AND ZULULAND 1834 - 1895

by

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PREFACE

The origins of this thesis can be traced to James Madison University, Virginia, where I was first introduced to African studies in lectures given by Dr. Daniel Macfarland, Professor of African History. I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to further my studies at the University of Ghana, Legon, where I accompanied Dr. Macfarland on a field-trip of West African countries in 1973. I will never be able to fully convey my feelings of gratitude to Dr. Macfarland. He has been my teacher and patron, a wise counsellor and an unfailing friend.

The production of this thesis owes a great deal to the advice and assistance of family, friends and colleagues. I am indebted to Professor Colin Webb, Professor of History at the University of Cape Town, for suggesting a thesis topic that has proved both rewarding and fascinating. Professor Andrew Duminy of the Department of History, University of Natal, Durban, made me more appreciative of the worth of the 'individual' in the historical process; for his warm support and comradeship I am grateful. A special acknowledgement to Professor Trevor Cope and Mr. Adrian Koopman of the Department of Zulu Language and Literature at the University of Natal for translating and interpreting John Dunn's *izibongo*, (Zulu praise songs). And my sincere thanks to Miss Helen Feist of the Department of German at the University of Natal for the efforts she put into translating the original version of a German missionary's experiences in Zululand. I would also like to express my thanks to the staffs of the South African Archives, Pietermaritzburg Depot, and the Killie Campbell Africana Library, Durban, whose courteous assistance made research at these institutions more pleasant and fruitful. In addition, I wish to acknowledge the financial assistance provided by the Human Sciences Research Council.

I am particularly grateful for the gracious hospitality afforded me by Mr. Daniel Dunn, spokesman for the Dunn community in southern Zululand. Through him I gained an additional insight into John Dunn's career that could only have been acquired through contact with Dunn's descendants and by observing the physical environment in which Dunn lived. The

tedium entailed in the typing of the thesis manuscript was borne admirably by Mrs. Jean Carter, Mrs. Esme Serfontein and Mrs. Fiona Fletcher all of Durban. I can only praise the great pains and the personal interest which they took in the typing, proof-reading and correcting of the text. A personal note of appreciation and remembrance is due my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Ballard of Page County, Virginia, who rendered invaluable moral and financial support; they alone know how much the completion of this thesis has meant to me.

This thesis was a supreme test of my physical and intellectual stamina. The task was made easier and more enjoyable for me by my supervisor, Dr. Paul Maylam of the Department of History at the University of Natal, Durban. Dr. Maylam guided me through the treacherous waters of the present debates in South African historiography, and made me aware of their implications with regard to Dunn's career. I gained immeasurably from Dr. Maylam's knowledge of African societies and his sophisticated perception of the nature of nineteenth century British imperialism, colonialism and racialism. A formal testimonial is a totally inadequate vehicle for expressing my appreciation and gratitude for Dr. Maylam's untiring efforts. His innate sympathy and intellectual vitality were constantly productive.

Finally, in compliance with the regulations of the University of Natal, I declare that this entire thesis is, except where specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, my own original work.

Durban,

June, 1980.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B.P.P.	-	<i>British Parliamentary Papers</i>
C.O.	-	Colonial Office Confidential Print
C.S.O.	-	Colonial Secretary's Office
D.D.P.	-	Domenic Dunn Papers
K.C.L.	-	Killie Campbell Africana Library
L.C.	-	<i>Legislative Council Documents and Reports</i>
N.B.B.	-	<i>Natal Blue Book</i>
N.G.G.	-	<i>Natal Government Gazette</i>
S.G.O.	-	Surveyor General's Office
S.P.G.	-	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
Z.A.	-	Zululand Archives

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CHAPTER ONEINTRODUCTION

The career of John Dunn in nineteenth century Zululand is significant as well as controversial: Dunn was a versatile individual and served in varied capacities: secretary and diplomatic adviser to Cetshwayo, King of Zululand (1873-1879); labour recruiter and Protector of Immigrants in Zululand for the Natal colonial government; political and military intelligence officer under Lord Chelmsford in the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879; principal political adviser to Sir Garnet Wolseley on the post-war settlement, and chief of the largest and wealthiest of the thirteen districts carved out of the subjugated Zulu kingdom. The numerous positions of responsibility and authority held by Dunn compels one to embark upon a discussion of developing themes in the history of Zululand and Natal in particular, and southern Africa in general.

A number of areas will be investigated: the emergence and decline of a 'frontier zone' in pre-colonial Natal; the material foundations of political power in the Zulu kingdom during the 1860s and 1870s; the nature of the white settler community of Natal; the creation of an extra-territorial migrant labour system involving Natal, Zululand and the Delagoa Bay hinterland. Questions related to British imperial policy and Dunn's career are inextricably woven into a discussion of South African confederation and the Anglo-Zulu war. It is necessary to take a fresh and detailed look at Dunn's role in the Ulundi or post-war settlement of 1879. A great deal of political activity occurred as a result of Dunn's own chiefly administration and his virulent opposition to the royalist Usuthu faction which clamoured for Cetshwayo's re-installation as king of Zululand. Attention is given to Dunn's role as an agent of 'colonization' in southern Zululand, the changes brought about through Dunn's introduction of African clients, and livestock and trade goods. The historian of romantic bent must guard against the inclination to exaggerate the historical significance of

individuals and minimize the effects of environment. This thesis attempts to achieve a balance between the individual and his environment. The approach of this thesis is thematic rather than biographical; the various, and, at times, seemingly unrelated subjects mentioned above are held together by the continuous thread of Dunn's presence and participation in events related to this wide range of themes.

John Dunn's career in Zululand has escaped the serious notice of most southern African historians. No scholarly biography or 'substantial' thesis exists on this romantic and little understood figure whose political, economic and military activities spanned three crucial decades in the history of Natal and Zululand, (1857-1887). Two theses covering aspects of Dunn's career have, however, been written. The first, a Master's thesis by Charles Shields, was written in 1939.⁽¹⁾ Shields' work suffers from a number of weaknesses. It is based largely on secondary sources and the author has failed to grasp the point that Dunn was a major contributor to the terms of the Ulundi settlement of 1879. Shields' discussion of Dunn's involvement in the firearms trade in Zululand is devoted to exonerating Dunn of the charge that he was a 'gun-runner'. These allegations of arms smuggling are a minor issue and Shields failed to see beyond these charges and assess the much more vital questions related to the role of firearms in strengthening Zulu military and political power.

The second work on Dunn is that of Simon Barber who produced an Honours thesis entitled 'John Dunn and Zululand, 1856-1883'.⁽²⁾ Within the parameters of its narrow time span and degree limitations Barber's thesis is useful. His investigation of the post-war era and Dunn's involvement in post-war political intrigue shows that the source material has been skilfully employed. However, Barber's attempt to portray Dunn as an African feudal lord in the Zulu kingdom reveals an ignorance of land tenure systems in indigenous African societies.

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- (1) C. Shields, 'The Life of John Dunn: With Special Reference to Zululand 1879-1897', (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of South Africa, 1939).
- (2) S.R. Barber, 'John Dunn and Zululand 1856-1883', (unpublished Honours thesis, University of Natal, 1971).

Both Barber and Shields take pains to defend Dunn's polygamous marriages to African women on the grounds that Dunn was only observing marriage customs common to the African society in which he lived. Having rested their respective cases on such obvious surface observations Shields and Barber did not look further to see that marriage in northern Nguni societies was a convenient social vehicle for accumulating political power and material resources.⁽³⁾

Dunn's life has also formed the subject matter of two historical novels. Dunn's career is sensationalized in Oliver Walker's novels *Proud Zulu* and *Zulu Royal Feather*.⁽⁴⁾ Both books are riddled with Walker's fanciful accounts of Dunn's sexual exploits with his African wives; this reflects the author's not unnatural desire to sell copy instead of portraying Dunn's domestic relations in a sensitive and accurate manner. Walker's mediocre novels would not have received attention in this thesis if he had not claimed a historical perspective. The publishers, with Walker's approval, described *Zulu Royal Feather* as 'a frank portrait of an epic sensualist who believed that in propagating so freely he was fulfilling part of the Lord's plan'.⁽⁵⁾ Such sensational description of important individuals have twisted historical fact out of all proportion, and it has made the historians' task of destroying popular myths a much more difficult one.

Dunn wrote an autobiography, *John Dunn, Cetewayo and the Three Generals*,⁽⁶⁾ which was published in 1886. The text was prefaced and edited by Duncan

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- (3) See J.J. Guy, 'The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom: The Civil War in Zululand 1879-1884' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1975), p.57.
- (4) O. Walker, *Proud Zulu* (London, 1949) and O. Walker, *Zulu Royal Feather* (London, 1961).
- (5) *Ibid.*, publishers note in Foreword.
- (6) D.C.F. Moodie, (ed.), *John Dunn, Cetewayo and the Three Generals*, (Pietermaritzburg, 1886).

Moodie, an amateur historian and journalist from Pietermaritzburg.⁽⁷⁾ Moodie was a vociferous promoter of British imperial expansion and an ardent supporter of the British monarchy; he scandalised his readers by claiming proudly to have had the 'pleasure' of caning an Australian who had dared to express his republican sympathies in his presence. The preface is more a scathing indictment of Gladstone's Liberal government for abandoning the Transvaal and refusing to annex a defeated Zululand to the Empire in 1881 than a descriptive introduction to Dunn's career. The small volume is interlarded with advice to sportsmen and accounts of Dunn's exploits as a hunter. One searches through the text in vain for any comment by Dunn on his attitudes towards polygamy, or information on the running of his several households.⁽⁸⁾ Nevertheless, the book is invaluable for it reveals Dunn's own interpretation of several notable events in which he was involved. For example, Dunn discusses Cetshwayo's 1873 coronation in considerable detail. Dunn had the rare distinction of being one of two European witnesses present. He goes to great lengths to explain his relations with Sir Theophilus Shepstone, Lord Chelmsford and Sir Garnet Wolseley. He includes his own opinions on the causes of the Anglo-Zulu war, and the weaknesses of the post-war settlement.

Concepts of individual and group social behaviour in relation to the natural and human environment are useful to the historian if they provide an insight into an individual's attitudes and behavioral

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- (7) Donald Morris, *The Washing of the Spears* (London, 1966), pp.620-621. Moodie wrote two other books on southern Africa: *The History of the Battles and Adventures of the British, the Boers and the Zulus etc., in Southern Africa from the Time of the Pharoah Necho to 1880* (Cape Town, 1888); and *Battles in South Africa Including the Zulu War* (Adelaide, 1879). The latter volume contained 'John Dunn's Notes', the material that was later published as *John Dunn and the Three Generals*.
- (8) Dunn was apparently reticent and reserved in manner; he refused to discuss or defend publicly his views on polygamy or his own reasons for entering into polygamous unions. If it had not been for the care taken by one of Dunn's sons in recording his impressions of life in Dunn's household, this facet in Dunn's life would have been lost to the researcher. See Domenic Dunn Papers (Killie Campbell Library, Durban). Ms.2.09.

patterns. The key to Dunn's behaviour is more easily unravelled through an investigation of the 'frontier' environment of Dunn's youth.

The historical development of pre-colonial Natal has been discussed by a succession of historians, missionaries, colonial officials and Nataliana enthusiasts. Early missionaries and settlers such as Allen Gardiner and Nathaniel Isaacs gave vivid accounts of white-black relations in their narratives.⁽⁹⁾ Graham MacKeurtan and A.F. Hattersley have written on early white settlement and colonization.⁽¹⁰⁾ James Stuart and A.T. Bryant devoted their efforts to studies of the northern Nguni peoples and, more specifically, to the Zulu kingdom.⁽¹¹⁾ In 1965 Edgar Brookes and Colin Webb co-authored a general history of Natal.⁽¹²⁾ In all the works, with the exception of Stuart, various aspects of white settlement and black reaction to white penetration are discussed, but from a group focus reflecting albocentric attitudes. In order to reach a deeper understanding of the nature of black-white interaction in the pre-colonial era it is necessary to draw upon recent studies of African frontier societies.⁽¹³⁾

It will be argued that a 'frontier' situation evolved in the period beginning with permanent white settlement in 1824 and before the formal British annexation of Natal in 1843. An essential task of this analysis is to establish the economic, political, social and ideological parameters that characterize a frontier. Arriving at the precise

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- (9) For example, see Allen Gardiner, *Narrative of a Journey to the Zoolu Country in South Africa* (London, 1836); and Nathaniel Isaacs *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa*, 2 vols. (Cape Town, 1936 and 1937).
- (10) Graham MacKeurtan, *The Cradle Days of Natal, 1497-1845* (London, 1930); and Allen Hattersely, *The British Settlement of Natal: A Study in Imperial Migration* (Cambridge, 1950).
- (11) A.T. Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* (London, 1929); and James Stuart and Duncan MacK. Malcolm (eds.) *The Diary of Henry Francis Fynn* (Pietermaritzburg, 1950).
- (12) See E.A. Brookes and C. de B. Webb, *A History of Natal* (Pietermaritzburg, 1965).
- (13) See Herman Giliomee, 'The South Afrifan Frontier: A Theoretical Framework' (unpublished seminar paper delivered at the meeting of the South African Historical Society, 1977).

definition of a 'frontier' is a most difficult undertaking when one considers that the 'frontier tradition' in South Africa has been incorporated into the current debate between 'liberal' and 'radical' historians. (14)

The transition of the Natal frontier zone to a colonial enclave was a major factor in Dunn's decision to move to the independent Zulu kingdom. It is no coincidence that Dunn left a fledgling British colony whose entire social, political and economic fabric was undergoing profound changes. The influx in the 1850s of the Byrne settlers, colonial administrators and clerics played a prominent role in terminating the state of political turbulence and social fluidity that was characteristic of the frontier. The cultural and racial belligerence of the colony's settler population promoted the institutionalization of western European values and lifestyles - which, in turn, left little room for white deviation from the newly emerging and increasingly rigidified colonial order. (15)

Dunn was a product of an earlier, pre-colonial cultural milieu that was fast disappearing in Natal by the late 1840s and certainly by the mid-1850s. By moving beyond the limits of metropolitan control into Zululand, and by substituting indigenous northern Nguni cultural norms for those of European origin Dunn at once becomes a 'transfrontiersman' as defined by the Isaacmans in their study of the prazeros of the lower Zambezi valley of Mozambique in the eighteenth and nineteenth

(14) For a brief critique see Harrison M. Wright, *The Burden of the Present: Liberal-Radical Controversy over Southern African History* (Cape Town, 1977), pp.63-64, and Martin Legassick, 'The Frontier Tradition in South African Historiography', in *Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, vol. 2, I.C.S. 1970.

(15) D.M. Schreuder, 'The Cultural Factor in Victorian Imperialism: A Case Study of the British Civilizing Mission', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. IV, No. 3, May 1976, pp.284-285. Schreuder uses the term 'cultural belligerence' to describe the attitudes and prejudices of white settlers, officials and missionaries towards indigenous peoples in British South African colonies in the nineteenth century. Schreuder contends that an exaggerated sense of cultural and racial superiority was prevalent among whites living on the colonial periphery.

centuries. In Dunn's case, we are dealing with a first generation transfrontiersman. He represents a prototype of a unique human class that developed distinctive traits assigned to the 'frontier man'.⁽¹⁶⁾ It is of vital concern to establish Dunn's cultural frame of reference, for life on the Natal-Zululand frontier moulded his personality and, in large measure, fashioned his attitudes and prejudices.

The prefix 'trans' - as in transfrontiersman - implies movement between two different societies with alien cultures and values. Dunn was a social product of both European and northern Nguni societies; it is thus essential that an attempt be made to offer an interpretation of the state and society in the Zulu kingdom and its impact on his life-style and rise to prominence. John Dunn entered Zululand on a foreboding note; he was prominent in the Zulu Civil War of 1856, having fought with the loser, Mbuyazi, at Ndongakusuka. Shortly thereafter he was invited by the victorious prince, Cetshwayo, to take up permanent residence in the kingdom and become his amanuensis and adviser. Dunn moved permanently to Zululand in 1858 and was given a tract of land in the southern part of the kingdom known as the 'Ungoye'.⁽¹⁷⁾

Dunn's role in the political economy of Zululand was of great significance. He understood thoroughly the advantages that were attached to polygamous marriages in Zulu society and employed the institution of marriage to cement alliances with numerous clans in order to secure material resources and political power. The power of the Zulu kings and chiefs had its foundations in the extended kinship system.⁽¹⁸⁾ The number of

(16) Allen and Barbara Isaacman, 'The Prazeros as Transfrontiersmen: A Study in Social and Cultural Change', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, VIII, 1975, p.2.

(17) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.13. 'Ungoye' is spelled 'Ngoye' today and refers to a low range of mountains in southern Zululand. The Ngoye is approximately twenty-five kilometres south-west of Empangeni. For the purposes of this thesis 'Ungoye' is used more loosely to describe the whole of Dunn's domain before the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879.

(18) Guy, 'Destruction of Zulu Kingdom', p.22.

clients and supporters that a chief could muster for regimental duty depended, to a great extent, on his success in incorporating as many clans as possible into his political and economic orbit through marriage. The kings, princes and chiefs usually provided protection, adjudicated legal disputes and allowed the allied clans to share in their material largesse; in return the clans gave their loyalty and labour-power. Thus, a system of mutual dependence emerged between the Zulu chiefs and their client clans.

Monica Wilson used Dunn as a prime example of how an individual employed the patrilineal segmentary lineage system to enhance his status and power:

Marriage with stock and polygamy allows a wealthy lineage to increase much faster than poorer lineages. John Dunn, the Scottish trader who became a sub-chief in Zululand under Cetshwayo and married forty-eight Zulu wives, had over a hundred children. He could marry many wives because he commanded wealth in cattle. This is how certain lineages expanded very fast in Africa.(19)

It is no mere coincidence that Dunn accumulated vital material and human resources in the Zulu kingdom during the 1860s and 1870s. Dunn's rapid rise in Zulu society was tied to the political fortunes of Cetshwayo - it occurred during a period of devolution of political authority. Cetshwayo's victory over Mbuyazi and his subsequent claims to the throne were by no means accepted by other sections ruled by ambitious and influential members of the Zulu royal family. Mpande's control over his rival sons had proved ineffective and he lost prestige and authority as a result.⁽²⁰⁾ Yet Cetshwayo was too weak militarily to overthrow his father if other powerful chiefs and princely rivals combined against the Usuthu. The chiefs and princes

(19) Monica Wilson, 'Changes in Social Structure in Southern Africa', in L. Thompson (ed.), *African Societies in Southern Africa*, (London, 1969), p.78.

(20) See Rosalind Mael, 'The Problems of Political Integration in the Zulu Empire', (Ph.D. thesis University of California, Los Angeles, 1974).

of northern Zululand, notably Zibhebhu, Hamu, a royal cousin and Mnyamana, might well contest such a radical assumption of royal power. Therefore Cetshwayo acted cautiously and allowed Mpande to remain as the official symbol of royal authority.⁽²¹⁾

In order to increase his power Cetshwayo needed allies; Dunn, an able, opportunistic and capable individual, agreed to serve the paramount⁽²²⁾ in return for generous economic concessions and a large measure of political independence.⁽²³⁾ Dunn served Cetshwayo as scribe and adviser, but, most important, he was the means whereby the Usuthu obtained firearms. Dunn's success in supplying guns to Cetshwayo's followers tipped the military balance in the paramount's favour.⁽²⁴⁾ Dunn advised Cetshwayo to pursue a policy that would consolidate his internal political position in Zululand, and Dunn also cautioned his benefactor from indulging in external military ventures against the Boers of the Transvaal and their Swazi allies.⁽²⁵⁾ In 1873 Cetshwayo's strategy was vindicated with his uncontested coronation as King of Zululand. Dunn's role in Cetshwayo's manoeuvrings for the throne must be acknowledged as a major factor in arresting the trend toward political devolution and in the return to increased centralization of royal authority.

Cetshwayo's 1873 coronation marked a watershed in Anglo-Zulu relations as well as in Zulu domestic politics; it was a ceremony shadowed by intensive diplomatic negotiations between Natal's Secretary for Native Affairs, Theophilus Shepstone, and Cetshwayo and Dunn. Shepstone took advantage of the occasion to promulgate laws whose supposed breach would justify the interference of the British government in Zulu internal affairs.⁽²⁶⁾ The free and orderly passage of migrant labourers from the Delagoa Bay hinterland through Zululand to Natal was a second major objective of Shepstone's official visit. John Dunn was later appointed

(21) J.Y. Gibson, *The Story of the Zulus* (London, 1911), p.123.

(22) Cetshwayo is referred to as the 'Paramount' and the title is appropriate for the period from 1857 to Mpande's death in 1872.

(23) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.29.

(24) See Guy, 'A Note on Firearms in the Zulu Kingdom', pp.557-570.

(25) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.26.

(26) P.A. Kennedy, 'The Fatal Diplomacy: Sir Theophilus Shepstone and the Zulu Kings, 1839-1879', (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1976), p.250.

Protector of Immigrants in Zululand for the Natal government. (27)

The agreement struck between the Zulu and British governments on the question of Tsonga labour was a notable event; it was the first extra-territorial migrant labour system created by mutual agreement between a British colonial government and an independent black state in southern Africa before the advent of deep-level mining on the reef in the 1880s. This part of Dunn's career deserves close scrutiny. The whole question of migrant labour must necessarily be approached from several points of view with equal attention given to the nature of the economy and society among the Tsonga peoples of the Delagoa Bay hinterland as well as an investigation of the political economy of Natal and Zululand up to the eve of the Anglo-Zulu war. (28)

The emergence of the Zulu confederation under Shaka in the 1820s as the most powerful northern Nguni state created new conqueror-subject relationships with neighbouring African states and chiefdoms. The Tsonga chiefdoms, situated between Lake St. Lucia and Delagoa Bay were subject, in varying degrees, to tributary exactions levied by the Zulu king and members of the ruling hierarchy. (29)

African opposition to the threat of territorial and economic encroachment by European colonies, republics or rival black states, prompted many African societies to take innovative action. Legassicks's study of the early nineteenth century Transorangian frontier led him to the conclusion that indigenous black peoples employed European technological practices and co-operated with white settler economies to bolster their own political and military positions to a greater

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- (27) See Charles C. Ballard, 'Migrant Labour in Natal 1860-1879: With Special Reference to Zululand and the Delagoa Bay Hinterland', *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, vol. I, 1978, pp.25-43.
- (28) See also C. Ballard, 'The Role of Tributary Labour in the Zulu Political Economy, 1865-1879', in *Conference on the History of Opposition in Southern Africa* (Johannesburg, 1978), pp.57-74.
- (29) Colin Webb and John Wright (eds.), *The James Stuart Archive*, vol. I, (Pietermaritzburg, 1976), p.24.

degree than has previously been acknowledged.⁽³⁰⁾ The Zulu kingdom during the years of Cetshwayo's political emergence and actual reign provides an example of how Zulu-Tsonga tributary relations were altered by the growing white settler-dominated economy in Natal, yet successfully manipulated to strengthen the Zulu polity.

The introduction of 'alien' black labourers, particularly the Tsonga, into the expanding capitalist economy of Natal in the 1870s provided the cash-crop agriculturalists and railroad contractors with much needed manpower. Natal's decision to conscript African migrants occurred at a time when internal labour scarcity and regional competition for labour were hindering the colony's progress. The creation and implementation of an extra-territorial migrant labour network was a co-operative response from both the appointed executive and elected legislative branches of the Natal government to increased labour demands. The migrant labour policy was, in essence, a solution born of compromise. Tsonga migrants were held up as the acceptable alternative to further coercing the Natal Nguni, by legal and economic methods, into wage labour. The latter was the ultimate goal of the white settler community, but was clearly unacceptable to Shepstone and his superiors at the Colonial Office.⁽³¹⁾

The objectives of this particular study of migrant labour are essentially fourfold: first, to examine the friction that emerged between the Natal Executive and the Legislative Council over the reserve system; second, a consideration of the economic factors which pressured the Natal Executive (principally Shepstone) into taking initiatives that would provide the settlers with labour without disrupting the administration of the reserves; third, an account of Shepstone's scheme for importing Tsonga labourers through Zululand to Natal, and an analysis of the negotiations between Shepstone,

(30) Martin Legassick, 'The Griqua, the Sotho-Tswana, and the Missionaries, 1780-1840: The Politics of a Frontier Zone' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1969), p.6.

(31) For a thorough analysis of settler opposition to Shepstone's administration of African affairs in Natal see David Welsh, *The Roots of Segregation: Native Policy in Natal, 1845-1910*, (Cape Town, 1971), Chapters, 3, 4, 5 and 10.

Cetshwayo and Dunn to ensure a safe and orderly passage of migrants; lastly, an examination of the system in action - the mechanics of recruitment, transport and lodging, influx control, assignment, wages and working conditions. (32)

No discussion of John Dunn's career would be complete without an in-depth analysis of the imperial factor at work in nineteenth century Natal and Zululand. The 'liberal-radical' debate has been extended to include British imperialism. Liberal historians, notably Robinson and Gallagher, see the confederation initiatives taken by the Colonial Office in the 1870s as an expression of Britain's commitment to achieve strategic security in southern Africa through the consolidation of the British colonies with the Voortrekker republics and through the subjection of independent African states. (33) radical historians interpret nineteenth century British imperialism as the naturally expansive spirit rooted in the western European capitalist system. Radical arguments turn metropolitan ministers and colonial officials into agents of capitalist development in southern Africa either in conscious or subconscious form. The economic imperative rife in radical writings has stimulated a massive revision of the Anglo-Zulu war. (34) Etherington has found evidence that Shepstone was an imperial visionary who wanted to subject the Zulu kingdom and all black states south of the Zambezi to British rule. Africans would be ruled by Shepstonian methods and provide the 'cheap' labour desired by white mining, farming and industrial interests. (35)

(32) Ballard, 'Migrant Labour in Natal', p.26.

(33) R. Robinson and J. Gallagher with Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians* (New York, 1968), chapters I and III.

(34) See A. Atmore and S. Marks, 'The Imperial Factor in South Africa in the nineteenth century: Towards a Reassessment', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. III, No. 4, 1972.

(35) Norman Etherington, 'The Meaning of Shepstone's Coronation of Cetshwayo', unpublished paper delivered at the Conference on the Anglo-Zulu War 1879. A Centennial Reappraisal, (University of Natal, Durban, Feb: 7 - 9, 1979), p.37.

British imperialism in southern Africa is an immensely complex subject. It manifested itself through metropolitan policy-makers in Whitehall, through colonial officials in Natal and missionaries in Zululand and through such disparate groups as humanitarians and land-hungry and labour-hungry white settlers. The Zulu kingdom was the focus of white penetration from official, colonial, missionary and humanitarian quarters.⁽³⁶⁾ A study of John Dunn lends itself admirably to an investigation of these forms of British imperialism. It will be shown that the policies of metropolitan officials were often in conflict and detrimental to imperialists of the settler and official schools. Dunn's position as a transfrontiersman in Zululand becomes practically untenable with the approach of the Anglo-Zulu war. The pressure being exerted by British imperial agents and military officers completely forced Dunn to 'transform' his political stance from one of neutrality to one of open and active support for the British military invasion of Zululand.⁽³⁷⁾ Henceforth, Dunn's moral credibility was compromised in the minds of many Zulu.

Dunn's first real contact with the British authorities began with the 1873 coronation of Cetshwayo as King of the Zulu kingdom. The period 1873-78 was one of intensified interaction and gradual estrangement between Dunn and the British imperial and colonial authorities. Further, it must be stressed that Dunn's involvement with the British government is divided into three distinct phases; first, the pre-war or confederation period (1873-1878) when Dunn's contact is limited

(36) For example see E. Unterhalter, 'Confronting Imperialism: The People of Nquthu and the 1879 Invasion', unpublished paper delivered at the Conference on the Anglo-Zulu war 1879: A Centennial Reappraisal, (University of Natal, Durban, Feb. 7 - 9, 1979).

In February 1979 a conference devoted to a centennial reappraisal of the causes, conduct and repercussions of the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879 was held. Various aspects of the war period were discussed by eighteen historians, linguists and social anthropologists at the University of Natal, Durban.

(37) Charles Ballard, 'The Political Transformation of a Transfrontiersman: The Career of John Dunn in Zululand 1857-1878', in *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. VII, No. 3, May 1979.

to colonial administrators, notably Theophilus Shepstone, Sir Henry Bulwer and John Shepstone. Second, the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879 marks a short but extremely momentous phase whereby Dunn is compelled to serve the British armed forces in Zululand; his involvement at this juncture is with imperial rather than colonial officials. Among these are Major General Sir Garnet Wolseley, Lord Chelmsford and other high ranking military officers.⁽³⁸⁾ The third, or post-war phase (1879-1884), encompasses that turbulent period of Dunn's administration as a powerful chief in Zululand and the political manoeuvring behind the Zulu civil war of the 1880s.

British imperial policy resolutions in southern Africa changed from one of caution and economy to one of expansion and consolidation with the arrival of the fourth Earl of Carnarvon as Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1874. Carnarvon envisaged the confederation of Britain's settler communities in the Cape, Natal and Griqualand West. Moreover, he deemed it necessary to incorporate the independent Voortrekker republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State in addition to all independent African states south of the Zambezi river. Carnarvon believed that this scheme would relieve the imperial government of financial burdens, especially defence, and bolster Britain strategically and politically.⁽³⁹⁾

Theophilus Shepstone was given the responsibility of annexing the South African Republic and, through persuasion or coercion, persuading the Voortrekkers to accept confederation. On 12 April 1877 Shepstone formally annexed the Transvaal to the Crown.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Having emerged as the Colonial Office's specialist in African affairs, Shepstone used his enhanced reputation and position as Administrator for the Transvaal to destroy Zulu independence and bring it under British subjugation. Historians of the confederation era have stressed that Theophilus Shepstone shifted his support in the boundary dispute between Zululand and the Transvaal to the latter. However,

(38) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.105 and 115.

(39) C.F. Goodfellow, *Great Britain and South African Confederation, 1870-1881* (Cape Town, 1966), pp.51-72.

(40) *Ibid.*, pp.111-115.

as Kennedy suggests, what is discernible in Shepstone's actions is not an abrupt shift from Zulu to Boer but a series of manoeuvres designed to exploit the office of Transvaal Administrator to reduce Zululand to the status of a British protectorate. Not until 1874 did Shepstone's expansionist aims in Zululand coincide with the policy of the Colonial Office.⁽⁴¹⁾ The political activity leading up to Shepstone's takeover of the Transvaal involved Dunn and opened a breach in their relationship.

Cetshwayo, Dunn and the Zulu ruling class did not see the motive behind Shepstone's coronation proclamations as a manoeuvre to impose legal controls on Zulu domestic affairs. They mistakenly believed that the coronation summit had committed both the British government and the Zulu king to maintaining the status quo. As Dunn remarked a decade later, Cetshwayo accepted Shepstone's proclamation as 'but a lecture of advice'.⁽⁴²⁾ Economic advantage had stimulated Dunn and the king to promote the recruitment and passage of Tsonga migrants and, in the process, both men were linked and, to a certain extent, dependent on Natal's expanding political economy. Dunn became a servant of both the Zulu state and the British Crown - his position as Protector of Immigrants placed his political activities on behalf of the Zulu king under the eye of the Secretary for Native Affairs, and later the Colonial Office. The outcome of the coronation negotiations served to erode further the independence of Dunn, Cetshwayo and the Zulu people.

The immediate post-war period (1879-1883) saw Dunn reach the peak of his power, and fall just as rapidly four years later. On 1 Sept. 1879, Sir Garnet Wolseley, Her Majesty's High Commissioner for south-east Africa, confirmed the appointment of John Dunn as one of the thirteen chieftains selected to rule post-war Zululand under the terms of the Ulundi treaty.⁽⁴³⁾ Immediately a storm of protest

(41) Kennedy, 'Fatal Diplomacy', p.318.

(42) *Ibid.*, p.250.

(43) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.146.

erupted from British government officials, Natal settlers and missionary societies over the settlement and Dunn's appointment. Bishop John W. Colenso and his daughters Harriette and Frances emerged as Dunn's most inveterate and damaging critics. They condemned Dunn for his adoption of northern Nguni social customs, principally polygamy, and for having 'deserted' and fought against his benefactor, Cetshwayo, during the Anglo-Zulu war. The bishop viewed the Ulundi settlement as a cruel mockery of 'British justice' and denounced Dunn in the most violent terms, exclaiming that 'this double dyed traitor has been just appointed by Sir Garnet Wolseley to be ruler of the largest of his thirteen provinces, where with his native wives and concubines.. he will set a splendid example of morality...'⁽⁴⁴⁾ Frances Colenso was no less incensed than her father and wrote that even Cetshwayo's magnanimity could not expect to be extended to the 'treacherous and ungrateful' Dunn who 'had deserted him in his hour of need, and had even assisted his enemies to capture him'.⁽⁴⁵⁾

The voluminous correspondence and numerous publications of the Colenso family set the tone for the uncomplimentary and morally weighted opinions that have coloured past and present historical assessments of Dunn's controversial career in Zululand.⁽⁴⁶⁾ As early as 1911 J.Y. Gibson delved into the realms of psycho-historical analysis, concluding that Dunn was possessed of a singularly mercenary nature and left the service of Cetshwayo because 'he was of a disposition to follow rather that course which could conduce the best to his continued prosperity than the dictates of a sense of obligation'.⁽⁴⁷⁾

(44) G.W. Cox, *The Life of Bishop Colenso* (London, 1888), p.528. Excerpt of a letter from Colenso to F. Chesson, Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society, 13 Sept. 1879.

(45) Frances E. Colenso, *The Ruin of Zululand: British Doings in Zululand since the Invasion of 1879* (London, 1885), p.8.

(46) See for instance Cornelius Vijn, *Cetshwayo's Dutchman* (Bishopstowe, 1880); this narrative was translated from Dutch and edited and prefaced by Bishop Colenso.

(47) Gibson, *Story of the Zulus*, p.189.

Cetshwayo's biographer, C.T. Binns, echoing the Colenso's earlier theme, remarked that 'after having received such generous treatment at the hands of Cetshwayo', Dunn 'had fought against him in the war and now was awarded by far the largest tract of all'.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Popular narratives of the Anglo-Zulu war have cast Dunn in the 'niggardly' rôle of a latter day Judas; in contrast, Cetshwayo is depicted as a tragic hero abandoned in his darkest hour by his adviser and confidant of twenty-two years. Alan Lloyd's condensed reconstruction of Morris's *Washing of the Spears*, entitled *The Zulu War, 1879*, is the most glaring example of this type of sensational moralizing. Lloyd illustrates his extreme prejudice and ignorance of Dunn's predicament in his inaccurate account of Dunn's mercenary objectives in the pursuit of Cetshwayo's brother, Dabulamanzi: '...he (Dunn) had hastened to place his special knowledge of the country at Chelmsford's service- an act for which, as he surmised, he would be duly rewarded. Now he took a gun with him to hunt for his former friend and neighbour, the brother of the king who had trusted him'.⁽⁴⁹⁾

In a similar vein, the less passionate historian has followed the lead of the Colensos by superimposing moral judgment on factual evidence. In his study of Theophilus Shepstone, C.J. Uys, an Afrikaner historian, contemptuously introduces Dunn as 'that polygamous Anglo-Zulu'.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Brookes and Webb treat Dunn with less prejudice: 'John Dunn indeed deplored the Zulu war and strove to dissuade Cetshwayo from fighting. As long as he could he remained neutral. But in the end he fought against him, profited by his downfall and opposed his return'.⁽⁵¹⁾ However, in the same breath Brookes and Webb negate their own efforts to assess Dunn analytically by quoting Cetshwayo's own account of his relationship with Dunn in which he clearly implies

(48) C.T. Binns, *The Last Zulu King: The Life and Death of Cetshwayo* (London, 1963), p.146.

(49) Alan Lloyd, *The Zulu War 1879* (London, 1973), p.144.

(50) C.J. Uys, *In the Era of Shepstone* (London, 1933), p.209.

(51) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.99.

Dunn has been treacherous and ungrateful.⁽⁵²⁾ In none of the above works have the authors made any serious effort to analyse Dunn in relation to British imperial policy which really holds the key to Dunn's defection from Zulu to British political service.

Dunn's name is sprinkled liberally through despatches and other Colonial Office records from 1877 to 1884. He was in the immediate forefront of many important political, economic and military events before, during, and after the 1879 war. Dunn was prominent at the reading of the British ultimatum to the Zulu nation in 1878.⁽⁵³⁾ He and his African scouts distinguished themselves in Lord Chelmsford's relief of Fort Eshowe in 1879.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Sir Garnet Wolseley reposed the utmost trust and confidence in Dunn's advice on the conditions imposed on a conquered Zululand.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Finally, Dunn incurred a great deal of

(52) Binns, *Last Zulu King*, p.186. Selous, the hunter, recorded Cetshwayo's opinion of Dunn in his visit to the exiled king in Cape Town in 1880:

'One very cold and stormy night in winter I was seated before a large fire in my hut when there was a noise without as if someone was arriving. I asked the cause from my attendants and they told me a white man in a miserable state of destitution had just arrived and claimed my hospitality. I ordered the servants to bring him in, and a tall, splendidly made man appeared. He was dressed in rags, for his clothes had been torn to pieces in fighting through the bush, and he was shivering from fever and ague. I drew my cloak aside and asked him to sit by the fire, and told the servants to bring food and clothing. I loved this white man as a brother, and made him one of my indunas, giving him land and wives, the daughters of my chiefs. Now my sun has gone down and John Dunn is sitting by the fire, but he does not draw his cloak aside'.

(53) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.119-120.

(54) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.452.

(55) Guy, 'Destruction of Zulu Kingdom', p.84.

hostility while post-war district chief (1879-1883) through his vehement opposition to Cetshwayo's re-installation as king in 1883 and he received scathing abuse from Natal's settler community and missionary societies in his attempts to exclude, or at least minimize, their economic, political and cultural influence in his chiefdom, and in fact throughout all of Zululand.

The position of missionaries and the nature of their activities in post-war Zululand is an underworked theme, while the role of the missionaries as supporters and agents of British imperialism in nineteenth century southern Africa is being increasingly recognized and documented by historians.⁽⁵⁶⁾ African responses to the unabashed cultural imperialism of the mission societies prompted black chiefs and kings to impose legal and political restrictions on missionary operations. This compelled the missionaries to seek imperial intervention and, in most instances, outright annexation. The activities of missionary imperialists such as John MacKenzie of the Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Society in Bechuanaland led to British intervention in the 1880s.⁽⁵⁷⁾ A similar pattern of indigenous opposition and resultant appeals from white missionaries for British annexation occurred in Zululand immediately before the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879. The politically active missionaries of the 1870s, in most instances, aligned themselves with the expansionist federation scheme being planned for southern Africa. But, military reverses in Zululand and Boer intransigence in the Transvaal altered Colonial Office policy and precipitated a shift of imperial command from Frere to Wolseley - a change that frustrated missionaries bent on returning to a Zululand protectorate devoid of chiefly opposition and restrictions. Dunn strictly enforced the Ulundi treaty in the district and barred most missionaries from his territory.

(56) See Atmore and Marks, 'The Imperial Factor in South Africa in the 19th Century: Towards a Reassessment'.

(57) Anthony Dachs, 'Missionary Imperialism: The case of Bechuanaland', *Journal of African History*, XIII, no. 4, 1972, pp. 648-656. In 1878 armed clashes between pro- and anti-missionary forces among the Tswana brought about a British military occupation. MacKenzie welcomed Imperial intervention and successfully lobbied for a Bechuanaland Protectorate - the outcome of the 1884 London Convention.

Metropolitan attitudes toward Christian missionary activity in post-independent Zululand (1879-) have received little scholarly attention. Etherington's studies of south-east African missions offer the most comprehensive treatment of mid-nineteenth century missionary activity in the region.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Etherington has concentrated mainly on missionary-African interaction in Natal, Pondoland and Zululand in the period leading up to the Anglo-Zulu war. The few observations which he makes on post-war political relations between the imperial government and Zululand missionaries are somewhat misleading; they give the impression that prefects and clerics neither clashed nor opposed each other. To say that 'for the most part they (missionaries) accepted British imperial rule as a good thing'⁽⁵⁹⁾ after 1879 is not entirely accurate. The objective of this counter-argument is to reconstruct the political and ideological clash that emerged between the imperial authorities and the Zululand missionaries and their colonial supporters following the Ulundi settlement of 1879.

Dunn must be seen, essentially, as an agent of metropolitan policy in the immediate post-war era of Zululand's history. Guy has shown in his thesis 'how between 1879 and 1884, the social unity and material power of the Zulu kingdom were so weakened that its people could no longer resist colonial intrusion'.⁽⁶⁰⁾ Guy also maintains that Dunn, through his influence and wealth, his power as chief over the largest of the thirteen post-war districts and, ultimately, as a valuable ally of Zibhebhu's Mandhlakazi faction, was a major contributor to the disintegration of Zulu national cohesion and the deterioration of the kingdom's economic infrastructure.⁽⁶¹⁾

(58) Norman Etherington, 'The Rise of the Kholwa in South-East Africa: African Christian Communities in Natal, Pondoland, Zululand'. (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1971).

(59) Norman Etherington, 'Social Theory and the Study of Christian Missions in Africa: A South African Case Study', *Africa*, 47(1), 1977, p.37.

(60) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, Preface.

(61) *Ibid.*

While Guy has concentrated on the detrimental effects of imperial and colonial administration and policy in Zululand, this study of Dunn will endeavour to chart the formulation of metropolitan policy from its origins in the Colonial Office through the hands of various government agencies to its point of implementation on the colonial periphery. This particular study of the imperial mechanism at work in Zululand lays much emphasis on the concentration of civil and military authority embodied in the South African High Commission.⁽⁶²⁾ The manner in which Wolseley, vested with the coercive powers of imperial decree, constructed the Ulundi settlement and catapulted Dunn to power and prominence in the post-war period is essential to a more precise definition of the nature of late Victorian imperial policy in Zululand. John Dunn was politically and economically resurrected by Wolseley, and their relationship, founded initially on expedience and mutual need, was responsible for much of the political turbulence and strife during the post-war period.

Finally, Dunn must be seen as an agent and a promoter of 'colonization' in southern Zululand. Cetshwayo's grant of land in the Ungoye gave Dunn a licence to exploit the natural and physical resources of the region. His activities as hunter were of such magnitude that he was held responsible for the denudation of much of the game, not only in the Ungoye, but throughout much of Zululand.⁽⁶³⁾ Dunn's invitation to Zulu and Natal Nguni to settle in his district was all the more attractive with the promise of material inducements such as livestock, game and land in an undeveloped and sparsely settled country to entice them. Between 1857 and 1900 the population of Dunn's district rose from several hundred to between fifteen and twenty thousand inhabitants. This dramatic influx of people in less than half a century had a radical impact on the environment and ecology. Dunn's own vigorous exploitation is evident with his extensive agricultural operations. He cultivated maize, sorghum, sweet potatoes, sugar cane and millet; he also experimented with coffee and cotton. Upon Dunn's death in

(62) See J.A. Benyon, 'The Cape High Commission: Another neglected factor in British Imperial Expansion in Southern Africa', *South African Historical Journal*, No. 5, Nov. 1973, p.30.

(63) S.D. le Roux, *Pioneers and Sportsmen of South Africa*, (Salisbury, 1930), p.106.

1895 the Ungoye had undergone substantial environmental changes - thousands of acres of natural veldt and forest vegetation had been cleared, and domestic and exotic crops planted. The rapid growth of population eventually proved a strain on the resources of the region; the once abundant game became scarce, overstocking of pastures caused erosion, and soils became worn out when fresh virgin lands for cultivation ran out.

It is not the intention of this thesis to pass moral judgment on John Dunn's career. With few exceptions Dunn has received negative treatment from most historians and journalists. The Colensoites, missionaries, Natal settlers and colonial officials have, for a host of various reasons, all condemned Dunn for marrying African women and reverting to 'nativism'. They accused him of being a lawless renegade, a gun-runner and a treacherous parasite who betrayed Cetshwayo when it was advantageous to do so. Except where inaccuracies occur no attempt will be made to prove or disclaim these moral indictments. To be totally objective in one's assessment of an individual is impossible; but most writers have hitherto failed to be analytical in their approach. One must appreciate that Dunn was a versatile, complex, determined and extremely capable man. The numerous positions of importance held by Dunn suggest more than a self-serving attitude of crass opportunism as his detractors have claimed. They instead reflect a hardy resilience born of a frontier environment, a capacity to balance successfully his political, ideological and economic priorities between the colony of Natal and the independent African kingdom of Zululand, and the ability to adapt to the pressures being exerted on Zululand by Britain's confederationists and the imperial officials charged with the execution of that policy.

CHAPTER TWO

NATAL: 1824-1856 :

THE EMERGENCE AND TRANSITION OF A FRONTIER ZONE

The definition of the 'frontier' as a geographical region where an advancing western European settlement interacts with the indigenous inhabitants on a social, political and economic level was first offered by the American historian, Frederick Jackson Turner. He concluded that the North American frontier was of great importance in moulding the attitudes of white North Americans before 1900. Turner saw the boundary of a frontier as being distinct from the boundary 'existing between sovereign native states'. For Turner the moving frontier of white settlement was 'the wave of civilization advancing across the continent', its outer fringe 'the meeting-point between savagery and civilization'.⁽¹⁾ Historians influenced by Turner refined and elaborated his original thesis and sub-divided the North American frontier into distinct and differing components of a larger whole: for example, a traders' frontier, a miners' frontier, the farmers' and cattlemans' frontier.⁽²⁾ South African scholars borrowed heavily from the Turner school and applied its principles to situations in South Africa.⁽³⁾

I.D. MacCrone defined white expansion into the northern and eastern Cape in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a frontier phenomenon. As boer pastoralists moved into territory beyond the limits of imperial control (either Dutch or English) existing racial and cultural attitudes were transformed in response to new and often stressful situations created by contact with African peoples. Out of this contact and conflict on the frontier white racial, religious and

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- (1) Frederick J. Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York, 1920), pp.1-38.
- (2) Ray A. Billington, *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier* (New York, 1949), p.9. Billington interpreted the American frontier as 'a series of contiguous westward migrating zones, each representing a different stage in the development of society from elemental to complex forms'.
- (3) Eric Walker, *The Frontier Tradition in South Africa*, a lecture delivered at Rhodes House on 5 Mar. 1930, (London, 1930).

political prejudices towards blacks intensified as a means of preserving the identity of Afrikaner and Briton.⁽⁴⁾

More recent liberal historians have veered away from MacCrone's view that conflict between black and white was the dominant feature of the South African frontier: 'co-operation' as well as 'conflict' occurred between white and black in frontier areas and more attention has been given to peaceful black-white interaction.⁽⁵⁾ However, liberal historians still view the frontier as the germ cell from which the present institutions of white supremacy were spawned. On the other hand, Afrikaner historians credit the 'frontier tradition' for having produced much of what is revered in the Afrikaner heritage: 'democracy, republicanism, racial exclusiveness; indeed a new type of human being originated on the frontier'.⁽⁶⁾

In 1969 Legassick challenged Turner's concept of the frontier as applied by MacCrone to South Africa. Legassick countered with the argument that 'the exploration of attitudes' in a frontier society does not lead to an understanding of how such attitudes were institutionalized.⁽⁷⁾

Two processes, he argues, were prominent in nineteenth century South Africa. 'One is the erosion of the political power of non-whites through their absorption into plural communities in a subordinate political status' - in short, the establishment of white supremacy. The second theme 'is the integration of the peoples of South Africa into a market economy linked ultimately with the industrializing, capitalist economy of Europe; along with this came the diffusion of European culture'.⁽⁸⁾

White supremacy and racist ideologies were institutionalized in a colonial society not in pre-colonial frontier communities.

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- (4) I.D. MacCrone, *Race Attitudes in South Africa* (London, 1937); and 'The Frontier Tradition and Race Attitudes in South Africa', *Race Relations Journal* XXVII, 3 (1961), pp.19-30.
- (5) Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson (eds.), *The Oxford History of South Africa*, vol. I., (Cape Town, 1969), chapters V and VI.
- (6) Giliomee, 'S.A. Frontier: Theoretical Framework', p.2.
- (7) Legassick, 'The Politics of a Frontier Zone', p.9.
- (8) *Ibid.*, pp.2-3.

Legassick utilizes the concept of a 'frontier zone' in explaining the processes of 'mutual acculturation' and the 'erosion of non-white political power' in Transorangia, 1780-1840. The political, economic and social acculturation of whites as well as blacks frequently occurred, and 'the frontier culture in South Africa produced a way of life substantially similar to that of the indigenous inhabitants'.⁽⁹⁾ A second feature of cultural exchange in a frontier zone is the reaction of non-white peoples to the acculturative influences of whites. The subjugation of indigenous African peoples was not 'remorseless' or 'inevitable' on the frontier as W.M. MacMillan suggests.⁽¹⁰⁾ 'In fact non-white societies could, and did, use the techniques and ideas brought originally from Europe to defend their established systems or in an attempt to win greater political power within the new plural societies'.⁽¹¹⁾ MacCrone, Walker and historians of the Turner school failed to emphasize African attempts to defend or extend their power with or against white elements of the frontier.

Legassick's definition of a frontier zone can be summarized as follows: a 'frontier zone' existed in a region that was beyond the boundary of effective imperial or metropolitan control,⁽¹²⁾ 'in which there was no single source of legitimate authority, in which different legitimate authorities could compete, and in which anyone who could generate power for himself could exercise it'. Frontier zones were also created by white 'refusal to recognize legitimate non-white political authority' and by the 'refusal of white colonists to recognize the 'residual rights' over the community from whom land was acquired'. Second, 'frontier zones are temporary, unstable, fluid and dynamic. Essential to their existence is a crisis of values, cultural and political, which cannot be resolved by

(9) *Ibid.*, p.9.

(10) W.M. MacMillan, *The Cape Colour Question* (Cape Town, 1968), p.11.

(11) Legassick, 'Politics of a Frontier Zone', p.6.

(12) Walter Prescott Webb, *The Great Frontier* (Boston, 1952), p.8. Hereafter Webb's term for Europe, the 'Metropolis' will be used 'implying what Europe really was, a cultural center holding within it everything pertaining to Western civilization', and Legassick, 'Politics of a Frontier Zone', pp.11-15.

the imposition of superior force' from any one group or alliance of groups within the frontier zone.⁽¹³⁾ The failure of frontier societies to achieve stability compelled the metropolitan society bordering the frontier to re-establish order and security.⁽¹⁴⁾

The pre-colonial period of white-black interaction in Natal has not been incorporated into past and present discussions of South African frontier societies. MacCrone, Walker and Legassick have limited their focus to the Cape and Orange River regions where predominately white Afrikaans-speaking settlers and British missionaries became involved with indigenous African societies. The criteria used by Legassick in the development of a 'frontier zone' can be applied to pre-colonial Natal. White-black cultural adaptation and the breakdown of northern Nguni political power follow patterns similar, in many instances, to frontier regions in other parts of South Africa. The penetration of white settlers into a territory clearly under the hegemony of the Zulu polity created that political instability characteristic of a frontier zone. The introduction of the 'imperial factor' established colonial Natal and effectively 'closed' the frontier with British annexation.⁽¹⁵⁾

i). Mutual Acculturation

In 1824 six men, under the leadership of Frances Farewell and Henry Francis Fynn, established a trading station at Port Natal. 'They were acting as agents for Cape merchants who sought a large and ready market among the Zulus from whom they could obtain ivory

(13) Legassick, 'Politics of a Frontier Zone', pp.11-17.

(14) *Ibid.*, p.18. Legassick asserts that 'in a large number of cases it was only the British who could exert sufficient force, or threat of force, to resolve the crisis of values and authority in the direction of white hegemony, or at least give it a strong push in that direction'.

(15) *Ibid.*

(including hippopotamus tusks) hides and maize'.⁽¹⁶⁾ The traders hoped to develop a flourishing trade with the northern Nguni and re-route the flow of ivory and hides from Delagoa Bay through the port.⁽¹⁷⁾ The British traders founded the settlement for purely economic motives and 'their trading interests transcended any missionary, political, military or other considerations which might be suggested'.⁽¹⁸⁾

Essential to the growth and security of trade at Port Natal was the opening of diplomatic relations with the legitimate authority in the region, the Zulu kingdom under Shaka. Almost immediately upon arrival Fynn and Farewell fully recognized that they were beyond the protection of British law which effectively terminated on the eastern Cape Colony boundary. The traders desired the security of British rule: to this end Farewell wrote to Lord Somerset, Governor of the Cape Colony, calling for the British annexation of Natal. Somerset, in line with Colonial Office policy, refused to sanction any efforts by Farewell to lay claim to the region and implied that the traders were dependent upon their own resources in dealing with the indigenous peoples.⁽¹⁹⁾

In August 1824 Fynn and Farewell opened communications with Shaka; they requested and received permission to occupy and exercise authority over land surrounding Port Natal.⁽²⁰⁾ While the English traders chose to regard their rights of occupation around the port as a permanent alienation of property, Shaka interpreted his grant as a royal prerogative which could be terminated, extended or transferred. The failure of the port settlers to understand the 'residual rights' of land use and occupation in northern Nguni society caused ill-feeling and rivalry to develop between

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- (16) Michael R. Barbour, 'Natal: 1824-1856, a Review of Some Economic Aspects of the Colony from its Foundation to the Granting of Representative Government' (unpublished Honours thesis, University of Natal, 1972), p.1.
- (17) James Stuart and Duncan McK. Malcolm, (eds.), *The Diary of Henry Francis Fynn* (Pietermaritzburg, 1950), p.56.
- (18) Barbour, 'Economic Aspects', p.1.
- (19) John Bird, *The Annals of Natal, 1495 to 1845* (Cape Town, 1965), p.71.
- (20) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.19.

several white traders when Shaka transferred the rights of occupation.⁽²¹⁾

By obtaining permission from Shaka to occupy land and to trade from the port the traders had, in effect, recognized the legitimacy of Zulu rule in Natal. The small band of traders had no alternative to this in the face of Zulu military dominance, coupled with the unwillingness of the British government to extend its authority beyond the borders of the eastern Cape. Shaka regarded the white traders as 'client-chiefs' and expected them to render 'service' to the Zulu state like other tributary chiefs within the Zulu political orbit.⁽²²⁾ 'Service' to the Zulu monarch could be of a military or an economic nature. Shaka summoned the white traders to assist in military campaigns against his enemies on two occasions. His successor, Dingane, readily obtained the participation of the Port settlers in three expeditions.⁽²³⁾ Although the English traders regarded themselves as British citizens, they demonstrated their flexibility in accepting a role of subservience to a black political authority in return for security and trading privileges. By rendering service to the Zulu monarchs the white traders provide a fitting example of European mercantile adaptation to the political realities existing in a frontier zone.

The adoption of northern Nguni laws and customs as an alternative to metropolitan codes provides yet another example of the acculturation of

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- (21) Barbour, 'Economic Aspects', p.3, and MacKeurtan, *Cradle Days*, p.107. Shaka later transferred the occupational rights of Farewell to James King in 1826 and again to Nathaniel Isaacs in 1828. For an in-depth explanation of the mechanics of land alienation in south-east African societies see Max Gluckman, *Ideas and Procedures in African Customary Law* (London, 1969).
- (22) Wilson and Thompson (eds.), *Oxford History* vol. I, chapter VIII. Thompson, 'Co-operation and Conflict: The Zulu Kingdom and Natal', p.349.
- (23) Stuart and Malcolm (eds.), *Fynn's Diary*, pp.238, 249-251. Although Fynn professed his aversion to fighting with the Zulu army against its enemies, he and other white traders, notably Isaacs and Cane, obliged, rather than risk incurring the wrath of Shaka and Dingane. For their efforts the traders were rewarded with gifts of cattle taken as spoils. Dingane was most lavish, especially after the successful raid on Sobhuza, the king of the Swazi, when 15 000 head of cattle were taken.

white frontiersmen. Within six months of white settlement at the Port, northern Nguni refugees began to congregate around the traders. Shaka's wars of expansion in south-east Africa had depopulated the vicinity and a severe dislocation of chiefdoms had resulted. Once these uprooted Nguni learned that the white traders had been given permission by Shaka to trade and settle they began to cluster around them seeking protection and a better livelihood. (24)

The rapid influx of these refugees prompted the traders to organize their growing community along Nguni political lines. The only alternative to ruling Port Natal by African customary institutions was anarchy, for the traders were too few in number and lacked the material and manpower to impose a metropolitan system of government on their black wards. From all accounts, it would appear that the refugees quickly accepted the traders as the undisputed leaders of the community, and separated into villages acknowledging individual traders as their chiefs. Henry Fynn became chief of three kraals scattered from the Bluff south to the Umzimkulu river. John Cane and Henry Ogle also governed three kraals each, in the vicinity of the Port. (25) A.F. Hattersley attributed the development of the chief-client relationship to circumstance: 'All lived from necessity much as the Bantu lived, Cane and Ogle with considerable establishments at the head of the bay and in the vicinity of the Umlaas river. Here they governed their tribes with the patriarchal authority of Bantu chiefs'. (26)

In 1832 traders from the British settlements in the eastern Cape colony trickled into Natal. The white population at the Port had increased from six to approximately thirty by 1838. (27)

(24) *Ibid.*, pp.22-23.

(25) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, pp.99, 109-111. The recent release of this edited version of the Stuart Papers is invaluable in determining African opinions and attitudes in the colonial and pre-colonial periods of Natal's history.

(26) Hattersley, *The British Settlement in Natal*, pp.14-15.

(27) MacKeurtan, *Cradle Days*, p.171.

Following the example of their predecessors (Fynn, Cane, Ogle) these men gathered Nguni refugees and fugitives from Zululand as clients. James Collis, Robert Dunn, D.C. Toohey and Richard (Dick) King, also assumed positions as chiefs over various kraals. (28) Collis, Dunn, Alexander Biggar and his two sons brought numerous Khoi retainers with them when they moved from the eastern Cape to Natal. (29) The Khoikhoi were employed in the same capacity as their counterparts in the Cape and Orange river regions - as hunters, interpreters, transport riders. (30)

The political adaptation of the white traders to Nguni norms led, in this case, to social acculturation. Legassick cites examples of white frontiersmen in Transorangia who deviated from European standards of conduct and dress. (31) Isolated from metropolitan influences and sources of supply Natal's white traders responded to their new environment by making adjustments in their living habits. Henry Fynn discarded European clothing for less conventional garb, as his associate Nathaniel Isaacs intimated in his narratives: 'his head was covered with a crownless straw hat, and a tattered blanket fastened round his neck by means of strips of hide served to cover his body, while his hands performed the office of keeping it round his nether man'. (32)

The dwellings of the traders were modelled roughly along African lines and building materials were almost exclusively of local origin. Farewell's house was described as a 'barn of wattle and daub with a thatched roof and a reed door but without windows'. (33)

(28) Minutes of the Natal Executive Council, (Pietermaritzburg: Natal Archives), p.27. Minutes from the 7 Jan. 1846 to 17 Sept. 1846.

(29) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive* vol. I, p.99.

(30) Wilson and Thompson (eds.), *Oxford History*, vol. I, chapter VI, Wilson 'Co-operation and Conflict: The Eastern Cape Frontier', pp.238-241.

(31) Legassick, 'Politics of a Frontier Zone', p.88. Legassick says that on the north-west frontier of Transorangia references to cultural types such as Willem van Wyk, who 'in every way behaved and clothed himself like a Hottentot' were not infrequent, and 'at the least we must recognize a greater degree of deviance among white frontiersmen than has commonly been asserted, representing a society more disparate in ethos, in wealth and status than has often been painted'.

(32) Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, vol. I, p.32.

(33) MacKeurtan, *Cradle Days*, pp.231.

Cane and Ogle possessed even more 'primitive' lodgings made of reeds and dried mud. As late as 1837, Allen Gardiner, the first missionary to visit Natal, expressed his dismay over the primitive state of white housing; 'There is only one dwelling there that you can call a house. The settlers live in the most disgraceful way and they make do as the natives do ... There is not one there that has a table or chair among them'. (34)

Another social characteristic common to the trader-hunter frontiers of north America and southern Africa is the scarcity, if not total absence of, a white female population. In order to offset this, white men frequently took wives and concubines from the indigenous population. (35) The prevalence of cohabitation among the white chiefs and their black female clients reflects not only the scarcity of white women but the degree of integration that occurred in a frontier society. (36) The testimony given by an African oral informant to James Stuart reveals the extent of white-black unions and polygamy in pre-colonial Natal:

All these Europeans built on this plan: they all had a number of wives and ordinary native kraals, but also differently constructed houses not far off where they actually lived and at which they received European visitors. Wohlo (Ogle) and Mbulazi (Fynn) are the two who had the largest number of wives ... The sexual intercourse with these wives took place on the Zulu plan; that is, any women required would be specially sent for. She would at nightfall come to the man's house. The man would not go about to each woman's hut from time to time, carrying his blanket with him, as less important men are in the habit of doing. (37)

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- (34) Gardiner, *Journey to the Zoolu Country*, p.406. Gardiner gave evidence to the Aborigines Committee of the House of Commons condemning the traders' lifestyle.
- (35) Billington, *Westward Expansion*, p.3. Comparisons can be made between American fur trappers and the Natal traders in their cultural adaptation. Billington remarks that 'The initial zone was the domain of the fur trappers ... they adapted themselves to the ways of the Natives, borrowing their clothes, their living habits, their forest lore, and often their wives'.
- (36) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.20. Until the arrival of James Collis from Algoa Bay in 1832, only Francis Farewell had brought his wife to the Port.
- (37) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I., pp.111-112. John Cane, Dick King and Charles Pickman also had kraals with establishments of African wives.

Two inferences can be drawn from these statements: first, the white trader-chiefs were held in high esteem by their black wards because of the security and employment afforded them. Second, it is evident that in consummating relationships with African women, the white traders, or at least some of them, adhered to Nguni marriage customs. The situating of the wives' huts around the residences of their white chiefs follows the pattern used by Nguni chiefs. (38) Serious efforts were made by several white chiefs to legitimize their marriages by the payment of the bride price in cattle *lobola*. After the establishment of British colonial rule in Natal, Henry Ogle publicly announced in a local newspaper that his eldest son by his first wife, for whom he paid *lobola*, was his legal heir. (39)

While Port Natal's white population adapted to northern Nguni culture, conversely, white European values made a cultural impression on northern Nguni society. The Black refugees had arrived at Port Natal in a destitute condition. The Mfecane had deprived these defeated people of their most tangible source of wealth and status-cattle. They were forced to turn even more to hunting, fishing and agriculture to survive. (40) The traders found this situation advantageous for the refugee agriculturalists provided food in a community where whites were not interested in crop cultivation owing to the decidedly more lucrative opportunities in trade. A regular supply of locally produced foodstuffs meant that the white settlers could devote more time and energy to their trading activities. African agriculturalists freed the traders from less certain and more expensive supplies imported from Algoa Bay or Cape Town. Gardiner commented on this complementary division of Port Natal's economy in his 1835 visit: 'The Natives, although but barely raised above the lowest scale of civilization, subsist by agriculture, while the Europeans live entirely by hunting ... his usual game is the elephant and the buffalo,

(38) Eileen Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus*, (London, 1936), pp.34-40.

(39) Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.98.

(40) Stuart and Malcolm (eds.), *Fynn's Diary*, p.24.

and by disposing of the tooth of one and the hide of the other, he obtains a sufficient fund for his present exigencies'.⁽⁴¹⁾

The encouragement given by the traders to their black clients engaged in agriculture saw a marked increase in grain and vegetable production. An event of great importance was the reintroduction of maize seed into Natal by the white traders. The Nguni refugees were quick in realizing the higher yield potential of maize as opposed to sorghum. Henry Fynn's chief *induna*, Juqula, introduced this crop to his kraals and by 1835 the majority of kraals in the Port Natal area were growing more than enough maize to supply the needs of the entire community.⁽⁴²⁾ The observant Gardiner noted the conditions suitable for agriculture and the abundance produced by African cultivators:

The soil, in general, is a light sandy loam, not favourable for large timber, but yielding excellent crops of Kafir (sorghum) and Indian corn (maize), ground beans and sweet potatoes; and so abundant are the corn crops that although it is only cultivated in patches, and that by natives alone turning up the surface with their hoes, a great quantity has been purchased during the present year (1835) for exportation to Mauritius.⁽⁴³⁾

In a short span of less than eleven years of white settlement in Natal, a minor agricultural revolution had taken place within the traditional system of northern Nguni agriculture. Destitute, hungry and displaced refugees had obtained a modicum of security under the protection of the traders and had taken up agriculture as their principal occupation. Maize cultivation and the security of life and land tenure had enabled the Port Natal Nguni to reach a level of surplus agricultural production. This trend gained momentum among the Natal Nguni and the growth of a large class of African peasant entrepreneurs in the first three decades

(41) Gardiner, *Journey to the Zoolu Country*, p.85.

(42) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.99. Juqula increased his status among the Port Natal Nguni with his growing of maize. He gained adherents to his kraal and 'in this way food increased and people came to (Konza him) and to buy seed there'.

(43) Gardiner, *Journey to the Zoolu Country*, p.86, and the *Grahamstown Journal*, 7 Aug. 1837. The surplus of maize at this time is seemingly confirmed by a Port Natal settler who wrote to the *Grahamstown Journal* warning prospective immigrants to the Port to bring all the necessities of life for the only produce to be purchased were fowls and Indian corn.

of colonial rule can trace its origins to the frontier society of Natal.⁽⁴⁴⁾

The black wards at the Port also became involved in the commercial activities of their white chiefs and this represents another facet in the acculturation of the Nguni refugees. They assisted the white traders in the ivory and hides trade as guides, hunters and carriers. Hunting expeditions under the direction of the white traders were organized in the search for elephant, hippopotamus and buffalo. Parties of hunters under Fynn, Cane and Ogle frequently fanned out over the southern and north-western interior of Natal during this period. The white traders and their Khoi retainers trained a number of their Nguni adherents in the use of firearms and they adapted quickly to this new European innovation.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Gardiner's comments on this subject reveal the extent of black familiarity with guns: 'For some years many of them (Port Natal Nguni) have been entrusted with firearms for the purpose of hunting the elephant and buffalo, and in consequence out of the whole body some very tolerable marksmen can be selected'.⁽⁴⁶⁾

In any analysis of the acculturation of non-whites in Natal, one must bear in mind that the process affected two distinct northern Nguni communities at two levels of differing authority. The acculturation of the Nguni refugees at Port Natal was a degrading process because of their inferior status as clients of white chiefs. On the other hand, the white chiefs were *de facto* clients in a subordinate status to the Zulu king. This dichotomy of political power and cultural influence in a frontier zone is a fluid and interchangeable phenomenon; one in which white society can play both inferior and superior roles depending upon the degree of cohesion or fragmentation present in the indigenous societies.

The Zulu kingdom was influenced by the white traders to a much lesser

(44) See Colin Bundy, 'The Emergence and Decline of a South African Peasantry', *African Affairs*, 71, 2885, (1972), pp.369-388.

(45) Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, vol. II, pp.40-41, 52-54.

(46) Gardiner, *Journey to the Zoolu Country*, p.407.

extent than the Nguni refugees. From 1824 until his assassination in 1828 Shaka welcomed the traders and allowed dispersed elements of the northern Nguni to settle under white supervision at Port Natal. It would appear, as far as records indicate, that Shaka never felt politically threatened by a white presence at the Port. Shaka saw two advantages to be gained by allowing Europeans to settle in his domain: first, the traders could supply him with European articles and goods, which he prized; and second, the refugee population would be concentrated under white client-chiefs totally dependent on his goodwill for economic and physical survival. Shaka clearly regarded the traders as subordinate allies and used them to his economic and political advantage. (47)

The dissemination of white culture through trade was limited to only a privileged few within the Zulu kingdom, primarily the ruling hierarchy of the royal family, military leaders and the women of the royal harem or *izigodlo*. (48) In this way Shaka elevated the status of his immediate ruling circle and effectively checked white influence by not allowing free and unrestricted trade with his subjects. Moreover, Shaka encouraged the traders to bring their wares to him personally and he gave generous amounts of ivory in exchange for brass and copper ornaments, beads, medicines and assorted novelties. So great was Shaka's longing for European medicines that he ordered his regiments out on large hunting expeditions in order to secure more ivory. (49) During Shaka's reign the vast majority of Zulu were never given the opportunity to barter with the white traders, therefore economic acculturation was negligible.

John Robert Dunn was born in 1834 in Port Elizabeth, in the eastern Cape; the exact day has never been precisely determined. (50) He was the third of six children born to Robert Newton and Ann Biggar (51) Dunn, both of

(47) Felix N.C. Okoye, 'Dingane': A Reappraisal', *Journal of African History*, vol. X, No. 1, 1969, p.223.

(48) Stuart and Malcolm (eds.), *Fynn's Diary*, p.143.

(49) *Ibid.*, pp.131-132.

(50) 'Ethel Campbell's Notes' (unpublished narrative of early Natal history, K.C.L.), Folio G, pp.11-12.

(51) Barber, 'John Dunn and Zululand, 1856-1883', p.1. Anne Harold Biggar was the daughter of a prominent Port Natal settler, Alexander Biggar.

whom emigrated from England to Algoa Bay in the early 1820s. Robert Dunn first arrived in Port Natal in 1834 and settled permanently with his family in 1838.⁽⁵²⁾

Robert Dunn established himself in Natal as a hunter, trader and storekeeper and grew prosperous from the trade in ivory, hides and European wares. He was a junior business associate of Thomas Maynard of Grahamstown and early Natal settler James Collis. After Collis's death in 1836 Robert Dunn and John MacCabe assumed full ownership of Collis's profitable commercial interests, principally Maynard's Store situated at the port's harbour entrance (the Point). Dunn conducted such a brisk and profitable trade in firearms and ammunition with the Natal trekboers that he was able to pay off his mortgage within one year. In 1839 Dunn built a substantial dwelling overlooking the bay, which he named 'Sea View'.⁽⁵³⁾

Robert Dunn died in 1847 when trampled to death by an elephant while on a trading expedition in the Natal interior.⁽⁵⁴⁾ The fortunes of the Dunn family declined rapidly after Robert Dunn's death: 'Sea View' and all the landed property, 2,514 acres⁽⁵⁵⁾ was sold shortly thereafter to settle outstanding debts incurred against the estate. Anne Dunn returned to Port Elizabeth with her daughters and died four years later in 1851. John Dunn elected to remain in Natal while his sisters settled in the eastern Cape.⁽⁵⁶⁾

From the earliest days of his youth John Dunn was exposed to this process of frontier acculturation. His nursemaids were Khoi women brought from Algoa Bay by Robert Dunn;⁽⁵⁷⁾ Cape Coloured and local African servants were an integral part of the Dunn domestic establishment at Sea View.⁽⁵⁸⁾ John Dunn compensated for his lack of formal

(52) D.D.P., K.C.L., Ms. Dun 2.09, Ms. 1459, p.1.

(53) MacKeurtan, *Cradle Days*, pp.239 and 171-72. 'Sea View' was located near the present day Durban suburb of Sea View.

(54) D.D.P., Ms. 1459, p.1. Robert Dunn died on 4 Sept. 1847, aged fifty-two.

(55) S.G.O. III 5/15, No. 6, 5 Sept. 1848.

(56) *The Natal Mercury*, 19 Nov. 1934. Anne Dunn died on 20 June 1851.

(57) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.99.

(58) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. Dun 2.09, Ms. 1459, p.4.

schooling and a dearth of European companions by engaging in those pursuits available to him on the frontier. Dunn grew to manhood in a society that valued expertise with rifle and horse, and he accompanied his father on numerous hunting and trading expeditions to the Natal interior.⁽⁵⁹⁾ Through daily social intercourse with the indigenous African populace Dunn learned to speak the Zulu language fluently, and he observed those northern Nguni social customs which he adopted later in his adult life.

Necessity and convenience prompted the Port Natal traders to adopt African institutions. Thus, the traders set the example of acculturation for Dunn. Robert Dunn known as *Misdoni* in Zulu, was a 'chief to several hundred African and Coloured clients.⁽⁶⁰⁾ John Dunn's grand-father, Alexander Biggar - a leading figure in the political life of pre-colonial Natal - sired a Coloured son by an African concubine.⁽⁶¹⁾ The extreme isolation from metropolitan society bred a spirit of individualism and fostered a cultural tolerance among many of Natal's white frontiersmen. These characteristics were instilled in Dunn in his youth; they surfaced with Dunn's later rejection of colonial society in favour of life in Zululand.

ii). The Erosion of Black Political Power

A combination of political and economic factors contributed to the demise of Zulu hegemony in Natal. Central to this discussion is an examination of the diverse groups, both black and white, that co-operated and fought with each other on the Natal frontier. The disparity in values and aspirations between the various factions operating during this period generated friction that led ultimately to armed confrontation. Political divisions within Zulu society drove enemies of the king to the British traders for protection. This development opened a breach between the traders and the Zulu King; and the first rift in black-white relations

(59) *Ibid.*, p.2.

(60) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.170.

(61) *Ibid.*, p.141.

began at this point. The second stage in the erosion of Zulu power occurred with the arrival of Boer pastoralists who aligned themselves with the port settlers in contesting Zulu authority. The third phase in the challenge to the Zulu kingdom came about with the defection of a powerful Zulu faction which combined with the Anglo-Boer forces to wrest power and spoils from the Zulu kingdom. Zulu resistance to white inroads was formidable and white usurpation of power would have been difficult, if not impossible, without the support of the Natal Nguni and rebellious Zulu. (62)

When the traders first settled at Port Natal in 1824, the entire region was temporarily depopulated save for three hundred or so destitute members of the Amatuli chiefdom who lived on the Bluff. (63) By 1831 the black population had reached a figure estimated at between two and three thousand. During Shaka's rule the vast majority of refugees was comprised of elements that were not incorporated within the Zulu kingdom. (64) After Shaka's assassination, Dingane's efforts to legitimize his rule met with resistance which the Zulu king attempted to eradicate through execution and confiscation of property. This internal dissension within the Zulu polity forced opponents of Dingane to flee for refuge to Port Natal, which by this time was recognized as a sanctuary. Okoye summarizes Dingane's domestic policy during this period:

The acquiescence of the army legitimized Dingane's sovereignty, but he still had to consolidate his position by destroying his real or potential enemies. And, in Dingane's eyes, these included the favourite chiefs of his predecessor and his male relatives. They also included the chiefs of Zululand who had renounced - or were contemplating renouncing - their allegiance to him. Finally, the list included any chief or induna who practised witchcraft, poisoned others, appropriated royal cattle or disobeyed the king. Hatred of the enemies of the state was in large measure responsible for the 'destructive murders' which characterized Dingane's domestic policy. (65)

(62) Okoye, 'Dingane', p.223.

(63) Bird, *Annals of Natal*, vol. I, p.124.

(64) *Ibid.*, p.71.

(65) Okoye, 'Dingane', p.222.

Dingane meted out severe punishment to those chiefdoms seeking independence from Zulu authority. Remnants of these rebellious chiefdoms, namely the Qwabe, Cele and Qadi, took refuge with the traders at the Port. 'These Zulu refugees naturally had no love for the king, and were, to a large extent, responsible for the worsening of relations between Dingane and the white traders for they repeatedly and maliciously spread the rumour that the Zulu monarch was contemplating exterminating the whites.'⁽⁶⁶⁾ The rise of a potentially subversive Zulu community under the auspices of the white traders presented Dingane with a growing threat to the authority of the Zulu state.

The first rift in relations developed in 1831 as a result of John Cane's unsuccessful diplomatic mission to the Cape colony on behalf of Dingane who wished to open friendly communication with the British government. Cane's efforts were sabotaged by two factors: first, British officials rebuffed Dingane's sincere overtures; second, Dingane confiscated Cane's cattle as punishment on the advice of his Khoi interpreter, Jacob, who spread unsubstantiated rumours of Cane's support of a British plan for the invasion of Zululand. Fed by rumours from the refugees that all the whites were to be liquidated, Henry Fynn fled southward to the Illovu river, while the remaining whites hid in the surrounding bush for safety. The traders returned to Port Natal several months later on Dingane's assurances that no harm would come to them.⁽⁶⁷⁾

In 1833 a second and more serious incident occurred when a Zulu expedition, returning via Port Natal from an unsuccessful raid to recover stolen cattle, came to blows with the traders and their wards. Once again the refugees had circulated an unsubstantiated rumour that

(66) *Ibid.*, p.223. Okoye's analysis of relations between the port and Dingane emphasizes the influence of the refugees in fomenting strife which ultimately led to complete disharmony and mutual distrust between Dingane and the traders.

(67) *Ibid.*, p.224. Jacob is a prime example of a black frontiersman who entered the Natal frontier zone and attached himself to the legitimate authority of the Zulu king as a means of acquiring privileges and power denied him by the British traders. Jacob's influence was considerable during this period until the traders prevailed on Dingane to have him executed for his rumour-mongering.

several departing traders had been killed by the Zulu impi. John Cane's clients reacted to the news by attacking and killing two hundred unresisting members of the Zulu army.⁽⁶⁸⁾ 'Convinced that Dingane would seek revenge by an attack on the port, the British traders quickly abandoned the port and fled to Pondoland. Ogle eventually returned to Natal; he visited Dingane's headquarters and received assurances that the traders were free to return'.⁽⁶⁹⁾

Dingane was clearly in a dilemma as to what course he should adopt toward the traders and their black wards. Like Shaka before him he coveted the trade goods that the traders brought into Zululand,⁽⁷⁰⁾ but the Zulu exiles at the port, while not a direct threat to the king's exercise of power, nevertheless undermined his position at court by their very existence. As early as 1833 Dingane's chiefs had begun to resent the sanctuary given to Zulu refugees by the British traders and had, in fact, begun to urge the king to send an army into Natal to exterminate all the black people there.⁽⁷¹⁾ For the first eight years of his reign, Dingane tolerated the black community at Port Natal because he did not want to antagonize the traders. Okoye asserts that 'up to 1835 what impresses us most is not Dingane's hostility towards the traders, nor his vagaries, but the pains he took to court their presence and his consistency in the pursuit of this objective'.⁽⁷²⁾

By the early part of 1835 Dingane had decided that more persuasive methods must be applied to the British traders as a coercive inducement to halt the flow of Zulu deserters to the port. The immediate cause of Dingane's aggressive posture is not certain but the defection of an entire Zulu regiment to Natal in the latter part of 1834 may have provided the impetus.⁽⁷³⁾ By April 1835 Dingane's threats against the port had reached such alarming proportions that 'self-interest compelled the traders to come to grips with the problem of Zulu escapees'.

(68) Gardiner, *Journey to the Zoolu Country*, pp.289-290.

(69) Okoye, 'Dingane', p.229.

(70) Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, vol. II, p.108.

(71) Okoye, 'Dingane', p.230.

(72) *Ibid.*, p.223.

(73) Stuart and Malcolm (eds.), *Fynn's Diary*, p.232

The arrival of the missionary, Allen Gardiner, in February 1835 provided the means whereby a temporary solution to the political impasse was reached. (74)

Gardiner, whose interests were spiritual rather than economic, introduced a new political element into a frontier zone that had been exclusively a traders' preserve. Initially, the traders gave Gardiner a cordial reception. They responded favourably to his efforts in drawing up guidelines leading to the founding of Durban and in introducing Christianity to the region. (75) The threats of a Zulu invasion of the port prompted the traders to induce Gardiner to go to Zululand and negotiate terms with Dingane. This the missionary succeeded in doing, and in June 1835 the king agreed to respect the lives and property of those inhabitants residing at the port, provided that in future all Zulu escapees would be returned to Zululand. (76)

For a brief three-month period both parties honoured the treaty. Anxious to ingratiate himself with Dingane in order to begin mission work in Zululand, Gardiner took an active role in returning fugitives with the aid of traders, notably, James Collis. Dingane made no further threats against Port Natal for he was obviously pleased with Gardiner's efforts in solving the problem of escapees. (77) However, at the end of June 1835, two white traders violated the treaty by encouraging Zulu, especially young women, to renounce their allegiance and move to the port. Gardiner's influence over the traders waned when he fulminated against their unconventional living habits, particularly the taking of African wives. 'Gardiner believed that the traders were guilty of 'glaring derelictions from Christian duty' and had a baneful influence upon their black wards'. (78)

Dingane retaliated against the traders' violations by prohibiting all trade between Zululand and Port Natal and, with the exception of

(74) Okoye, 'Dingane', pp.231-232.

(75) MacKeurtan, *Cradle Days*, pp.176, 181-184.

(76) Gardiner, *Journey to the Zoolu Country*, pp.129-133.

(77) Okoye, 'Dingane', p.232.

(78) Gardiner, *Journey to the Zoolu Country*, pp.213-219.

Gardiner, refused to permit any European from crossing the Thukela River boundary. That the Zulu king did not attack the port is attributable to the fact that all the traders and many of their clients possessed firearms.⁽⁷⁹⁾ Secondly, faced with the threat of a Zulu invasion before Gardiner's treaty was concluded, the traders had organized under Alexander Biggar to defend the port against attack.⁽⁸⁰⁾ As the population of the traders and their refugee clients grew in size and strength, their confidence in defending their community increased. With a view to establishing British rule in Natal, Gardiner saw the possibilities of employing the refugees in a para-military capacity under the command of Europeans:

A European military force is not therefore absolutely necessary either for the support of the government or the defence of the settlement - a few veteran soldiers, for the purpose of instituting drills, and introducing a uniformity of system would be quite sufficient, under the inspection of one or two non-commissioned officers, to organize a native force adequate for any necessity that might arise ... after three months I should have no hesitation in combating, if necessary, the whole Zulu army.⁽⁸¹⁾

Relations between the traders and Dingane were not entirely beyond reconciliation after the breakdown of the treaty. Tensions were eased somewhat when the traders consented to assist Dingane's army in the recovery of cattle from Sobhuza, the king of the Swazi. Commercial relations were re-established as a result of the traders' invaluable assistance in the campaign. The upshot of all this was that Dingane now demanded muskets and powder for ivory, hides and cattle. For a short time the traders willingly supplied him with firearms because of the exorbitant profits to be made.⁽⁸²⁾ Dingane's insatiable desire for guns was probably caused out of a combination of two factors: first, a fear of a white invasion from the Cape colony, and second, concern over the decline in Zulu military prowess as a result of Zulu reverses at the hands of the rival Ndebele people.⁽⁸³⁾ A

(79) Stuart and Malcolm (eds.), *Fynn's Diary*, pp.242, 250.

(80) Bird, *Annals of Natal*, vol. I., p.75.

(81) Gardiner, *Journey to the Zoolu Country*, p.408.

(82) Stuart and Malcolm (eds.), *Fynn's Diary*, p.249-250.

A port trader, Blakenberg, received 40 head of cattle for one elephant gun and some lead and powder.

(83) Isaacs, *Travels and Adventures*, vol. II, pp.59-60, 79-80.

permanent breakdown in trader-Zulu relations came about in 1837 when asylum was once again offered to escapees; and shortly thereafter, sales of firearms were discontinued out of fear that Dingane would use them against the port. (84)

The clash between missionary and trader on the Natal frontier intensified with Gardiner's return in 1838. Convinced that the influence of the British traders over the refugee Nguni had created a community that deviated from western Christian standards, Gardiner sought out British officials at the Cape and in London with the aim of imposing British authority on the settlement. His arguments for annexing Natal as a colony were rejected by the Colonial Office; yet he managed to have the Cape of Good Hope Punishment Act extended to British subjects living in south-east Africa below 25 degrees latitude. Armed with this powerless decree and an appointment as Justice of the Peace, Gardiner returned to the port in May 1836. Immediately upon arrival the missionary-magistrate summoned the traders for a meeting where he announced his authority and banned all further sale of arms and ammunition to the Zulu king. (85)

The traders, led by Alexander Biggar, repudiated Gardiner's assertions. Having no real authority, and without police or funds to enforce his decrees, Gardiner was compelled to leave Port Natal moving twenty miles northward to the Tongaat River. The traders voiced their opposition to the Punishment Act by transmitting a written protest to Gardiner which stated that 'Natal was not British territory, but a free settlement'. The traders also expressed a desire for the British government to appoint magistrates to 'protect and encourage them, not to threaten and imprison them'. It concluded by saying that the settlers would 'cheerfully render obedience to such competent authority as may have the power as well to protect as to punish'. (86)

Two divergent strands of thought are evident in the traders' protest

(84) Okoye, 'Dingane', p.234.

(85) MacKeurtan, *Cradle Days*, p.200.

(86) *Ibid.*, p.201.

and reflect a crisis of priorities common among white frontiersmen. In the first instance, the traders reveal their individualism by defining their 'community as a 'free settlement'. They reject British authority, as interpreted by a missionary who condemns their deviation from western European moral standards and who seeks to limit their lucrative trade in firearms. In the same memorial, the traders profess a desire for British rule if it will 'protect and encourage them', - in other words, protect the lives, property and economic interests of the settlement from the Zulu 'menace' without infringing on their social and economic liberties. The strained relations between Dingane and Port Natal created a political instability that hampered trade, and led to raiding and warfare. (87)

The arrival of the Retief-Maritz contingent of boer families in Natal in 1838 inspired the traders to adopt measures which would release them from the economic and political control of Dingane. In June 1837 news of the impending boer move to Natal stimulated the traders to consider aligning themselves with the boers. Not expecting any immediate establishment of British rule, the traders announced that when the boers arrived 'we intend to form an internal government of our own, free from the false measures and wavering policy of the neighbouring colony, (Cape colony) and we have no doubt but that everything will then go smoothly'. (88) Thus, there was a second expedient shift in the political allegiance of the British traders: first in 1824 from Briton to Zulu and then a second from Zulu to boer in 1838.

However perturbed Dingane had grown with the traders over the issue of

(87) John S. Galbraith, *Reluctant Empire: British Policy on the South African Frontier 1834-1854*, (Los Angeles, 1963), pp.180-183.

(88) MacKeurtan, *Cradle Days*, pp.202, 239. The coming of the boers to Natal had economic as well as political motivations. Commerce at the port had reached a low ebb by 1838 with the curtailment of trade in Zululand. The influx of several hundred boer families anxious to replenish their stock of food, tools, guns and powder revived business at the port. For example, Robert Dunn and John McCabe conducted a thriving business in arms and ammunition with the boers.

Zulu refugees, he had tolerated their presence out of a fear of firearms and in the forlorn hope of obtaining guns to bolster his military power. The trekboers constituted a much more serious threat to continued Zulu hegemony over Natal. The thirty or so traders and their retainers could be effectively quarantined to the port vicinity, whereas the more numerous boer pastoralists demanded large tracts of land in territory regarded by the Zulu as their sphere of influence. Dingane's reaction to boer penetration was to kill Retief and his party and launch a swift attack on the boer encampments; the king's strategy was to inflict such a severe defeat as to force their withdrawal from Natal. (89)

Dingane's precipitous actions cemented the boer-trader alliance and generated enough cohesion among the whites to challenge the Zulu power. The first offensive against the Zulu state came from Port Natal when an expedition of 2 100 Africans under John Cane successfully raided Zulu villages in northern Natal. This army returned in early April 1838 with four thousand cattle and over five hundred Zulu women and children. (90) In the same month Alexander Biggar and John Cane led a second expedition which was almost completely annihilated by a Zulu army under the king's brother, Mpande. In late April the remaining Europeans evacuated Port Natal before the settlement was sacked and burnt by the advancing Zulu army. (91) By the middle of 1838 Zulu armies had inflicted severe defeats on both the boer and British settlers. But Dingane's success was short-lived as boer reinforcements poured into Natal in November of the same year. (92)

On 16 December 1838 the Zulu army was severely defeated by a boer commando at Blood river. Zulu domination of Natal was seriously shaken and Dingane's credibility within the Zulu kingdom was weakened to the extent that rival princes and factions could openly challenge his authority. (93) These fissiparous tendencies surfaced in September 1839 when Mpande revolted and fled with his followers to seek an alliance

(89) Brookes and Webb *History of Natal*, pp.31-32.

(90) Galbraith, *Reluctant Empire*, p.185.

(91) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.34.

(92) Galbraith, *Reluctant Empire*, p.186.

(93) MacKeurtan, *Cradle Days*, p.242.

with the boers. Taking advantage of this political rupture in the Zulu royal house, the boers concluded an alliance with Mpande which decisively defeated Dingane's forces. Mpande was recognized as king of Zululand by the majority of his people; Dingane was eventually captured by the Swazis and executed.⁽⁹⁴⁾

The British settlement at Port Natal fell within the domain claimed by the Republic of Natalia and for a brief three-year period the community of traders, merchants and their Nguni clients accepted boer rule.⁽⁹⁵⁾ Zulu sovereignty in Natal had been successfully challenged by a combination of white-black alliances. First, British traders and their black wards had found common cause with the boer pastoralists; second, Mpande's defection from Zululand to the side of the boers had tipped the military balance firmly in the favour of the white frontiersmen. The territory claimed by the boers and recognized by the Zulu kingdom had tentatively fixed the boundaries of the future colony of Natal. The last step required in 'closing' the frontier was the restabilization of the region by an imperial power.

During the first fifteen years of white penetration into Natal, the British government had been unwilling to exert its authority in the area. Policy-makers at the Colonial Office had consistently refused appeals by the traders and Gardiner to annex the territory. Natal was not considered economically viable or strategically vital enough to warrant the expense of annexation.⁽⁹⁶⁾ The attitude of the government was expressed in 1836 by the Colonial Secretary, Lord Glenelg:

His late Majesty disclaimed, in the most direct terms, all right of sovereignty at Port Natal, and all intention to extend his dominion in that direction ... Port Natal is a foreign land, governed by foreign chiefs, and the government of this country has neither the right nor the intention to interfere with these chiefs.⁽⁹⁷⁾

(94) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.35.

(95) MacKeurtan, *Cradle Days*, p.242.

(96) Galbraith, *Reluctant Empire*, pp.181-183.

(97) MacKeurtan, *Cradle Days*, p.210.

The mass exodus of boers from the Cape colony in 1837 precipitated a revision of British policy regarding Natal. The establishment of a boer republic and the eruption of warfare with African peoples threatened to increase tensions on the turbulent eastern Cape frontier. In November 1838 Sir George Napier, Governor of the Cape Colony, authorized the military occupation of Port Natal to prevent the harbour from falling into either boer or Zulu hands. With the defeat of the Zulu and the restoration of order the British garrison withdrew in December 1838. Napier had reacted to pressures from the Colonial Office which was still opposed to permanent occupation. (98)

The change from Zulu to boer hegemony over Natal cannot be viewed as the termination of a frontier situation. The replacing of a black authority by a white-dominated power structure represents only a shift in the direction toward white rule; it does not imply that a state of permanent hegemony had been reached. The struggle for political control in Natal was narrowed down to a contest between the two competing white authorities of Britain and the Republic of Natalia. Boer rule in Natal was short-lived because of its failure to consolidate authority over the dislocated northern Nguni refugees in an orderly and peaceful fashion. (99)

The Zulu-boer conflict produced an instability that inspired a massive flood of Nguni peoples to return to their former lands. The influx of nearly sixty thousand refugees into Natal between 1839 and 1842 meant increased competition for grazing and agricultural lands. Squatting and cattle theft were common and boer attempts to deal with this led inevitably to disorder and conflict. The British government was alarmed by boer commando raids on south-eastern frontier tribes accused of cattle theft and the Volksraad's plan for relocating the surplus Nguni population from the Natal midlands to lands on or near those settled by eastern Cape chiefdoms under British protection. These events convinced the British government that Natal must be

(98) Galbraith, *Reluctant Empire*, p.184-185.

(99) *Ibid.*, p.178.

annexed in order to prevent a renewed wave of chaos and violence from erupting on the eastern Cape frontier. (100)

Napier despatched a small British force to occupy Port Natal in May 1842. Boer resistance to occupation dissipated after a brief siege of the port garrison was broken by the arrival of a relief force in the same month. (101) British settlers at the Port (Durban) readily shifted their allegiance to Britain, having grown disgruntled over the economic and political restrictions imposed on them by the Volksraad in Pietermaritzburg. (102) Mpande prudently followed the example of the British settlers and pledged his loyalty to the British authorities and offered the services of his army in expelling the boers. (103) With the formal British annexation of Natal in 1843 a re-ordering of the political and social structure along permanent colonial lines began to take place. The annexation of Natal signalled the transformation of a 'frontier zone' into a colonial territory.

The concept of a 'frontier zone' has much utility for it serves to distinguish frontier societies from those that emerge in a colonial situation. Integral to Legassick's concept are the 'two analytically distinct' yet inter-connecting processes of 'acculturation' and the 'erosion of non-white political power'. Legassick contends that these two processes transcend and incorporate other important developments. These processes begin in frontier zones and reach their ultimate conclusion with white authority firmly established throughout South Africa by 1910. (104)

The 'frontier concept', while being tied to a broader theoretical framework, is, nevertheless, a flexible and practical tool in explaining the mechanics of interaction between culturally diverse groups. For example, historians like Hancock and Billington recognize group diversity on the South African and American frontiers respectively. Their method

(100) *Ibid.*, pp.193-196.

(101) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.39.

(102) MacKeurtan, *Cradle Days*, pp.260-271.

(103) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.42.

(104) Legassick, 'Politics of a Frontier Zone', pp.8-9.

of group differentiation lies in an examination based on separation. (105)
 Legassick points out that while frontiers are separable in theory they are not so in practice. In Transorangia (1780-1840) missionaries, traders, soldiers and boer pastoralists all operated in the area during this period. These white frontiersmen made contact with the indigenous inhabitants creating a frontier situation corporately not singly. (106) In Natal's case, traders, missionaries, boer pastoralists and Khoikhoi frontiersmen mingled with the northern Nguni to create a frontier zone.

Until recently, South African frontier historiography has been dominated by albo-centric and ethno-centric works. Legassick attempts to correct this interpretational imbalance by focussing attention on the roles played by Africans in frontier zones. The process of 'non-white power erosion' is Legassick's vehicle for elaborating on the political and cultural dynamics of African states in response to white encroachment. The system of shifting alliances that sprang up between various groups on the Natal frontier is one of the most important developments leading to the eventual eclipse of Zulu authority. Initially, Shaka and Dingane displayed considerable skill in statecraft by using the British traders to strengthen their political power. However, the diverse and often conflicting interests of black and white groups produced an instability that re-aligned forces against the Zulu state. Zulu authority was curtailed by a black-white alliance composed of Britons, boers and rebellious elements within the Zulu kingdom.

The emergence of a frontier zone in Natal altered the political and economic life of the northern Nguni. Refugees scattered by the wars of the Mfecane, and Zulu unwilling to submit to the rule of Shaka and Dingane, found alternatives to privation and execution by becoming clients and allies of the British and the boers. The alternatives offered by white frontiersmen served to split the African population into two distinct sections: namely, the independent Zulu kingdom and the Natal Nguni. The cleavage between

(105) See W.K. Hancock (ed.), 'Perspective View', *Survey of Commonwealth Affairs*, vol. II, pp.6-18; and Billington, *Westward Expansion*, pp.3-8.

(106) Legassick, 'Politics of a Frontier Zone', p.10.

the two groups became more pronounced in the colonial era as the Natal Nguni increased in numbers and as acculturation to western values made deeper inroads. The re-introduction of maize and the creation of a market for agricultural surpluses stimulated the Natal Nguni to become peasant farmers and to desire European trade goods. Thus, the frontier period in Natal can be interpreted as the introductory phase in the transition of black and white to a colonial regime.

iii). Transition and Effects of 'Closure'

The transition of the Natal frontier zone to a British colony can be divided into four distinct yet over-lapping areas: first, the structure and composition of the colonial administration before and up to the eve of 'responsible' government in 1856; second, a discussion of the various white and black ethnic groups that flowed in and out of Natal during the transition phase, and an analysis of the immigration of large numbers of Britons to the colony; third, an examination of the British settlers' antagonism towards Africans and white renegades must incorporate cultural factors as well as those related to the political economy. Moreover, a comparison of frontier and colonial attitudes in Natal reveals sharp contrasts. Dunn's attitudes and behaviour when studied against the backdrop of the colonial transition suggest a number of factors that motivated Dunn to leave the colony and settle in Zululand.

On 31 May 1844, Natal was annexed as an autonomous district of the Cape colony.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ The new appendage was 'reluctantly' acquired; it had been added to the Empire by Britain to bring about stability among the African peoples of the region. This measure would, it was hoped, impose order and lessen the incessant warfare and raiding on the eastern Cape frontier. The rise of the Republic of Natalia presented a potential threat to Britain's strategic security in the region and the Colonial Office wanted to prevent the boers from gaining an outlet to the sea.

(107) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.48.

Also, the British government wanted to forestall any attempts by the boers to develop diplomatic ties with rival foreign powers. (108) Beyond her strategic requirements in Natal, Britain considered the new colony to be of little economic value; (109) there were no known deposits of valuable metals or minerals to boost the territory's development. Ivory, hides and skins provided the only source of export income. Recalcitrant Boers, numbering several thousand, far outnumbered the few hundred British settlers clustered around the immediate vicinity of Durban. The African population was still in the throes of post-Mfecane dislocation with ever-increasing numbers returning to Natal to re-occupy their old homes with the boundaries of Zulu authority pushed back across the Thukela river. Their numbers were estimated at between eighty and one hundred thousand in the early 1840s. (110) Natal was a backwater of British settlement; as late as 1838 prospective white immigrants were warned of the 'primitive' conditions to be encountered:

They were to rely on their own resources for the comforts and clothing required for their families for at least a year; they were to provide themselves with plenty of tools and spare parts for their agricultural implements, as well as a stock of colonial cattle. ... At the time of my writing this nothing except Indian corn and few fowls can be purchased. Tea, sugar, flour, are luxuries not even thought of, cloth very scarce; oxen or milch cows are not to be purchased for cash. (111)

These were the major problems and conditions that confronted the new colonial administration that took office in December 1845. (112) At the centre of Natal's government were the Lieutenant-Governor, Colonial Secretary, Crown Prosecutor and Diplomatic Agent to the Native Tribes; the posts of Colonial Treasurer, Postmaster and Registrar of Deeds were assumed by the Colonial Secretary and reflect the caution and extreme economy exercised by the Treasury over Colonial Office finances. The Lieutenant-Governor was subordinate to the Cape Governor; Parliament and the Cape Legislative Council were

(108) Uys, *In the Era of Shepstone*, pp.20-21.

(109) Bird, *Annals of Natal*, vol. II, p.86.

(110) Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, pp.41-43.

(111) *The Grahamstown Journal*, 7 Aug. 1837.

(112) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.54.

the only official bodies empowered to legislate on Natal's behalf. The Natal Executive Council, composed of the Lieutenant-Governor and his top-ranking officials, could not legislate for the District of Natal: representative government in any official form was not introduced until 1856. (113)

With limited finances and a skeleton staff the new administrators nevertheless implemented major reforms which dramatically affected all population groups in Natal. The first crisis arose between the boers and the administration over the question of land apportionment. The boer pastoralists claimed hundreds of thousands of acres in the Natal midlands. Many boers considered a farm of five or six thousand acres to be just sufficient to support one family. (114) Most British officials considered the boers' claims exorbitant. The Colonial Office desired smaller holdings, registered survey and cash payments. Colonial Office insistence on a proper survey of Natal lands threw the whole claims issue into confusion. Between 1843 and 1847 much of the colony was eventually surveyed. But the long delay angered and frustrated the boers to the point where the vast majority of them had left Natal by 1848 for the Transvaal. (115)

The second problem facing the colonial government was the administration of African affairs. The appointment in 1845 of Theophilus Shepstone as Diplomatic Agent to the Native Tribes in Natal was an event of major importance in the history of the colony; for nearly thirty years Shepstone dominated the administration of African affairs from the formulation of policy down to its implementation and enforcement. (116) Practically unaided, and with little money, Shepstone in 1846-1847 moved nearly eighty thousand Natal Nguni into the locations which he had created for their occupation. (117) Shepstone instituted 'Native Customary Law'

(113) *Ibid.*, pp.54-56.

(114) Hattersley, *The British Settlement of Natal*, p.62.

(115) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.61.

(116) Bird, *Annals of Natal*, vol. II, p.473.

(117) E.H. Brookes and N. Hurwitz, *The Native Reserves in Natal*, vol. III, (Durban, 1952, Natal Regional Survey), Chapter 1.

to govern Africans living in the reserved areas; this was a legal contrivance that Shepstone designed in order to separate African legal administration from the ordinary Roman-Dutch law that governed Europeans. Shepstone's colleagues and white settlers, both British and boer, criticized the location system on the grounds that the reserve areas were too large in acreage and the abundance of land available to Africans made them economically independent and, therefore, unwilling to enter the employ of white settlers. (118)

As the last remnants of the boers trickled out of Natal for the Transvaal a fresh wave of five thousand British immigrants poured into the colony between 1849 and 1850. (119) They were known as the Byrne settlers and they were instrumental in the entrenchment of colonial institutions in Natal. White settlers with British sympathies now outnumbered the dwindling boer community. By 1855 settlements had been established along the coast and in the interior; Verulam, Richmond and Greytown were founded as a result of the rapid rise in the white population. Pietermaritzburg, the capital, and Durban, the only seaport, each accumulated nearly two thousand white residents. (120)

The Byrne settlers affected the political, social and cultural life of Natal. Churches, schools and libraries were built; John W. Colenso was invited to settle in Natal, becoming the colony's first Anglican bishop in 1859. Agricultural shows were held and botanical gardens planted; (121) newspapers appeared in Pietermaritzburg and Durban - the *Natal Witness* in 1845 and the *Natal Mercury* in 1852.

There was a marked contrast between the pre-colonial hunter-trader frontiersman and the new colonial settler in their respective attitudes towards Africans. The post-frontier settler displayed a racial and cultural chauvinism that had never been prevalent among the early Port traders. The white population had nearly quadrupled with the arrival of the Byrne immigrants, yet the white population paled into insignificance when compared to the number of Africans. The entire settler community numbered approximately eight thousand in 1855. Africans in Natal still outnumbered whites by fifteen to one. Impressed by, and at the

(118) Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, Chapter 3.

(119) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.56.

(120) Hattersley, *British Settlement of Natal*, p.315.

(121) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.65.

same time fearful of the black majority, white settlers reacted vociferously to any real or imagined threats posed by Africans to their political, economic and cultural institutions. (122).

The ideological currents running through nineteenth century European societies were transferred far beyond Europe by its colonists. Western Europe experienced a great burst of cultural and spiritual vitality throughout much of the nineteenth century. Europeans believed firmly in the superiority of their technology, their faith in Christianity and their systems of government and jurisprudence; they also held the view that Europeans and the white race in general were innately superior and far more 'advanced' than non-white races. Britain, perhaps more than any other European nation, took to heart the belief that their political and cultural institutions were of a higher calibre than that of all other nations and ethnic groups. Imbued with these notions of superiority, Britons carried their ideals and prejudices with them to Britain's colonial territories and spheres of influence throughout Africa and Asia. (123) Victorian cultural imperialism was given expression in the activities of the Aborigines Protection Society (A.P.S.), the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.), the London Missionary Society (L.M.S.), and by innumerable British settlers, merchants and government officials who came into contact with African and Asian societies.

Schreuder has noted the 'cultural belligerence' that existed among settlers and officials in the mid-nineteenth century Cape colony. (124) The indigenous African peoples of southern Africa were considered 'uncivilized' and 'heathen' by white British colonists. (125) Natal settlers, missionaries and officials adhered to the same creed of superiority as their counterparts in the Cape colony; they felt it was their 'moral' duty to 'civilize' and Christianize the northern Nguni of

(122) Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', p.34.

(123) See Robinson and Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians*, pp.1-3.

(124) Schreuder, 'The Cultural Factor in Victorian Imperialism', pp.283-284.

(125) *Ibid.*, pp.284-285.

Natal and Zululand. The sense of moral commitment to raising the African from a state of 'savagery' and 'ignorance' to one of 'industry' and 'enlightenment' was real. This sense of commitment should not be treated solely as a superficial moral contrivance by the settler community to justify their main objective - the economic exploitation and the political subjugation of Africans.

The fact that Africans should be subservient to Europeans was not incompatible with the principles attached to the settlers' 'civilizing' mission. Blacks were thought to be in an infant stage of cultural development, and the Natal settlers considered it only 'natural' and correct that they should maintain their superiority in all spheres of human endeavour in order to guide, goad, and, if necessary, coerce their 'childlike' wards along the path to 'civilization'. That Africans far outnumbered Europeans in Natal lent an even greater sense of urgency to the 'civilizing' mission. The *Natal Witness* defined most accurately the settler community's perception of Africans:

The other class of our colonial population consists of men in a state of infancy as regards civilization. They are far more numerous than the Europeans, and their numbers are likely to be increased by additions from the adjacent tribes. Scattered over large tracts of country, and unimpelled by want, they have worn their lives away up to the present time in slothful indolence, to the full development of the depravity of human nature. (126)

The 'native' problem loomed large in the settler mind and Africans were held responsible for complicating the problems attached to 'land, labour and security'. (127) The tensions surrounding black-white relations in Natal only intensified the level of cultural intolerance focussed on white 'deviants' who went 'native' by taking African wives and borrowing African institutions. The religious and secular guardians of European civilization in Natal were aware of the adoption of African customs by the

(126) *Natal Witness*, 15 Jan. 1847.

(127) Walker, *History of Southern Africa*, p.186.

early Port Natal traders. (128) The *Witness* told its readers that a combination of environmental and alien cultural influences had a debilitating effect on Europeans living in the colony:

X There are, however, several causes which seem to operate injuriously on the character of the Natal colonists as a colonist ... unfair and ungrateful though it may seem to avow it, the mild temperature of the climate, and the exuberant fertility of the soil, appear calculated to pamper an indolence and lifelessness which the presence of native depravity, and the absence of powerful incentives to civilized refinements are by no means less adapted to induce. Removed far from the influences that are upon him on every side while in the heart of the civilized world; and cut off from many of the enjoyments of social intercourse, and public engagements, the Natal colonist is in danger of falling in true nobleness. (129)

The examples of Fynn, Cane and Ogle, who married African wives and sired coloured offspring, were despised by the colony's new settlers. As late as 1856 intending immigrants were warned of the unnatural social conditions existing in Natal:

no one should emigrate to Natal who would find it difficult to deny himself the enjoyments of civilization and who would not be satisfied with a semi-wild, simple farm life. It is not necessary to deny oneself intelligent company altogether, because many of the English colonists belong to the educated class, but many of them do not see a white face for nine months. I strongly advise that the emigrant should come here as a married man. For several reasons I consider that absolutely essential, particularly as there is a shortage of young ladies here. (130)

The post-annexation settlers were not dependent on the Zulu king or white frontier 'interest groups' like the trekboers for security of life or property. However, the establishment of colonial rule in Natal did little to relieve the settler community of its morose concern at being so near the borders of the Zulu kingdom - southern Africa's most militarily formidable black state. (131) An exploration of nineteenth

(128) Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.42.

(129) *Natal Witness*, 15 Jan. 1847.

(130) O.H. Spohr (ed.), *The Natal Diaries of Dr. W.H.I. Bleek* (Cape Town, 1965), p.36.

(131) Wilson and Thompson (eds.), *Oxford History*, vol. I, chapter IX, Thompson, 'Co-operation and Conflict: The High Veld', p.383.

century Natal settler attitudes reveals a fear and suspicion of almost hysterical proportions.

Settler anxieties over the overwhelming numerical superiority and close proximity of the Natal Nguni and the neighbouring Zulu only served to galvanize the already exaggerated sense of cultural and racial superiority characteristic of the settler community. (132) White settler fears of being engulfed by the African population bred intolerance towards those Europeans who adopted an African lifestyle; white 'deviation' from western European cultural norms was met with ostracism in all spheres of Natal colonial life. The 'acculturated' white frontiersmen either renounced their African affiliations or, as in Dunn's case, refused to yield to settler pressure and moved beyond the reach of colonial authority to a new frontier.

Against this background of ever-tightening colonial rule and the growing demands that Europeans conform to European standards, John Dunn became alienated from Natal's changing society. Personal tragedy and financial setbacks soured his attitude even more. The 1846-47 Lands Commission found that Dunn's father owned 2,514 acres of land and a prosperous trading store in Durban. (133) By 1851 both of Dunn's parents had died and the estate sold to settle outstanding debts. (134)

At this juncture in his life John Dunn, now seventeen years old, with little formal education, and no trade or skill, set about the task of fending for himself. His proficiency with a rifle and his extensive knowledge of the immediate Natal hinterland earned him a meagre living

(132) *Ibid.*, The editors contend that 'Natal settlers very quickly acquired a racialistic attitude to the colonial situation. In the first few years the dominant impressions many settlers had of Africans were a consciousness of their difference, a fear of their numbers, and a disappointment at their instrumental deficiencies'. Wilson and Thompson admit 'there are no substantial studies of the history of race attitudes among white South Africans' except the works of I.D. MacCrone (See Chapter 1).

(133) S.G.O., 5/15, Vol. 6, 25 Sept. 1848.

(134) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.2.

as a guide for hunting parties, his patrons being the British officers garrisoned at Durban. This income proved insufficient and Dunn turned to transport riding; after a journey to the Transvaal on behalf of a Durban businessman, he returned to find that he would not be paid his honorarium. The unscrupulous employer refused Dunn payment for his services on the technicality that under Roman-Dutch law he (Dunn) was under the legal age entitling him to negotiate and demand a wage. Thoroughly disillusioned and without funds Dunn stated that he 'renounced civilization' and left Durban for the frontier lands on the border between Natal and Zululand. (135)

Dunn's 'renunciation' of Natal's colonial society reflects more than cultural alienation. His motives for moving to the frontier were most urgently economic. White settlers found only limited economic opportunities in Natal during the first two decades of colonial rule. There is evidence to suggest that farming was not a profitable occupation in Natal until the establishment of the sugar cane industry in the 1860s.

The Byrne settlers found upon arrival in Natal that land companies and speculators owned a goodly proportion of the best agricultural and grazing lands in the colony. These same land companies and absentee landlords kept the price of land high with the result that many new immigrants found it difficult, if not impossible, to purchase enough productive land to earn a reasonable living. (136) Furthermore, the absentee owners rented their unoccupied lands to Africans; these black tenants produced maize, sorghum, vegetables and livestock and sold their surpluses on the open markets in the major towns of the colony. (137) Thus, black farmers came into direct competition with struggling settler agriculturalists. Bundy's work on the development of a black farming class in nineteenth century southern Africa revealed that African peasants did indeed pose a serious economic threat to white farmers:

(135) *Ibid.*

(136) See Henry Slater, 'The Natal Land and Colonisation Company 1860-1948' in *The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, vol. IV, (I.C.S. 1972-73), pp.41-52.

(137) Bundy, 'African Peasantry', pp.373-374.

Natal's peasants were rapidly becoming rich and independent, complained the 1852-53 Native Affairs Commission; 'they preferred the most independent state, and hence has arisen the uniformly insufficient supply of labour'. The major proprietors in the colony found that their easiest source of revenue lay in renting land to Africans, prior to 1870 these latter were able to withstand pressures on them to work for the white man and had been able to pay their taxes by selling off their surplus grain or cattle. (138)

Perhaps no other single written work reveals settler attitudes more graphically and exhaustively for this period than the findings of the 'Report of the Commission of 1852-53', (139) which Etherington labelled as 'some of the most unabashed paeons to European superiority to be found in the whole dismal literature of settler racism'. (140) The Commission was packed with an overwhelming majority of land-owning settlers; their opinions and prejudices were sprinkled throughout the body of the report. (141) Broken down to its essentials, the report blamed Shepstone for having created a location system that was dangerous to the security of the colony. The report found that the chief fault lay in the over-abundance of land allocated to the reserves where Africans would be capable of fomenting sedition and rebellion that would be hard to quell. And, the 'generous' acreage made available to Africans fostered an economic independence which inhibited the potentially abundant supply of labour - labour which could be mobilized to aid the settlers in the development of the colony's economy. The report concluded that Shepstone and his colleagues on the earlier 1846-47 Lands Commission had 'failed chiefly owing to the size of the locations recommended, which led it to trespass largely on the private rights of proprietors of farms, and also dried up the source whereby an abundant and continuous supply of kaffir labour for wages might have been procured'. (142)

(138) *Ibid.*, p.374.

(139) The full title reads 'Proceedings and Report on the Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Past and Present State of the Kaffirs in the District of Natal'. (Official Report, 1853), (K.C.L.).

(140) Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', p.34.

(141) Brookes, *History of Native Policy*, pp.53-55.

(142) 'Proceedings and Report', p.4.

Considering the restricted scope of Natal's early economy Dunn and other settlers found that hunting and trading offered more profitable returns and required a much smaller investment than farming. In fact colonial societies, such as Natal in the 1840s and 1850s, predictably exploited the most visible, accessible and readily profitable material resources available. The natural environment of Natal and Zululand supported a large variety and number of wild and domesticated animal life. Much of Natal and Zululand is well watered and conducive to the growth of a rich flora.⁽¹⁴³⁾ The rich natural pastures and forest-savannah vegetation provided forage and shelter for much sought after game animals such as elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, buffalo, springbok, and monkey. The northern Nguni of Natal and Zululand were stockkeepers and had many thousands of head of cattle in their possession. Thus, through trade, barter and hunting the Natal settler could obtain ivory, hides, and cattle which could be easily converted into hard cash.⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ It was not uncommon for a number of the early white settlers to engage in full, or even part-time hunting and trading in Natal and Zululand as a means of accumulating much needed capital or supplementing a meagre farming income. Samuelson told how his friend, John Clark, a well known Natal trader got his financial 'start in life' through the sale of the 'hides, tusks and horns of the animals he shot in Zululand.'⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ As late as 1883, one observer of the Natal hunter-trader fraternity described his pattern of activity:

The trip over, he returns to Natal, his wagon emptied of the goods he carried up with him, but, in their place, loaded with hides, buckskins, horns, a little ivory perhaps - anything that will find a market in the colony - and driving along with him a choice head of sleek Zulu cattle. All of which he disposes of, either to buy a fresh load and start off again, or to return to his farm; for some combine trading with their ordinary farming pursuits, taking a periodical trip into Zululand.⁽¹⁴⁶⁾

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- (143) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, pp.4-9.
 (144) B. Mitford, *Through the Zulu Country*, (London, 1883), p.129.
 (145) R.C.A. Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago* (Durban, 1929), preface.
 (146) Mitford, *Through the Zulu Country*, p.130.

If calculated in terms of income earned for Natal's early economy, the contributions of the hunter-trader were out of all proportion to their relatively small numbers. The official government figures for the value of commodities exported from Natal show that ivory and ox and cow hides were consistently the colony's most important earners of foreign exchange for the period 1853-1863. Their annual value in pounds sterling was as follows:

YEAR	IVORY	OX AND COW HIDES	
1853	£ 8,634	902	(147)
1854	£14,688	2,401	(148)
1855	£13,504	3,201	(149)
1856	£13,715	11,568	(150)
1857	£18,470	21,440	(151)
1858	£31,754	16,229	(152)
1859	£17,618	12,460	(153)
1860	No records available		(154)
1861	£22,825	10,551	(155)
1862	£27,059	5,884	(156)
1863	£40,736	6,351	(157)

It was not until 1862 that ivory and hides yielded first place to wool in value of exports. In that year the value of wool exported was £38,432 while that of ivory and hides combined fell to £32,943. ⁽¹⁵⁸⁾

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- (147) *Natal Statistical Blue Book*, No. 4, 1853.
 (148) *Ibid.*, No. 5, 1854.
 (149) *Ibid.*, No. 6, 1855.
 (150) *Ibid.*, No. 7, 1856.
 (151) *Ibid.*, No. 8, 1857.
 (152) *Ibid.*, No. 9, 1858.
 (153) *Ibid.*, No. 10, 1859.
 (154) There was no 1860 edition of the *Natal Statistical Blue Book*.
 (155) *Natal Statistical Blue Book*, No. 12, 1861.
 (156) *Ibid.*, No. 13, 1862.
 (157) *Ibid.*, No. 14, 1863.
 (158) *Ibid.*, No. 13, 1862.

The figure for sugar in 1873 had jumped to £162 540 while that of ivory and hides was valued at £73 271.⁽¹⁵⁹⁾

A close scrutiny of the figures concerning the value of ivory and hides provides a number of clues related to the activities of the hunter-trader in Natal and Zululand; first, the hunter-trader was one of the most important contributors to Natal's economy from its very beginnings until the mid 1860s. Yet, the hunter-trader was a temporary rather than a permanent feature of the colonial economy. The ruthless exploitation of the fauna of the region by the white hunter led inevitably, to the destruction of much wild game in Natal and Zululand by 1880. The hunter-trader was a transitory figure whose interaction with the natural environment was essentially destructive and exploitative; second, the export figures reveal spectacular yearly and periodic fluctuations. It is no coincidence that the export volume of ivory and hides rose dramatically in those years when there was political upheaval and cattle disease in the game and cattle rich Zulu kingdom. It will be shown that Dunn and other white hunter-traders from Natal were quick to intrude and participate in the internal political struggles of the Zulu kingdom when cattle, ivory and hides were the rewards.

Considering the depressed state of agriculture in Natal and the changing social character of the colony, Dunn moved to the Natal-Zululand frontier to take up the occupation of hunter-trader. Drifting aimlessly through Zululand with no fixed place of residence, Dunn shot game which he bartered to nearby kraals to supply his simple needs. Upon leaving Durban he had taken with him Catherine Pierce, the fifteen-year old daughter of Robert Dunn's European assistant, and an eastern Cape African woman⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ of the Cele tribe. The young couple lived a semi-nomadic life; Dunn's expertise with a rifle, coupled with his familiarity with Zulu customs, ensured a modicum of material and physical security. The records available indicate that at no time in Dunn's life was he so near to a thorough rejection of 'European standards'. He derived sustenance for himself and Catherine by living off the land. Dunn's nearest neighbours

(159). *Ibid.*, No. 24, 1873.

(160) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1452, pp.3-6.

were either Zulu or white 'renegades' who lived in a similar manner as he - all finding a common bond in their preference for Zulu ways and in their rejection of European society. (161)

From 1852 until 1854 John Dunn lived in this state until he made the acquaintance of retired British Army captain, Joshua Walmsley Junior, son of Sir Joshua Walmsley, the radical Mayor of Liverpool and M.P. for Bolton. (162) In 1852 Walmsley was confirmed in an appointment as Border Agent at the lower drift of the Thukela. The circumstances under which Dunn met Walmsley are related in a colourful account given by a clerk employed by the Border Agent at Nonoti near the Lower Drift:

Walmsley, Cockburn and Harry Milner, the last named of Durban, went to Zululand on a hunting trip. They crossed the Tugela and pitched their camp near the banks of the Matikulu. Whilst there, Walmsley drew the attention of the others to the fact that he had seen going about in that locality a boy (white) and apparently a European, dressed exactly like a Kaffir (Zulu). Harry Milner examined the boy and said at once his name was John or Jack Dunn, and that he had been missing for several years, no one knowing what had become of him. Upon hearing Milner say he was absolutely certain it was John Dunn of Durban, Walmsley decided to catch him. After a little trouble Dunn, having tried somewhat to resist, was caught. Walmsley then said to him in English, for Dunn had not forgotten his mother tongue, that he would have to do one of two things (a) consent to live at Nonoti with Walmsley, where he would be properly cared for, or (b) be sent straight back to Durban. Dunn chose the former alternative. He afterwards lived about six years with Walmsley who educated him in every way. (163)

This commentary reveals the extent of Dunn's almost total adoption of the Zulu way of life.

(161) *Ibid.*

(162) R.N. Currey (ed.), *Letters and Other Writings of a Natal Sheriff, Thomas Phipson 1815-76* (Cape Town, 1968), p.233.

(163) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.3.

Through Walmsley's patronage Dunn furthered his education and found employment; Dunn became the Border Agent's administrative assistant and he was given the additional responsibility of training a corps of forty or fifty Khoi and African policemen in the use of firearms and horses. (164) This body of men served in the capacity of a frontier gendarmerie; their expenses and wages were financed entirely by Walmsley. It was the Border Agent's duty to observe the traffic crossing the lower drift to and from Zululand and maintain law and order in the district. (165)

In December 1856 civil war broke out in Zululand between the supporters of Mpande's two eldest sons - Cetshwayo, leader of the Usuthu faction and Mbuyazi, head of the Gqoza. The conflict centred around an intense rivalry for the succession to the throne. (166)

Cetshwayo was stronger militarily than Mbuyazi, for the Usuthu regiments outnumbered the Gqoza by three to one. (167) In mid-November Mbuyazi fled south toward the Thukela with Cetshwayo in pursuit. Mbuyazi's intention was to ask for asylum for himself and his followers in Natal to avoid an unequal contest with the more numerous Usuthu. On the 29 November the Gqoza encamped at Ndongakusuka kraal on the Zululand side of the lower drift of the Thukela. (168)

Walmsley was well-informed on the disturbances in Zululand; his main objective was to keep apart the warring factions in Zululand and prevent any fighting from spilling over the Thukela into Natal. With the security of the colony uppermost in his mind, Walmsley predictably rejected Mbuyazi's overtures to cross the Thukela into Natal. As the Usuthu neared the Lower Drift, white traders and Zulu refugees poured across the river into Natal, thus precipitating a panic among the local Natal Nguni, many of whom abandoned their kraals and moved deeper into Natal for safety. Dunn persuaded Walmsley to allow him to cross the Thukela and try to prevent bloodshed through mediation between the two warring factions. (169)

(164) *Ibid.*

(165) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.3-4.

(166) Rosalind Mael, 'The Problem of Political Integration in the Zulu Empire', (Ph. D. Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1974).

(167) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.4.

(168) James Stuart Papers, (K.C.L.), 'Ndongakusuka'.

(169) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.4.

With thirty-five of his frontier policemen and a complement of one hundred African retainers, Dunn rode into the Gqoza camp; he surveyed the terrain and prudently advised Mbuyazi to move his dependants further inland away from the river. Dunn wanted to avoid, in the event of a retreat, the entrapment of thousands of defenceless women and children between the Usuthu and the Thukela in flood at that moment. Mbuyazi and his principal *izinduna* scoffed at Dunn's suggestion and the dependants remained where they were, much to their misfortune. (170)

On the morning of 2 December 1856 the Usuthu arrived at Ndongakusuka and advanced on the Gqoza. Dunn's attempts to parley with Cetshwayo proved futile and he and his policemen were forced to fight the Usuthu. The battle turned into a general rout as Mbuyazi's force of seven thousand men collapsed before the Usuthu onslaught of approximately twenty thousand warriors. Dunn retreated with his men to the Thukela stripped and plunged into the flood-swollen river, before being rescued in mid-stream by white traders manning a small punt. (171) Dunn gave these impressions of the slaughter:

As soon as I got to the river I was at once rushed by men, women and children begging me to save them. Several poor mothers held out their babies to me offering them to me as my property if I would only save them, and now the Usutu were fairly amongst us, stabbing right and left without mercy ... the scene was horrible. The Usutu were, with terrible earnestness, hard at work with the deadly assegai, in some cases pinning babes to their mother's quivering forms. (172)

On the authorization of Lieutenant-Governor Scott, Theophilus Shepstone arrived at the Lower Drift on the afternoon of 2 December. He interviewed Dunn, Walmsley and a handful of white traders to assess the extent of danger to Natal. (173) Shepstone was concerned over Dunn's participation in the Zulu dynastic struggle; he feared that Cetshwayo might interpret Dunn's actions in fighting with Mbuyazi as British intervention on behalf of the Gqoza thus provoking a possible Usuthu invasion of Natal in retaliation. Shepstone expressed his concern over Dunn's involvement to Scott:

(170) *Ibid.*

(171) *Ibid.*, p.7.

(172) *Ibid.*

(173) 'Mpande: Extracts and Letters relating to Mpande 1846-1871', File 27024, typescript of letter from Lieutenant Governor Scott to Sir George Grey, 15 Dec. 1865.

There were some wagons belonging to traders on the Zulu side of the river, these were of course all plundered; there were also about five traders, white men, caught by the army but not touched, so I am in hopes that the impression on the minds of the Zulu is not that Mr. Dunn and party were there as partizans. (174)

Shepstone and Scott were critical of both Dunn's and Walmsley's conduct in the Zulu civil war. Walmsley was not empowered by his position as Border Agent to authorize Dunn to intercede in a domestic power struggle beyond the boundaries of Natal; Dunn's attempt to parley with Cetshwayo and his subsequent involvement in the actual fighting were considered reckless and irresponsible - both Walmsley and Dunn received a 'mild' censure from the Executive Council on Shepstone's recommendation:

That Mr. Walmsley after hesitation did sanction Mr. Dunn's entering the Zulu country ... under the mistaken impression that he could authorize Mr. Dunn to enter the Zulu country in his private capacity. That Mr. Dunn went over expressly to make peace; but that his proceedings were injudicious and ill-advised to the object he had in view ...

The Council are also of the opinion that the conduct of Mr. Walmsley was injudicious in allowing Mr. Dunn to cross the Tugela, and that before taking such a course he should have waited for instructions from the government. (175)

Dunn's involvement in the battle of Ndongakusuka, caused the Natal Colonial authorities additional headaches when twenty-five or so white traders claimed the actions of Walmsley and Dunn, the government's agents, had provoked Cetshwayo to plunder them of their cattle and trade goods.

(174) *Ibid.*, typescript of letter from T. Shepstone to Lieutenant-Governor Scott, 2 Dec. 1856.

(175) Executive Council Minutes, vol. 6, 14 Dec. 1855-8 Dec. 1860. Council Meeting of 5 Feb. 1857.

Two days after Ndongakusuka Shepstone warned the Lieutenant-Governor of the furore Dunn's actions had caused among the traders: 'A large quantity of traders' property has been taken by Cetewayo's army; and I hear they intend to press their claims upon your attention - also that they propose an interview with me on the subject.'⁽¹⁷⁶⁾

The traders saw in Dunn's participation at Ndongakusuka a pretext to obtain compensation from the Natal Government for their losses in the Zulu civil war. Twenty-one of the traders sought legal advice⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ and submitted claims to the Secretary for Native Affairs:

(176) 'Mpande: Extracts and Letters relating to Mpande, 1846-71', (K.C.L.), File 27024 - Typescript of letter from T. Shepstone to Lt. Governor Scott, 4 Dec. 1856.

(177) *Ibid.*

CLAIMANT	CATTLE LOSSES	VALUE IN STERLING OF CATTLE AND PROPERTY LOSSES
M. Barr	90 Head	£120. 6. 0.
T. Campkin	24 Head	£112. 0. 0.
W. Dalmaine	67 Head	£222.10. 0.
P. Dupre	30 Head	£126. 2. 6.
R. Forbes	46 Head	£ 57. 5. 0.
T. Galloway	167 Head	£251. 9. 0.
W. Grant	19 Head	£ 60. 0. 0.
A. Gous	207 Head	£531.18. 6.
J. Hill	10 Head	£ 15. 0. 0.
F. Jackson	-	£ 40. 0. 0.
J. Landell	83 Head	£206. 0. 3.
L. Lewis	6 Head	£ 21.18. 6.
D. McGill	39 Head	£ 65.18. 0.
A. Moore	6 Head	£ 26. 9. 0.
H. Paxton	42 Head	£ 18. 0. 0.
E. Rathbone	331 Head	£792.10. 0.
P. Shadwell	38 Head	£230.13. 0.
J. Steel	-	£ 41. 0. 0.
J. Strydom	78 Head	£219. 0. 0.
R. Surtees	287 Head	£526. 2. 6.
TOTAL	1 670 Head	£3 680. 2. 3. (178)

(178) S.N.A. 1/1/7. Nos. 1-57. 'Traders' Claims for Losses sustained by the Zulu disturbances in December 1856'. These claims were submitted from December 1856 until the latter months of 1857.

A suspicious Shepstone was not convinced by the traders' indignant pleadings that they were innocent victims of Dunn's rash foray into the Zulu Civil war. Shepstone took official depositions from individual traders and witnesses at Ndongakusuka, including Dunn. Shepstone found out that several of the traders had fought with Mbuyazi's Gqoza in hope of being on the victorious side and sharing in the loot of cattle that was invariably taken from the vanquished. (179) Two prominent white traders, Waugh and Rathbone were so conspicuous at Ndongakusuka that they were immortalized in Cetshwayo's *izibongo* or praise poems. (180) Two other traders who submitted claims, Andries Gous and Paul Dupré, admitted to Shepstone that they had fought in the battle. Shepstone told Scott that he believed the traders 'all had abundant time to get out of the way - but there is a Government notice distinctly informing them that they enter the Zulu country at their own risk'. (181) Under Ordinance number four of 1848 all persons wishing to trade beyond the Natal frontier in Zululand had to take out licenses from the nearest Magistrate. Three traders, Paxton, Shadwell and Gous were liable for prosecution because their licences had expired months before the battle of Ndongakusuka. (182) Shepstone's Report on the trader's claims for compensation from the Natal government was responsible for the negative attitude of the Natal Executive Council toward the traders:

The Council are unanimously of the opinion that the Zulu traders have totally failed to substantiate their allegations ... That the traders by their own evidence were aware of an impending collision and had ample time to withdraw their property from the Zulu country ... That it is evident the traders found a favourable opportunity to trade in the gathering of the two armies, and that heedless of the danger and the warning given them they imprudently prolonged their stay.

That therefore their own acts led to the loss of their property and they are not entitled to compensation from public funds. (183)

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- (179) 'Mpande: Extracts and Letters', File 27024 - Typescript of a letter from T. Shepstone to Lt. Governor Scott, 4 Dec. 1856.
 (180) Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, p.4.
 (181) 'Mpande: Extracts and Letters', File 27024 - Typescript of a letter from T. Shepstone to Lt. Governor Scott, 4 Dec. 1856.
 (182) S.N.A. 1/1/7. Nos. 1-57. Resident Magistrate, Durban to Shepstone, 6 July 1858.
 (183) Executive Council Minutes, vol. 6, from 14 Dec. 1855 - 8 Dec. 1860. Council Meeting of 5 Feb. 1857.

Shepstone informed the lawyer representing the traders that it was 'the policy of Her Majesty's Government to remain strictly neutral with regard to the trader's claims for compensation from the Zulus'.⁽¹⁸⁴⁾ Although, officially the Natal Government had disclaimed any responsibility to compensate the traders, it did send Henry Francis Senior as its agent to negotiate the release of five thousand head of cattle with Mpande. The Zulu King thought the demands excessive and offered only 1 124 head; Fynn felt this was insufficient and broke off the talks, returning to Natal.⁽¹⁸⁵⁾

Ironically, Dunn, the man held responsible for Cetshwayo's confiscation of the traders' property, succeeded in obtaining the release of cattle. In the latter months of 1857 Dunn, on his own initiative, brazenly entered Zululand and persuaded Mpande and Cetshwayo to hand over nearly 1 200 head of cattle. Dunn was lured into Zululand primarily in response to the £250 reward offered by the traders for the return of their cattle.⁽¹⁸⁶⁾ It was on this second meeting with Cetshwayo that Dunn was invited by Cetshwayo to settle in Zululand and become his European advisor.⁽¹⁸⁷⁾ The traders had to wait until October of 1858 when, after all expenses and fees had been deducted, from the sale of the cattle, they received £1 420 in compensation.⁽¹⁸⁸⁾

The deep involvement of Natal's white traders in the Zulu civil war of 1856 is a strong indication of the manner in which hunter-traders responded to the economic opportunities offered by political conditions in the Zulu Kingdom. The hunter-traders saw in the Zulu political crisis bright prospects for acquiring cattle. The civil war of 1856 was responsible for an unusually high concentration of people and cattle than would have been the case under normally peaceful conditions. Mbuyazi's Gqoza numbered around 20 000 people and they brought several thousand cattle with them. Thus, the Natal hunter-traders clustered around this mass of people and livestock in the vicinity of Lower Drift of the Thukela. They conducted a brisk trade in cloth, beads, blankets

(184) S.N.A. 1/1/7 No. 179. Shepstone to Koch, 9 Nov. 1857.

(185) Mael, 'Problem of Political Integration', p.260.

(186) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.12.

(187) S.N.A., 1/6/3, No. 43. Cetshwayo to Lt. Governor of Natal, 17 July 1857; and Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.12-13.

(188) S.N.A. 1/1/7. Nos. 1-57, 1856-1858.

and miscellaneous items called 'Kafir curiosities' in exchange for cattle, ivory, horns and assorted wild animal skins.⁽¹⁸⁹⁾ Between six and ten of the white traders actively assisted Mbuyazi with the express intention of sharing in the cattle looted from Cetshwayo's Usuthu, should the Gqoza be victorious in battle. Dunn was a member of the white hunter-trader fraternity. He was then willing to participate on Mbuyazi's side, and later in risk of his own personal safety approach his former foe and request the traders' cattle. Dunn's motives for becoming involved in the Zulu political-economy were dictated as much by the economic opportunities offered as his desire for the greater social freedom and social mobility that existed on the Natal frontier.

John Dunn's career has all the characteristics of a 'transfrontiersman'. There are subtle yet fundamental differences between Dunn's frontier experience and that of the earlier Port Natal hunter-traders. The Isaacmans define transfrontiersmen as individuals who are party to a 'transformation of institutions and values which were at the core of their respective cultures':

... transfrontiersmen are defined as people of European descent who permanently settled beyond the limits of Western society. They included traders, hunters, mercenaries, deserters, and social outcasts. Because of their relatively small numbers, the absence of metropolitan women of child-bearing age, and their total isolation from European socializing institutions, they were progressively absorbed into the dominant population. Their adoption of indigenous cultural elements extended beyond the borrowing of local artefacts, techniques, and languages, which facilitated their adaption to a new and difficult environment, to include the transformation of institutions and values which were at the core of their respective cultures. As such, acculturation was substitutive rather than additive, and differed from the process of hybridization which characterized many frontier societies.⁽¹⁹⁰⁾

(189) *Ibid.*, The traders who lost property at Ndongakusuka carefully specified the types and kinds of trade goods they claimed to have lost; thus, the claims form, in a sense, an invaluable inventory of trade goods in circulation for this period.

(190) B. and A. Isaacman, 'Transfrontiersmen', p.2.

When comparing Dunn with the early Natal traders a distinction between the addition or substitution of 'alien' cultural values in a frontier society must be made based on the varying degrees of acculturation. Practically all of Dunn's earlier contemporaries - Cane, Fynn, Ogle, King and Robert Dunn - could be classified as 'hybridized' frontiersmen. Before the establishment of colonial rule, the Port Natal traders had taken on the characteristics, superficially at least, of the transfrontiersmen. The essential difference is that the acculturation of the transfrontiersmen was permanent while that of the early traders was temporary. The latter, out of necessity, borrowed northern Nguni marriage customs, political systems and socio-economic routines in order to survive and prosper in a territory beyond metropolitan control. The coming of British colonial rule pressured most of the surviving pre-colonial traders to disband their kraals and discard their African wives and concubines. Henry Fynn, Dick King and others, eventually married European women,⁽¹⁹¹⁾ and established themselves as 'respectable' members of the newly emerging colonial society.⁽¹⁹²⁾ In a sense, the acculturation of the Port Natal traders was additive, temporary, and influenced greatly by the extension of British hegemony over Natal.

Dunn, on the other hand, represents a new type. First his exposure to northern Nguni cultural values was more profound. He was reared in, and conditioned by, a frontier environment. Second, he voluntarily left a colonial territory to settle permanently in an African society beyond metropolitan control. Third, he substituted African values in place of those of European origin which were beginning to take root in Natal. By 1857 Dunn had rejected those institutions at the core of his tenuous European cultural heritage; he had taken up a new way of life and been absorbed into the local dominant culture.

Ultimately, a study of John Dunn as a transfrontiersman within the Natal-Zululand context, may be utilized to draw out a number of

(191) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive* vol. 1, pp.57-58.

(192) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.171.

parallels and contrasts between frontier and colonial societies. It is also necessary to distinguish which elements of the European population were most susceptible to 'alien' cultural influences in the Natal frontier zone. The degree of 'susceptible' acculturation depended, in large measure, on the capacity of Europeans to withstand the pressures of contact with a vigorous indigenous culture such as that of the northern Nguni. The cultural ingredients necessary to fend off the influences of an 'alien' culture were as follows: first, a roughly equal number of men and women in sufficient numbers to provide the leadership and the support necessary to maintain one's cultural identity; second, those 'core' institutions which prevent any serious acculturation and deviation from one's parent society - organized religion, a system of political organization to maintain law, order and security, and a consciousness of one's group, racial and/or cultural superiority when compared to that of the local indigenous society. The white traders of the Port Natal frontier community had none of the requisite supports or logistical requirements mentioned above. They were too few in numbers to man effectively those institutions of religion, government and society which they had left in the metropolitan or colonial societies from whence they had come. Therefore, the cultural norms of the local dominant African culture influenced and altered substantially the lifestyle of the white traders. The settler community of colonial Natal had the necessary numerical strength and balance of male-female numbers to transplant metropolitan political, cultural and economic institutions to Natal. The antagonism of the white settler towards the indigenous African population in Natal and Zululand was an outgrowth partly of mid-Victorian racial and cultural superiority combined with economic competition. These notions of white superiority intensified as contact and involvement between the culturally distinct and culturally self-sufficient settler and northern Nguni communities increased.

CHAPTER THREEJOHN DUNN AND CETSHWAYO:THE MATERIAL FOUNDATIONS OF POLITICAL POWERIN THE ZULU KINGDOM 1857-1878

One very cold and stormy night in winter I was seated before a large fire in my hut when there was a noise without as if someone was arriving. I asked the cause from my attendants and they told me a white man in a miserable state of destitution had just arrived and claimed my hospitality. I ordered the servants to bring him in, and a tall, splendidly made man appeared. He was dressed in rags, for his clothes had been torn to pieces in fighting through the bush, and he was shivering from fever and ague. I drew my cloak aside and asked him to sit by the fire, and told the servants to bring food and clothing. I loved this white man as a brother, and made him one of my head indunas, giving him land and wives, daughters of my chiefs. Now my sun has gone down and John Dunn is sitting by the fire, but he does not draw his cloak aside.(1)

Cetshwayo Ka Mpande,
The Castle,
Cape Town, 1880.

This was Cetshwayo's later recollection of his first meeting with John Dunn - as recorded by Selous, the famous hunter. Dunn's defection from Zulu to British political and military service on the eve of the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879 would account for Cetshwayo's embittered tone. However, the exiled monarch's much embellished version of his first introduction to Dunn in 1857 is not relevant to this assessment. What is important is that Cetshwayo made 'the extravagant' claim that he had elevated Dunn to a position of

(1) Binns, *The Last Zulu King*, p.186.

power and wealth in the Zulu kingdom by giving him wives and access to land - the accumulation of which lent status to male members of Zulu society. That Cetshwayo's support was important to Dunn's rapid rise and acceptance in the Zulu political hierarchy is not disputed.⁽²⁾

But, the degree to which Cetshwayo had claimed he was responsible for Dunn's elevation is open to question. Dunn rendered valuable political and material assistance to an insecure paramount who was threatened by rival factions and an estranged father, King Mpande. Furthermore, Dunn's intimate knowledge of northern Nguni customs, rituals and institutions gave him an added advantage in legitimizing his position as chief; and he knew that the accumulation of four vital material and human resources - wives, clients, land and livestock - promoted and sustained political careers in Zululand. A fifth item - the control of trade and strategic trade routes - assumed important dimensions in the 1860s and 1870s and will be shown to have been an indispensable factor in the political ascendancy of Cetshwayo and Dunn. Dunn's rise to power occurred mainly as a result of the unsettled political conditions in the kingdom. There was a definite pattern of political instability attached to the issue of the royal succession. The origins of this instability can be traced to the de-centralized nature of Zululand's agrarian society.

(i) The Political Economy of Royal Succession

Throughout the entire sixty year history of the independent Zulu kingdom regicide and civil war characterized the transfer of royal power. Both Shaka and Dingane met violent deaths; so did numerous royal princes, members of their families and many of their followers. Royal rivalries sparked the bloody civil wars of 1839 and 1856 and resulted in the death of thousands of Zulu.⁽³⁾ And civil war did not terminate with the loss of Zulu independence in the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879; in 1883-84 the third and most damaging internal conflict broke out between the

(2) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.99.

(3) *Ibid.*, pp.37 and 94.

Usuthu and Mandlakazifactions thus completing the destruction of the Zulu kingdom.⁽⁴⁾ Etherington has correctly stated that the 'lack of a settled principle of succession' was 'the most fundamental defect in the constitution of the kingdom'.⁽⁵⁾

Gluckman and others have attempted to explain this pattern of violence surrounding the successions by focussing on the internecine rivalries that emerged between male members of the Zulu royal house in close relation to the rise of the Zulu Empire under Shaka.⁽⁶⁾ Certainly the personal ambitions of individual members of the Zulu royal family to aspire to the throne at the expense of their relatives cannot be discounted. Nor can the absence of adequate constitutional safeguards to insure an orderly and peaceful transfer of power be overlooked. Kuper has shown how constitutional devices were built into Swazi society as a means of averting, or at least curbing, violence and civil war when the throne became vacant. The Swazi experience was a sharp contrast with the Zulu tendency towards violence as a method of deciding the issue of Royal succession: 'Swazi Laws of succession and inheritance, and the explanation given for these laws, demonstrate a conscious attempt to overcome the lines of fission that are likely to endanger the unity of the group concerned. Swazi criticize the Zulu because seizure by force characterized their line of succession'.⁽⁷⁾

But, neither the ambitions of competing royals nor the constitutional development of Zulu society provide satisfactory explanations for the continuum of political violence that surrounded the succession to kingship. The motives of individuals and constitutions in the succession struggles become distorted and overemphasized if they are not linked to those classes that control and manipulate the material base upon which political power rests. Etherington has touched briefly on these interconnecting factors:

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- (4) Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, preface.
 (5) N.A. Etherington, 'The Meaning of Shepstone's Coronation of Cetshwayo', unpublished paper presented to the Conference on the Anglo-Zulu war 1879, University of Natal, Durban, February, 1979, p.3.
 (6) Max Gluckman, 'The Kingdom of the Zulu of South Africa', in M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard (eds.), *African Political Systems* (London, 1970), pp.35-36.
 (7) H. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy* (London, 1969), p.88.

To a great extent the Zulu monarchy was grounded on an analogy with the Nguni homestead - the king was the family head writ large - the theoretical monopoly of women and cattle claimed by household patriarchs conferred enormous power which, when transferred to the level of a kingdom, could be of incalculable benefit to a clever monarch. It was notorious, however, that the price of this power in every household was an incessant rivalry between fathers and sons. Nguni fathers commonly bought peace in the Oedipal war by delaying as long as possible to designate their heirs thereby pitting siblings against each other. These conflicts had existed from time immemorial and were a cause of the perpetual fragmentation which characterized Nguni political life prior to the time of Dingiswayo. Age-set regiments created powerful centripetal forces to bind the kingdom together but buried deep in the bosom of the state were the explosive rivalries of the family.(8)

The origins of the succession disputes in the Zulu kingdom requires an examination of the internal dynamics of northern Nguni society. There was an essential dialectic, between the centralized authority of the king and the patrilineal segmentary lineage system which, by its very nature, encouraged the diffusion and fragmentation of political and economic power. It will be suggested that the almost exclusively agrarian character of Zulu society was by nature a de-centralized economic system. This fundamental factor dictated the development of the entire social system along fissionary lines. The methods in which Shaka imposed a central government upon an inherently diffuse agrarian based social system did not prove adequate enough to provide safeguards for a peaceful transfer of royal political power. The recurring political assassinations and civil wars in the Zulu kingdom mirror the essential contest between the king, or the central authority, and the district chiefs and royal princes, who represent the devolutionary social system, for control of the material bounty produced by the agrarian society.

A number of theories have been advanced to explain the process of political consolidation among the northern Nguni, particularly, the

(8) Etherington, 'Shepstone's Coronation of Cetshwayo', p.3.

emergence of Shaka ka Senzangakhona of the Zulu chiefdom as the architect of the largest and most highly centralized of these states in nineteenth century South Africa. ⁽⁹⁾

Within the context of this environment Shaka was an innovator and a revolutionary who possessed remarkable powers of leadership and organization. Between 1818 and 1824 Shaka, through a series of rapid conquests, welded scores of chiefdoms and hundreds of clans into a single kingdom that stretched from the Delagoa Bay hinterland in the north to Pondoland in the south. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Unlike his patron and predecessor Dingiswayo, Shaka made radical revisions in the northern Nguni political system. He subordinated the power of local chiefs by drafting all young males into regiments or *amabutho* according to age. For nearly a third of their productive lives the young men of the Zulu kingdom were assigned to various royal homesteads or *amakhandas*. They laboured exclusively for the benefit of the king, building his residences, tending his cattle and sowing and reaping his crops. Thus, Shaka attempted to break down the local and regional affiliations of Zulu manhood by making them completely dependent upon the king for food, shelter and rank. Shaka's methods tended to centralize

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- (9) For a survey of the relevant arguments see the following:
- (i) Gibson, *Story of the Zulus*, pp.11-12.
 - (ii) Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*.
 - (iii) Max Gluckman, 'The Rise of a Zulu Empire' in *Scientific American*, 202, (1963).
 - (iv) J.D. Omer-Cooper, *The Zulu Aftermath: A Nineteenth Century Revolution in Bantu Africa* (London, 1966), pp.3-4.
 - (v) L. Thompson, 'Co-operation and Conflict: The Zulu Kingdom and Natal' in Wilson and Thompson (eds.), *Oxford History*, vol. I, 341. The rise of Shaka and the social revolution that followed in the wake of the founding of the Zulu Empire has long been a subject of continuous and stimulating debate among scholars. Gibson and Bryant put forward the theory that the social revolution was caused initially by the influence of European military tactics on the mind of Dingiswayo, and the effects of trade between the Portuguese at Delagoa Bay and the northern Nguni chiefdoms. Gluckman, and later Omer-Cooper suggested that the social upheaval which occurred in south-eastern Africa was the result of population pressure. Leonard Thompson in the *Oxford History of South Africa*, vol. I, found the theories related to trade and white inspiration unconvincing; he considered the hypotheses of Gluckman and Omer-Cooper more plausible but their evidence on demographic trends thin and difficult to prove empirically.
 - (vi) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, chapter 1.
- (10) Omer-Cooper, *Zulu Aftermath*, pp.3-4.

production processes for the benefit of the king. Furthermore, he reserved the right to withhold marriage to both sexes. Most men were in their thirties before they were given permission to don the *isicoco* or headring and then marry into a particular female regiment that had been released for marriage.⁽¹¹⁾ By drafting the labour power of all Zulu males King Shaka concentrated political and material power in the office of the monarch. Guy emphasizes the fundamental powers which the Zulu king exercised over the production processes of Zululand's agrarian society:

Through the 'military system' the Zulu king was able to influence the most fundamental processes of the kingdom - the processes upon which the very existence of the kingdom was based. He could control to an important degree the intensity with which the environment was exploited, the rate of demographic increase, and the rate and direction in which the processes of production could expand. The Zulu military system gave the king the means to control the processes of reproduction and production within the Zulu kingdom.⁽¹²⁾

While the 'Shakan Revolution' wrought radical alterations in the political organisation of the northern Nguni it did not alter the basic social fabric of society, which remained substantially unchanged. The patrilineal segmentary lineage system with the national unit being the sib, was relatively undisturbed by the processes of state formation.⁽¹³⁾ Guy asserts that the 'longevity and resilience' of the social system was a fundamental 'expression of productive processes',⁽¹⁴⁾ which Shaka and succeeding Zulu kings did not attempt to reorganise. Guy explains the relationship between kinship and the agricultural economy in pre-colonial Zululand:

(11) J.J. Guy, 'Ecological Factors in the Rise of Shaka and the Zulu Kingdom', unpublished paper presented to the Workshop on Production and Reproduction in the Zulu kingdom, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, October 1977, pp.11-16. On the regulation of marriage by the king, Guy says 'it seems to me that if one understands the fundamental productive processes of the Zulu kingdom and their relationship to the kinship system, then this power of the king to withhold marriage through the military system becomes crucially significant.

(12) *Ibid.*, p.16.

(13) Eileen Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus* (Pietermaritzburg, 1936), p.217.

(14) Guy, 'Ecological Factors in the Rise of Shaka', p.11.

Kinship relations were an expression of production relations and must be considered together. All Zulu belonged to exogamous lineages, membership being determined by common descent through the male line from a founding ancestor. The lineage structure was given material expression in the homestead (*umuzi/imizi*) of the kingdom. Every man in Zululand or soon after, his marriage would set up a homestead of his own. As homestead-head *Cumnumzana/abanumzana* he would rank his wives in segments within the homestead. In time these segments under the eldest son of each segment, would break from the homestead and establish homesteads of their own. Thus every homestead in Zululand had sprung from a previously existing one and contained within it the seeds of the new ones. (15)

Since practically all northern Nguni chiefs and men of rank were also *abanumzana* the number of offspring born to these polygamous households was numerically higher than in monogamous social units. When translated into economic terms polygamous households reproduced very fast placing heavy demands on the material resources available to the homestead unit. These economic stresses contributed to the tense rivalry between the male offspring of the various segments. Competition for material favours and rewards within the homestead frequently manifested itself in political rivalry, and *vice versa*. The homestead head would then seek to resolve the real or potential conflicts between his sons by separation through the creation of new homesteads. Thus, the remedy for sibling rivalry was the establishment of new homesteads where the sons could accumulate wives, land, cattle and retainers of their own. (16)

Within chiefly lineages the socio-economic institution of segmentation tended to complicate the political issue of succession upon the death of a chief. In theory the eldest son of the Great Wife chosen by a chief usually assumed the reigns of leadership. (17) But in practice

(15) *Ibid.*, pp.11-12.

(16) Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu, p.25.

(17) Krige, *Social System of the Zulus*, pp.39-40.

this was not always the case; sons of wives other than the Great Wife who had acquired homesteads and material resources through the institution of segmentation on occasion successfully challenged the designated heir and usurped the throne. The transfer of political power in northern Nguni society was therefore an uncertain and hazardous process that could divide the political unit into warring factions before a victor emerged and political equilibrium re-established.⁽¹⁸⁾ Kuper observed that in some northern Nguni societies 'forceful usurpation, however, may be a normal legal form of succession, and the old equilibrium will continue under murderers of former rulers, while unsuccessful attempts will be considered treason punishable by death. The victorious usurper may not aim at revolutionizing the system of government; he may be actuated merely by personal ambition, and backed by supporters who desire only a change of personalities and not of policy'.⁽¹⁹⁾ These observations would apply to pre-Shakan chiefdoms and the Zulu kingdom. Moreover, the socio-economic foundations of northern Nguni society, particularly that of the Zulu, acted in such a way as to supply material power to the political rivals of the official authority. The patrilineal segmentary lineage system or, what will be described as the 'patrilineage production' system, tended to devolve political and economic power away from the centre to the periphery. Thus the social formation of Zulu society was by its very nature incompatible with a centralized government and militated against a peaceful resolution of royal succession.

When Shaka consolidated his rule over Zululand he made concerted efforts to manipulate the patrilineage production system to the benefit of the monarchy. He used the power of the state, the *amabutho*, to extract surplus from the social system, primarily labour power from all the homesteads in the kingdom. Sansom has concluded that the enrolling of young men into a national rather than a regional regimental system promoted 'plural allegiance' which 'led to 'cross-cutting' ties' of

(18) Jeff Guy, 'A Note on Firearms in the Zulu Kingdom: with special reference to the Anglo-Zulu War 1879' *Journal of African History*, XI, 4 (1971), p.559.

(19) Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p.88.

loyalty that gave cohesion to the nation and countered traditional segmentation of authority where officials commanded homologous units'.⁽²⁰⁾ Rebellious homestead heads whose loyalties to the king were suspect were either executed or forced to flee in the face of the coercive force of Shaka's newly created national army. However, it must be emphasized that Shaka did not destroy the basic social unit of the clan. Guy, in his analysis of Zulu society during the reign of Cetshwayo ka Mpande (1873-1879) says that 'kinship ties were closely linked to the production system and the people of the kingdom still saw themselves as members of clans and lineages whose origins could be traced to pre-Shakan times. This continuity was a reflection that the productive forces had not undergone radical changes in this period'.⁽²¹⁾

The essential incompatibility between the power of the state and the patrilineage production system may be traced to Shaka's methods of administering this social integration of two distinct systems. This tension between the state and the social system flared into violence when the issue of succession occupied the attentions of the Zulu people.

In order to enforce his rule throughout the realm Shaka needed loyal administrators. These officials were known as the *izikhulu* or the 'great ones' of the nation. The *izikhulu* comprised several categories according to status based on birth and ability. Shaka's victories had elevated members of his family to the highest positions of status and rank within the kingdom. The kings' brothers and his relations through collateral lines of the Zulu clan served as district chiefs and as supervisors of the *amakhanda*. During Mpande's reign they were referred to as the *abantwana* or princes and princesses.⁽²²⁾ Next

(20) Basil Sansom, 'Traditional Rulers and their Realms' in W.D. Hammond-Tooke (ed.), *The Bantu-Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa* (London and Boston, 1974), p.280.

(21) J.J. Guy, 'The Political Structure of the Zulu kingdom During the Reign of Cetshwayo Ka Mpande', unpublished paper presented to the Workshop on Nguni History, Rhodes University, July 1979, p.1.

(22) Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p.34.

were the powerful hereditary chiefs of pre-Shakan chiefdoms who had been incorporated into the kingdom. Other district chiefs owed their positions to Shaka exclusively for he had 'raised up' capable individuals through interference in clan affairs. Able commoners who had demonstrated their prowess and accumen as military leaders or as advisers were also selected to rule in the name of the king.⁽²³⁾ A host of lesser officials known as *izinduna* (*induna*) served the interests of the state as tribute collectors, regimental commanders, the king's personal servants or as royal messengers. 'State power was devolved from the king to the *izikhulu*, to the heads of administrative areas within the kingdom, with local affairs being the responsibility of the resident homestead-heads'.⁽²⁴⁾

During Shaka's reign his brothers were kept under close observation although appointed to positions of command and supervision throughout the kingdom. Dingane was given an area north of the Thukela River to administer for the king.⁽²⁵⁾ But, there is no indication that he built up a substantial following that might one day present a potential challenge to the king. Shaka would appear to have been the most successful of all Zulu kings in maintaining the authority of the monarchy. He kept the nation's energies fully occupied in strengthening the state and his scope of command through constant raiding and conquest.⁽²⁶⁾ He built-up an elaborate system of espionage to ferret out real or suspected 'traitors' or opponents of his absolutist regime.⁽²⁷⁾ Shaka the 'arch tyrant', also employed institutionalized terror to maintain royal authority.⁽²⁸⁾ A number of his subjects were 'arbitrarily' killed to feed vultures - the 'birds of the king'.⁽²⁹⁾ He attempted to curb the accumulation of wealth - primarily cattle - by important individuals which might be used

(23) Guy, 'Political Structure of the Zulu kingdom', p.4.

(24) *Ibid.*, p.5.

(25) Webb and Wright (eds.), *James Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.195.

(26) Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p.29.

(27) E.V. Walter, *Terror and Resistance* (New York, 1969), p.137.

(28) Webb and Wright (eds.), *James Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.175. Jantshi Ka Mongila, a spy for Shaka, Dingane and Mpande stated that 'when Tshaka required spies he said he wanted them from his old tribal people living at Mtonjaneni'.

(29) Webb and Wright (eds.), *James Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.7. Evidence of Baleka Ka Mpitikazi.

to form a material base for political power. A Stuart informant stated that 'even warriors were killed by Tshaka. For when a man had repeatedly been given presents of cattle and these had multiplied, people would come and say he had enormous herds and accuse him of overshadowing the king. Upon this he would be accused of being *anumtakati* and then be put to death and his stock seized'.⁽³⁰⁾

As far as the issue of a successor was concerned Shaka seems to have been acutely aware of the rivalries that developed between the sons, and the sons and fathers in northern Nguni chiefly households. Therefore, he sired no offspring. *Baleka Ka Mpitakazi* said that: 'He did not want to father a child because, he said, it would be another prince. This fact is true; ...a person like Tshaka is like a wild beast, a creature which does not live with its own young, its male offspring'.⁽³¹⁾

Shaka's conscious efforts to have no children proved to be a 'non-solution' to the problems of succession. In September 1828 Shaka was stabbed to death by his brothers Dingane and Mahlangana at his Bulawayo kraal.⁽³²⁾ The motives for the assassination remain unclear. There is no hard evidence to suggest that Shaka had any intentions of purging his brothers; in fact he had refrained from killing any of his brothers during his reign. Dingane and Mahlangana however, struck at an opportune moment when the Zulu regiments were away on the ill-fated Balule expedition against Shoshangane leaving the king relatively alone and unguarded.⁽³³⁾ When the half-starved army returned Dingane apparently convinced them that he had acted in the best interests of the nation by killing a tyrant whose reign had been one of unrelieved terror and bloodshed. He assured the Zulu people that the 'dancing stick would be preferred to shields and assegais'.⁽³⁴⁾ The war-weary Zulu accepted Dingane's reasoning and acknowledged him as king. Ironically, Shaka's system of spies, his use of official violence and his ruthless repression of challenges to royal authority did not save him from a

(30) *Ibid.*, p.19. Evidence of Baleni Ka Silwana.

(31) *Ibid.*, p.8, Evidence of Baleka Ka Mpitikazi.

(32) Etherington, 'Shepstone's Coronation of Cetshwayo', p.3.

(33) Webb and Wright (eds.), *James Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.6.

(34) Okoye 'Dingane: A Reappraisal', p.221.

violent death. Walter overemphasizes the awe and enormity of Shaka's rule vis a vis 'terroristic depostism'.⁽³⁵⁾ In another sense, and Walter misses this point, Shaka was largely responsible for the heightened tempo of politically motivated violence in northern Nguni society. Through war and conquest he had annihilated scores of chiefly lines, and in a perverse way made institutionalized violence, the accepted norm in the transfer of political power. Dingane did not establish a precedent for violence as a legitimate means to succession, the pattern had been well established by his predecessors Shaka, Dingiswayo and Zwide.

Dingane was King of Zululand for over a decade, (1828-1838). He devoted his energies to the problems of internal consolidation of his authority over Zululand. He was morbidly suspicious of his male relatives and attempted to snuff out the lives of as many real or potential challengers from the Zulu royal family and those chiefs whom he suspected of disloyalty.⁽³⁶⁾ Very early in his reign serious challenges to Dingane's authority surfaced from within the kingdom.

While the *amabutho* had initially acquiesced to Dingane's authority there were substantial regional factions and chiefdoms which were unreconciled. The reasons for this was that loyalty to the central government was directed to the person of the monarch and not to the institution of monarchy itself. Through his gifts of leadership Shaka had forged a personal loyalty among many of the chiefdoms. He spread members of the royal family and appointed chiefs throughout the realm to rule in his name. They supervised cattle, commanded regional *amakhanda* and performed the role of emissaries for the central authority. Through the patrilineage production system members of the royal family and Shaka's ruling class increased their own material and political power in the form of growing numbers of cattle and followers. When Shaka

(35) Walter, *Terror and Resistance*, pp.280-381.

(36) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, pp.40-67.

died, the loyalty of several important chiefs and royal princes was not transferred to the new king. But, the material resources and reproductive power of the patrilineage production system controlled by these rebellious factions remained intact and were a dangerous political threat to Dingane. Kennedy perceived this phenomenon:

For this reason the Zulu royal family was an important threat to Dingane. Cleverly Shaka had distributed his family wide and far. They supervised the cattle, became the emissaries of the central authority, and at the same time were loyal. With its creator dead...Shaka's extensions developed to their natural conclusion. With a new central authority (Dingane) the outlying districts separated from their center, and within these districts people and power clustered around members of the royal family. What was more, these erstwhile supporters of the central authority had the means to assert their independence. They were the supervisors of great herds of cattle, and although they were *de jure* the property of the new king, *de facto* they were beyond his grasp.(37)

The above pattern is amply illustrated in Mpande's accumulation of material and political power which he successfully deployed against Dingane's authority as king. Mpande ka Senzangakhona (c1798-182) was the son of the Zulu Chieftain Senzangakhona and his ninth wife, Songiya ka Ngotsha of the Hlabisa lineage.⁽³⁸⁾ As a half-brother to Shaka, Mpande's status was high in the kingdom. Although little is known of his early life he appears to have satisfied Shaka's requirements of loyalty and participated in several military campaigns holding high positions of command. In 1827-8, Shaka personally presented Mpande with his first two wives Nqumbazi the mother of the future heir and king, and Monase, mother of Mbuyazi.⁽³⁹⁾ Upon Shaka's death shortly afterwards, Mpande gave his allegiance to Dingane; the new king allowed him to take more wives and build-up a personal following at his homestead near Eshowe in southern Zululand.⁽⁴⁰⁾

(37) P.A. Kennedy, 'The Transformation of Mpande: Resources and the Zulu Kingship', unpublished paper presented at the Workshop on Production and Reproduction in the Zulu kingdom, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, October 1977, pp.8-9.

(38) John Wright and Ruth Edgecombe, 'Mpande Ka Senzangakhona c.1798-1872', in C.S. Saunders (ed.), *Black leaders in Southern History* (London, 1979), p.47.

(39) *Ibid.*, p.39.

(40) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.111; and - Okoye, 'Dingane: A Reappraisal', p.223.

However, Mpande's position, like that of all his relatives, was precarious with Dingane bent on destroying his male relatives and their supporters, if he thought them in the least way a threat to his position. Dingane proceeded to kill most of his half-brothers in efforts to prevent opposition to his rule from coalescing around potentially rival princes. Those murdered were Ngwadi, Mahlangana and Ngqojana.⁽⁴¹⁾ Several chiefdoms whose loyalty had been to Shaka only rose in open revolt against Dingane's rule. In 1828 Nqetho, Chief of the Qwabe declared the independence of his chiefdom from Dingane and fled southward to Pondoland. Nqetho and most of his people were subsequently pursued and killed by Dingane's regiments. The Cele Chiefdom suffered a similar fate in 1831 when Dingane massacred practically the entire population. In 1837 the Qadi were mercilessly cut down by Dingane's warriors for their seditious behaviour.⁽⁴²⁾ As in pre-Shakan times the northern Nguni chiefdoms in the Zulu kingdom either fought or fled when dissatisfied with the rule of an absolutist king or chief.

During this period of Dingane's purges Mpande accumulated additional wives, cattle and followers through the patrilineage production system. Remnants of the shattered Cele and Qwabe chiefdoms who had not sought refuge with the white trading community at Port Natal 'galvanized' to Mpande following the deaths of their leaders. Kennedy claims that 'by mid-1832 Mpande had organized a substantial following. Within four years of Shaka's death, and seven years before the end of Dingane's reign, Henry Francis Fynn wrote the *Grahamstown Journal* that Mpande was the acknowledged heir apparent to the Zulu Chieftainship'.⁽⁴³⁾ By 1838 a combination of internal stresses and external pressures had gathered which would bring about the downfall of Dingane and elevate Mpande to the throne.

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- (41) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.111; and - Okoye, 'Dingane: A Reappraisal', p.223.
 (42) Okoye, 'Dingane: A Reappraisal', pp.222-223.
 (43) Kennedy, 'Resources and the Zulu Kingship', p.10.

Between 1824 and 1838 the penetration and establishment of white communities in what was clearly Zulu territory east of the Drakensberg escarpment added a new dimension to the political life of the Zulu kingdom. In 1824 English traders had been allowed to establish a trading settlement at Port Natal. Relations between Shaka and the traders had been cordial.⁽⁴⁴⁾ This climate changed in 1831 when thousands of refugees from Dingane's purges poured into Port Natal. The presence of a hostile community of Zulu harboured by whites presented a threat to Dingane's authority in the southern part of his kingdom.⁽⁴⁵⁾ In 1837-38 several thousand Voortrekker pastoralists spilled over the passes of the Drakensberg intent on occupying hundreds of square miles of Zulu territory in Natal. The murder of Piet Retief and his party in 1838 and the subsequent defeat of the Zulu army at Blood River is well known and need not be retold in detail here. But, these military and political setbacks at white hands irreparably weakened Dingane's authority causing widespread dissatisfaction against his continued reign among many of the Zulu people.⁽⁴⁶⁾

Mpande now emerged as an alternative to Dingane in the eyes of many of the leading men of the kingdom. The king was alarmed at Mpande's rise to prominence among the people and sought to destroy him. In August 1839 Dingane used a pretext to summon Mpande to his royal residence, *Mgungundhlovu*, where he planned to kill him. Mpande was warned of Dingane's intentions and in early September he made friendly overtures to the Voortrekker leader, Andries Pretorius and crossed the Thukela into Natal with an estimated 17,000 to 20,000 followers and 25,000 head of cattle.⁽⁴⁷⁾ 'This event, one of the most decisive in the history of the kingdom, is still remembered among the Zulu as "the breaking of the rope that held the nation together"'.⁽⁴⁸⁾ A challenge to the central authority of the Zulu king from a rival prince

(44) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.112.

(45) Okoye, 'Dingane: A Reappraisal', pp.230-231.

(46) Wright and Edgecombe, 'Mpande', p.49.

(47) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.152.

(48) Wright and Edgecombe, 'Mpande', p.49.

had split the kingdom into two warring factions. The first Zulu civil war of 1839 had begun.

Mpande's defection to Natal gave the Voortrekkers a decisive opportunity to intervene in Zulu affairs. They concocted an alliance with Mpande against Dingane. The Voortrekkers 'immediate motives were to avenge the deaths of their compatriots killed by the Zulu the year before, and to extract compensation for their losses of cattle, but they hoped also to install Mpande as a puppet king in Dingane's place'.⁽⁴⁹⁾ In January 1840 four hundred Voortrekker commandos advanced along with Mpande's regiments to seek out Dingane and destroy him. In January 1840 Mpande's forces defeated and routed Dingane's army at *Magongqo* in northern Zululand while the Voortrekker commando waited in reserve.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Dingane escaped but his reign was effectively at an end; he was later killed by the Nyawo people of northern Zululand. Mpande was recognised as king by the Voortrekkers as well as by the subordinate chiefs of Zululand.⁽⁵¹⁾ A second king had died a violent death in the struggle for the Zulu throne.

The civil war of 1839 was primarily a result of rivalry among male members of the Zulu royal family. Moreover, the unstable nature of the royal succession had severe repercussions for the kingdom as a whole. First, the civil war of 1839 had seriously weakened Zulu national unity and allowed the bordering Voortrekker community to demand material and territorial concessions: Mpande, and the Zulu people in general paid a high price for their alliance with the rapacious Voortrekkers: 30,000 cattle were taken as booty and the territory of Natal, later a British colony, became permanently alienated from the kingdom.⁽⁵²⁾ The contest between Dingane and Mpande, also demonstrated the essential strength of the patrilineage production system when manipulated by challengers to the king's central authority. It also confirms Gluckman's assertion that 'the princes might draw to themselves

(49) *Ibid.*

(50) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, pp.153-154.

(51) *Ibid.*, p.193.

(52) Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', p.35.

followers beyond those given by the king, and as in the past, brothers of tribal chiefs had broken away to establish independent tribes, so the princes within the nation were a potential threat to the king, especially if he misruled. They were ready to intrigue against him and take advantage of the people's dislike of him. Zulu custom says the king should not eat with his brothers, lest they poison him. (53)

Mpande's career as king is significant for it was during his long thirty-two year reign (1840-1872) that the rivalry for the succession reached its greatest intensity. This was due partly to the fact that Mpande's descendants came to form the royal family. In all Mpande sired twenty-three sons and an undetermined number of daughters. (54) His eldest son Cetshwayo was born to his first wife Ngqumbazi of the chiefly line of the Zungu clan. His second eldest was Mbuyazi born to a favourite wife, Monase. (55) Rivalry developed between these two half-brothers at a relatively early age. There are strong indications that there was a considerable amount of tension and jealousy between Ngqumbazi and Monase and later Nomantshali another favourite of Mpande's in jockeying for favours and attentions in the royal homestead of Nodwengu located on the Mahlabathini plain north of the white Mfolozi. Polygamous marriages were tailor-made for nurturing rivalry and hatred between the various segments. Mpande's homestead did not escape these marital tensions as a Stuart informant so graphically recalled:

The king was sometimes scolded by one or other of his wives. She would have some cause for grievance, and she would lash out at him in the wildest manner and aloud, the reason being that she wanted him to consort with her...He, unable to face this, would go out to the men and, quickly finding fault about some trifle or other, have someone put to death on the spot, this sort of thing was due to intense jealousy; others were 'called', she not. She might in her fury even say, 'Let the king take me and put me to death on the spot'. (56)

(53) Gluckman, 'Kingdom of The Zulu', p.35.

(54) Jeff Guy, 'Cetshwayo Ka Mpande c.1832-84', in C.S. Saunders (ed.), *Black Leaders in Southern African History* (London, 1979), p.75.

(55) Webb and Wright (eds.), *James Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.39. Evidence of Baleni Ka Silwana.

(56) *Ibid.*, Evidence of Nkantolo Ka Situlamana.

Another informant claimed that jealousy was commonplace in almost every polygamous household, be it king or commoner; 'even with two wives, an ordinary man has great jealousy to contend with, and has to be very circumspect. if the husband has been away, the two watch where he enters, i.e. which woman's hut, and, if he has brought a titbit of meat, which person it will be given to. So acute is the feeling'.⁽⁵⁷⁾ It would be safe to assume that the web of intrigue and backbiting that developed between the mothers was naturally transferred to the sons.

Mpande has been criticized for not designating an heir thus curbing the growing rivalry between his sons that uncertainty and anxiety bred. But the succession issue became interlocked with Mpande's struggles to consolidate his authority throughout the kingdom. Mpande had become king because he had the support of the leading chiefs of the kingdom, who sought an alternative to the murderous absolutism of Dingane. These chiefs had no intention of allowing the new king to impose the same degree of centralized control over them or their followings. The subordinate chiefs had enhanced their political power through the patrilineage production system and were not going to readily yield their hard-won semi-autonomy to a new despot. Furthermore, the 1839 civil war had 'loosened or broken pre-existing ties of allegiance to the king, and had greatly weakened his position in relation to his leading subject chiefs and *izinduna*. ...These men kept him in office and at the same time vied with him and with one another for power, while for his part Mpande was constantly trying to enhance his position by playing off his subordinates against one another'.⁽⁵⁸⁾

As Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi attained manhood a bitter rivalry developed. The tension became so untenable for Mpande in 1854 that he commanded both sons to leave Nodwengu and establish separate homesteads of their own. Cetshwayo settled on a tract on the south bank of the Mhlatuzi river

(57) Wright and Edgecombe, 'Mpande Ka Senzangakhona', p.50.

(58) Gibson, *Story of the Zulus*, pp.102-103.

and Mbuyazi built at the Ifafa Hills on the south bank of the Black Mfolozi river.⁽⁵⁹⁾ The process of segmentation was at work again as both princes attracted followers who hoped to be on the winning side when the struggle was resolved. Cetshwayo's adherents were known as the Usuthu while those of Mbuyazi were called the Gqoza. A showdown was imminent as the succession rivalry became a contest between Mpande and the subordinate chiefs.⁽⁶⁰⁾

Mpande tried to pave the way for Mbuyazi and the Gqoza to secure the aid of the British government in Natal in case of a confrontation with Cetshwayo. Accordingly, in 1856 he gave a tract of land to Mbuyazi along the Lower Thukela boundary with Natal. In November 1856 Mbuyazi and nearly 20,000 of his followers and their cattle moved southward from the Ifafa Hills to take possession of Mpande's grant. Immediately Cetshwayo and the subordinate chiefs mobilized their regiments in pursuit.⁽⁶¹⁾ On 2 December 1856 Cetshwayo's superior forces caught up with the Gqoza near the Lower Drift of the Thukela. The battle of Ndongakusuka resulted in the deaths of Mbuyazi and five other sons of Mpande and an estimated ten to fifteen thousand of his followers, women and children included. The ranks of the *abantwana* had been culled in the second Zulu Civil War.

(ii) Dunn: An Agent for Change

Between 1857 and 1879 John Dunn rose to become one of the most wealthy and powerful chiefs in the Zulu kingdom. His rapid elevation begs a number of questions: Why did Cetshwayo grant such generous political and economic concessions to Dunn, who was not a Zulu but an *Umlungu* (European)? What political conditions existed that allowed a white man to become a powerful chief over a territory that was an integral part of the Zulu kingdom? Furthermore, why was Dunn's assistance and advice considered so indispensable to Cetshwayo that he allowed Dunn

(59) Wright and Edgecombe, 'Mpande Ka Senzangakhona', p.55.

(60) *Ibid.*, pp.55-56.

(61) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.6-7.

to colonize a portion of his kingdom with Natal Nguni and disaffected Zulu who had fled from the rule of other district chiefs and whose allegiance was to Dunn only, immune from service and obligation to any other chief or prince of Zululand, Mpande and Cetshwayo included? A clue to answering these questions can perhaps be found in analysing Dunn's relationship with Cetshwayo in conjunction with the latter's ambitions to consolidate his political position as heir to the throne. Dunn's relationship with Cetshwayo can be described as symbiotic - both Cetshwayo and Dunn had advantages and expertise which were considered complimentary to their respective careers. Dunn's rise to prominence is a reflection of the transfrontiersman's ability to adapt to the cultural and physical environment of the society in which he lives, and - at the same time, introduce the customs and technology of the alien society of which he is also a part. In Dunn's case, he attempted to maximize the opportunities offered by both Zulu and European societies. He integrated himself into Zululand's agrarian society thus capitalizing on the political and economic benefits that such integration brought. Dunn also used his links with white society to expand his trading and labour recruitment network and to ingratiate himself with Cetshwayo by using his entrepreneurial and technological skills. Dunn emerged as a catalyst for political and economic change in the Zulu kingdom.

On first inspection, Dunn's decision to enter Zululand and request the return of the traders' cattle would appear rash; after all, Dunn had fought against Cetshwayo and now he was willing to beard the prince in his own lair for the promise of a £250 reward. But Dunn timed his entrance into Zululand well. The fluid and unstable political circumstances in the months following Ndongakusuka were responsible for Dunn's favourable reception by Cetshwayo. Immediately following the purge of Mbuyazi, the situation was as follows: Cetshwayo distrusted Mpande for there is a strong indication that the king had favoured Mbuyazi in the civil war. Moreover, Mpande purposely intrigued against Cetshwayo by spiriting two of his surviving sons out of Cetshwayo's grasp. He put Mkungo under Bishop Colenso's care in Natal and Mtonga

and Mgidhlana escaped to the protection of the boers of the Transvaal.⁽⁶²⁾ Second, the savage fighting on the borders of the colony and Cetshwayo's convincing victory over Mbuyazi had aroused the fear and suspicion of the settler community in Natal. Cetshwayo's reputation suffered even more in Natal with the confiscation of the traders' one thousand cattle.

Cetshwayo was anxious to prevent Mpande from acquiring the active support of the British government in Natal. He, therefore, strove to ingratiate himself with the Natal authorities by appearing co-operative and well-intentioned. In July 1857 Cetshwayo requested the Natal government to send a 'white chief' to live in Zululand who would perform the roles of advisor and intermediary between himself and the Natal authorities. The Natal government was disinclined to involve itself more deeply in Zulu domestic affairs choosing rather to communicate officially with King Mpande only.⁽⁶³⁾

In the latter part of 1857 Dunn crossed the Thukela with the intention of recovering the traders' cattle. First, Dunn thought it prudent to pay his respects to King Mpande. He was one of the first Europeans to see the Zulu king after Ndongakusuka, and it is worth speculating upon the encounter. While *en route* to Cetshwayo's residence at Mangwini to collect the traders' cattle, Dunn paid his respects to Mpande at Nodwengu. The king received him well and bade him render an account of the fight at Ndongakusuka. Dunn intimated in his autobiography that his recollection of the battle was the first accurate version Mpande had heard. As their discussions progressed the king gave Dunn the impression that neither Cetshwayo nor Mbuyazi should succeed him; that honour was intended for one of his younger sons.⁽⁶⁴⁾ It is puzzling that Dunn, a relative stranger, should be taken into the king's confidence. However, one must remember that Mpande had ascended to the throne through political intrigue; he could have seen Dunn as a vehicle for imparting this supposedly sensitive information to Cetshwayo and to the British government in Natal, thus casting uncertainty over Cetshwayo's claims to the throne. Certainly Mpande was not a

(62) Mael, 'Political Integration', p.235.

(63) S.N.A. 1/6/3. Cetshwayo to Lt. Governor of Natal, 17 July 1857.

(64) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.10.

powerless pawn to Cetshwayo as Gibson has claimed.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Cetshwayo was disturbed enough by the rumours that emanated from Nodwengu to send an *impi* in 1860, under his brother Ziweddu, to kill Mpande's favourite wife Nomantshali and her sons Mtonga and Simpozana.⁽⁶⁶⁾ Mtonga escaped but the latter was killed before Mpande's eyes - proof that the king had not the power to determine the fate of his heirs but powerful enough that Cetshwayo dare not kill the symbol of royal authority without the risk of alarming the other factions.

When Dunn presented himself to Cetshwayo at Mangwini he was well received.⁽⁶⁷⁾ Cetshwayo saw in Dunn the end of his quest for a 'white chief' to serve as his diplomatic advisor. The prince felt an acute political need for a white assistant and Dunn possessed qualities that Cetshwayo found attractive. Dunn was fluent in the Zulu, English and Afrikaans languages. He could read and write competently in English and could, therefore, translate and transcribe messages and replies between Cetshwayo and the Natal government. Dunn's strong association with northern Nguni societies would go a long way in making him acceptable to the Zulu people. Dunn's occupation as hunter-trader could be utilized by Cetshwayo to obtain those articles of European manufacture which he desired. Moreover, there is a strong hint that Cetshwayo admired Dunn's skill with a rifle and his courage in battle. Cetshwayo even paid a compliment to Dunn's performance at Ndongakusuka: 'John Dunn and his riflemen did great execution. They also very gallantly covered the retreat for some distance but, in the end, had to ride for their lives'.⁽⁶⁸⁾ Last, one must consider those personal qualities which attracted Dunn to Cetshwayo. Dunn was considered by many who met him to be a handsome and even-tempered man. Sir Garnet Wolseley described him as 'a very good looking man, very good looking indeed'.⁽⁶⁹⁾ Cetshwayo offered much the same opinion and noted that Dunn was a 'splendidly made man'.⁽⁷⁰⁾ Mitford probably described Dunn's appearance and manner in more detail than any other contemporary observer:

(65) Gibson, *Story of the Zulus*, p.106.

(66) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.27.

(67) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.11-12.

(68) C. de B. Webb and J.B. Wright (eds.), *A Zulu King Speaks: Statements made by Cetshwayo Ka Mpande on the History and Customs of his people* (Pietermaritzburg, 1978), p.16.

(69) Adrian Preston (ed.), *The South African Diaries of Sir Garnet Wolseley (Natal) 1875* (Cape Town, 1971), p.94.

(70) Binns, *Last Zulu King*, p.186.

John Dunn is a handsome, well-built man, about five feet eight in height, with good forehead, regular features, and keen grey eyes; a closely cut iron-grey beard hides the lower half of his bronzed weather-tanned countenance, and a look of determination and shrewdness is discernible in every lineament. So far from affecting native costume, the chief was, if anything, more neatly dressed than the average colonist, in plain tweed suit and wideawake hat. In manner he is quiet and unassuming, and no trace of self-glorification or 'bounce' is there about him. (71)

In order to woo Dunn into his service Cetshwayo handed over the traders' cattle and invited him to settle in Zululand and become his advisor. As a further inducement and proof of his good intentions, Cetshwayo gave Dunn a gift of ten oxen and offered him a tract of land. (72) Dunn resigned from the Border Agent's service and moved permanently to Zululand in April or May of 1858. Dunn was dissatisfied with his position as a minor official; this, together with bitter memories of financial setbacks endured during his youth prompted Dunn to enter Cetshwayo's service. This is revealed in his autobiography:

I at first demurred, but afterwards thought on the hardships I had had to undergo owing to my not being allowed by the Roman Dutch Law to receive the money I had honestly earned, and the inducements held out by Cetshwayo, including the promise of land in his country. Considering all this, I say, I made up my mind to accept his offer and remove to Zululand for good. (73)

Cetshwayo honoured his promises and conveyed an extensive tract of land to Dunn in the immediate coastal region of southern Zululand known as the 'Ungoye'. It served Cetshwayo's political purposes to give Dunn control of this region for it had been depopulated during the Civil War of 1856. Moreover, southern Zululand had been a stronghold of Mbuyazi's supporters. (74) Thus, Dunn was rewarded with land and Cetshwayo had 'raised up' a new chief who would, hopefully, serve and extend the political interests of the Usuthu in a district of Zululand that had

(71) Mitford, *Through the Zulu Country*, p.197. At the time of Mitford's account in 1883 Dunn was forty-nine years old.

(72) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.10-12.

(73) *Ibid.*, p.13.

(74) Mael, 'Political Integration', pp.211-213. Mael says that the southern coastal section of Zululand between the Thukela and Matikulu Rivers was 'virtually depopulated'.

hitherto been hostile.

Dunn coveted this heavily forested and sparsely settled region where he could exploit the abundant game.⁽⁷⁵⁾ The area yielded ivory, hides, skins and pelts, which provided Dunn with a comfortable income.⁽⁷⁶⁾ Dunn was not content, however, to hover on the periphery of Zulu society as a mere hunter-trader; he wanted to entrench his political, economic and social authority over the Ungoye and its black inhabitants through a manipulation of the production processes found in the agrarian based social system. Against the violent protests of his first wife, a Cape Coloured, Dunn contracted marriages with Zulu women representing the various clans living in his district and in many cases far beyond his jurisdiction.⁽⁷⁷⁾ Dunn was careful to heed Zulu marriage rituals; he paid *lobola* in cattle for most of his forty-nine wives.⁽⁷⁸⁾

Recent case-studies of the Zulu political economy in the nineteenth century have stressed the importance of wives, land, livestock and clients in the accretion of political power.⁽⁷⁹⁾ Dunn accumulated an abundance of all four of these essential resources; through marriage he formed alliances in order to extend his political and economic power. He paid *lobola* of between nine and fifteen head of cattle for each of his forty-six wives contracted in this fashion. Cetshwayo presented Dunn with two wives from his own *izigidlo* in appreciation of Dunn's

(75) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.14.

(76) D.D.P. Ms. Dun. 2.09, Ms. 1459, p.3. The papers of Domenic Dunn, a son of John Dunn, are an invaluable collection of unpublished memoirs, family history and praise songs. A wealth of detailed information related to John Dunn's domestic establishment, political acquaintances and economic pursuits are contained therein.

(77) *Ibid.*, p.2.

(78) *Ibid.*, Ms. 1467 a, pp.31-32.

(79) See the collected papers of J.J. Guy, P. Colenbrander and P. Kennedy presented at the Workshop on Production and Reproduction in the Zulu Kingdom (University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, Oct. 1977).

earlier gift of two guns.⁽⁸⁰⁾ Dunn's extensive trade in firearms in Zululand, begun in the early 1860s,⁽⁸¹⁾ introduced a new item into the *lobola* system. When first introduced, guns were at a premium and purchased by Cetshwayo at the rate of one rifle for ten head of oxen. Thus, one rifle assumed the status and value of a set number of cattle. In this instance, Cetshwayo considered rifles a suitable substitute for cattle.

Dunn's widespread influence and prestige throughout much of Zululand was reflected in the number of clans into which he married. Altogether, Dunn is recorded as having taken wives from at least twenty-three different northern Nguni clans. The majority of Dunn's wives came from clans located in the southern and central coastal regions of Zululand; he took five wives from the Mzimela clan, four each from the Dube and Nzuza clans, and three each from the Mthethwa, Shandu and Mdhletshe clans. Dunn's influence in northern Zululand and the area bordering the Delagoa Bay hinterland was also strong; he took a wife from a Mnguni clan living around Lake St. Lucia.⁽⁸²⁾ Listed below are Dunn's wives grouped according to clan name and/or clan group or parent clan.⁽⁸³⁾

(80) D.D.P., Ms. 1467 a, pp.31-32.

(81) See Guy, 'A Note on Firearms in the Zulu Kingdom', pp.559-60.

(82) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459, p.8.

(83) *Ibid.*

I	<u>Mzimela</u>	II	<u>Dube</u>	III	<u>Nzuza</u>
	(i) Bambekile		(i) Nomtezi		(i) Noyintabe
	(ii) Nokuta		(ii) Mtango		(ii) Mongebha
	(iii) Nomtaba		(iii) Snolepe		(iii) Putuza
	(iv) Novumbi		(iv) Nomadhlozi		(iv) Funiba
IV	<u>Mthethwa</u>	V	<u>Shandu</u>	VI	<u>Mdhletshe</u>
	(i) Vukutu		(i) Mzandu		(i) Nombina
	(ii) Kayonina		(ii) Fungile		(ii) Ngapune
	(iii) Nogebedu		(iii) Citekile		(iii) NOMPI
VII	<u>Magubane</u>	VIII	<u>Sokulu</u>	IX	<u>Mgenge</u>
	(i) Sabisi		(i) Nomkando		(i) Nabathathi
	(ii) Nomiti		(ii) Nemtombi		(ii) Ntombinkade
X	<u>Kanyile</u>	XI	<u>Kumalo</u>	XII	<u>Qwabe</u>
	(i) Basawane		(i) Funekile		(i) Lunguzile
	(ii) Nonyati				
XIII	<u>Langeni</u>	XIV	<u>Mpanza</u>	XV	<u>Ntuli</u>
	(i) Macibose		(i) Niyona		(i) Mpansi
XVI	<u>Zungu</u>	XVII	<u>Mbambo</u>	XVIII	<u>Mnguni</u>
	(i) Noisaba		(i) Nomhlawati		(i) Nomadulozi
XIX	<u>Ndlovu</u>	XX	<u>Mcanzana</u>	XXI	<u>Ncwabeni</u>
	(i) Noningo		(i) Madhlazile		(i) Nomasento
XXII	<u>Mbokasi</u>	XXIII	<u>Tusi</u>		
	(i) Mbunuse		(i) Ngukandula		

A modified version of A.T. Bryant's map of northern Nguni clans reveals a definite geo-political pattern in Dunn's marital alliances.⁽⁸⁴⁾

(See Map A). Dunn's trading ties fell in a north-south line between Delagoa Bay and Durban. Tsonga labourers recruited by Dunn for Natal settlers had to travel along the north-south Zululand coastal route between the Hluhluwe and Thukela rivers. The trade in firearms also flowed southward from the Lourenco Marques entrepot into Zululand. It

(84) Bryant, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, see map, p.698.

is no mere coincidence that Dunn took a majority of his wives from Zulu clans stretching from north to south along the entire length of the Zululand coast. In Zulu society, marriage was a convenient vehicle that led to the founding of political and economic pacts between clans and factions. Dunn recognized the value of alliance through marriage and used the institution on a large scale to secure and monopolize the north-south coastal route so vital to the traffic in firearms and to ensure the unrestricted passage of Tsonga migrants flowing into Natal from the Delagoa Bay hinterland.⁽⁸⁵⁾ (See Map B denoting the trade routes used by Dunn).

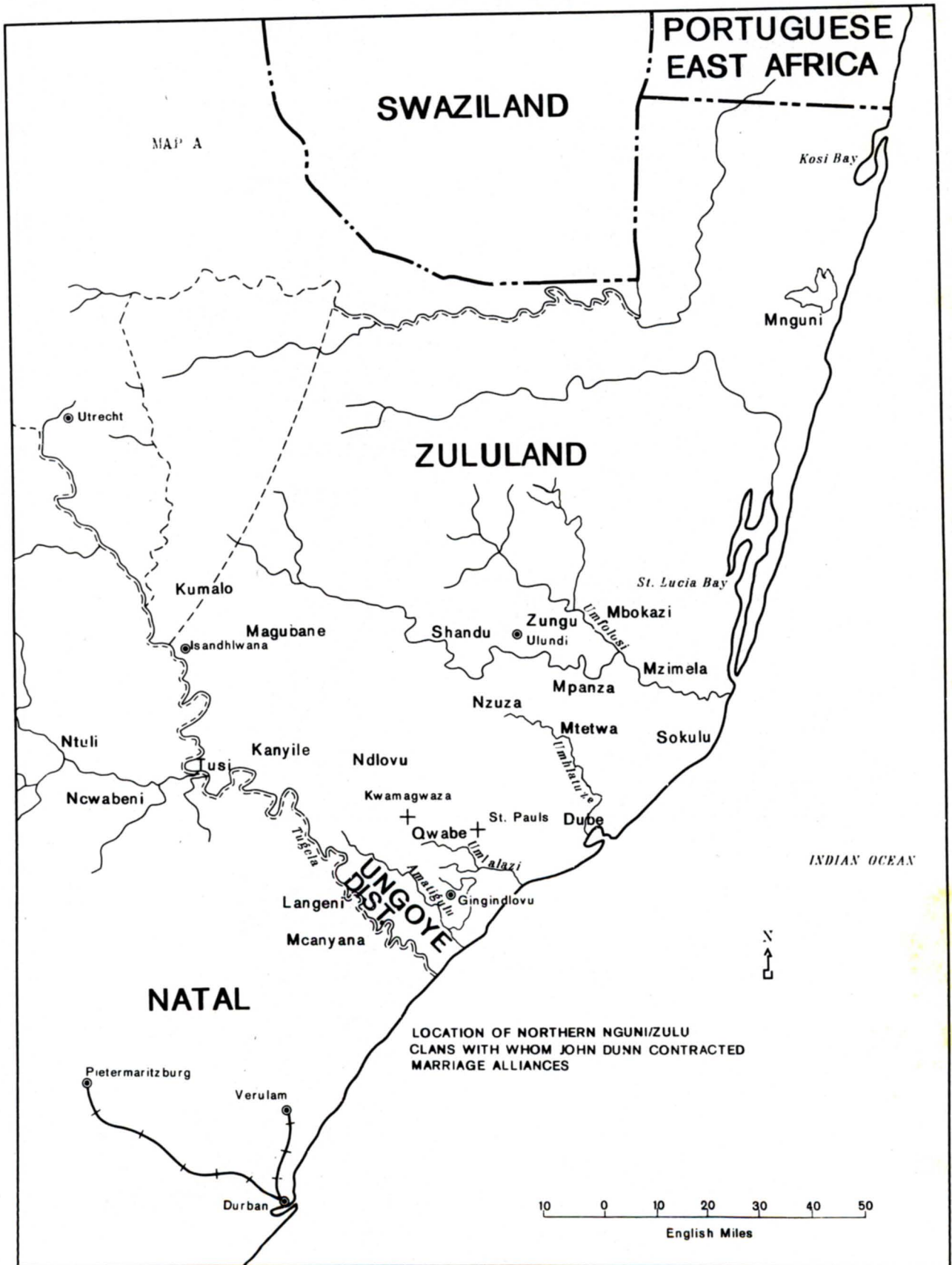
Like most Zulu men of rank and wealth, John Dunn maintained several residences at which he received the *abantwana*, *izikhulu* and *izinduna* who sought his alliance, assistance and favour. Dunn established three main residences: Mangete, a second one at Emoyeni and a summer residence, Qwainduku, in the Ungoye range.⁽⁸⁶⁾ In a burst of egotism, Dunn remarked that:

my position had now become of of some consequence in the country, and I was looked upon as being second to Cetshwayo in authority - the poor old king Pande only holding a nominal position I now began to feel a difference, as I no longer had the free and easy time I had had of it before, but had constantly to receive some big man as a visitor - Cetshwayo's brothers included...⁽⁸⁷⁾

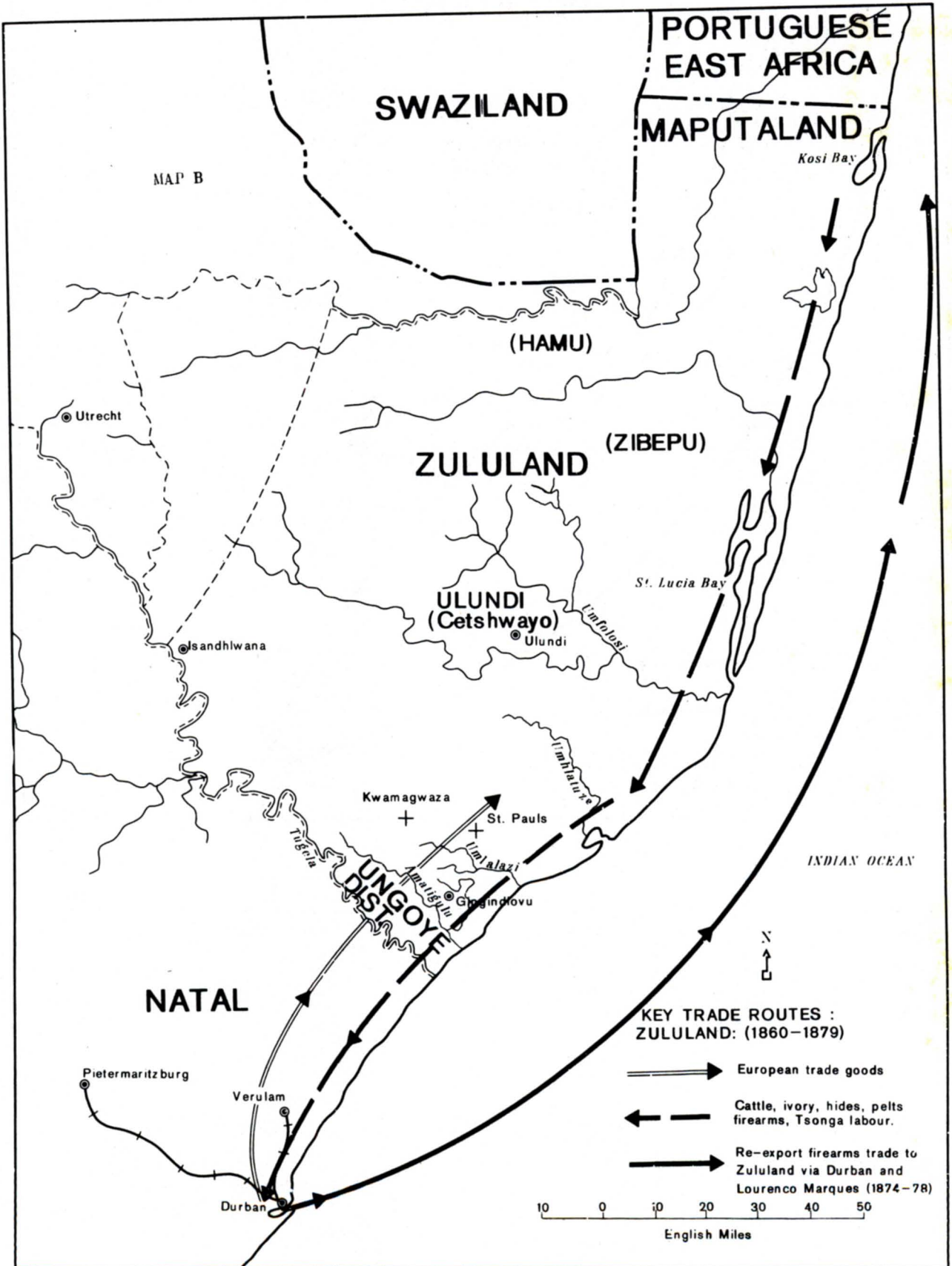
Dunn's cultivation of Zulu dignitaries included the chiefs of the clans into which Dunn had married. Domenic Dunn, a younger son of John Dunn, painted a vivid picture in his unpublished memoirs:

What great times they were when John Dunn was Lord of the land from the Tugela to the Mhlatuzi (Umhlatuzi river)! And greatest of all days was the time when every leading subject had to *Gubla umkosi wenkosi*, that is celebrate the yearly feast of their chief. Picture them arriving in their

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- (85) P. Harries, 'Labour Migration from the Delagoa Bay Hinterland to South Africa: 1852-1895', *The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, (I.C.S.), vol. VII, No. 21, 1976, p.63.
 (86) D.D.P., Ms. Dun 1.092, p.6. Information taken from the unpublished memoirs of Domenic Dunn entitled 'This is my Country'.
 (87) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.30.



LOCATION OF NORTHERN NGUNI/ZULU CLANS WITH WHOM JOHN DUNN CONTRACTED MARRIAGE ALLIANCES



pride of feathers, leopard skins and shining beshus...Ngokwana Mkwanazi all the way from near the Mhlatuze with his important men and bodyguards numbering upwards of forty. Zimena Mzimela, Malambula Kaso Bhefile, Majozi Dube, Ncama Mtetwa ...these from the Ngoye forest. Magwendu Zulu, Sisimana Ntuli, Majiya Nzuza, Ntuntu Nzuza, Ngqondo Dube...these from the Umhlalazi river and Pakosi of the Mahalose people near Gingindhlovu, Lokotwayo Mcanbi from Mangete and Abase Langeni and Endulinde utshana Matowski...all chiefs of rank with their retinues of warriors, women and maidens assembling for the feast.(88)

Krige's observations of Zulu social customs found that the physical and social arrangement of a headman's household was of the utmost importance.⁽⁸⁹⁾ Dunn did not veer from the accepted pattern familiar to Zulu domestic practice. Emulating the wealthier homestead heads of Zululand, Dunn kept his private quarters in a single main residence; it was, however, of European architecture and construction and located in the centre of his kraal. His wives lived separately in their own individual beehive huts which were situated around the main house. Dunn's children lived with their mothers and, like their mothers, were only admitted to Dunn's quarters when commanded to do so. In addition to the family's living quarters, there were huts for Dunn's *izinduna*, armed retainers, household servants and Zulu visitors. A large cattle kraal, stables for horses and storage pits for mealies, sorghum and sweet potatoes were also located within the kraal; the entire complex was enclosed by a circular hedge of thorns known as a *utango*. After Dunn's appointment in 1879 as one of the thirteen chieftains selected to rule post-war Zululand, a courthouse, European style bungalows for white magistrates, and a schoolhouse for Dunn's children were added to the Mangete and Emoyeni complexes.⁽⁹⁰⁾

With few exceptions Dunn ruled his black subjects by Nguni customary law. He invoked strict discipline over his wives. He forbade his wives to travel beyond the confines of their respective household/kraal area

(88) D.D.P., Ms. Dun 1.092, p.2.

(89) Krige, *Social System*, p.39.

(90) D.D.P., Ms. Dun 1.092, p.2.

unless given permission. For breach of rules Dunn banished several of his wives from his household and the Ungoye itself. Two wives found guilty of adultery were sentenced to death and executed in accordance with Zulu law.⁽⁹¹⁾

As district chief, Dunn exercised judicial authority over his people by settling disputes and meting out punishment to those found guilty of crimes. Dunn followed the example of other Zulu chiefs and appointed a council composed of his chief *izinduna* to advise him when trying cases. Dunn, however, reserved the defendant's right of final appeal to his discretion.⁽⁹²⁾ Wolseley's post-war settlement of 1879 allowed for the continued operation of Nguni customary law under the supervision of the British Resident of Zululand.⁽⁹³⁾ Dunn made little or no effort to impose European laws and institutions on his African clients. His one minor deviation was the appointment in 1879 of three European magistrates fully acquainted with Zulu law to assist in the legal administration of a much enlarged post-war Dunnsland.⁽⁹⁴⁾

By 1859 Dunn had laid the foundations for chiefly authority. His possession of resources facilitated his acquisition of political power. He had been appointed a district chief, and he had successfully accumulated three vital resources; wives, land and livestock. The fourth requisite, clients, proved to be the most difficult to obtain, for it required Cetshwayo's approval. Moreover, Dunn needed an additional tract of land capable of supporting the large following that he envisaged.

In the 1860s Dunn was presented with an opportunity to negotiate with Cetshwayo for more land and clients. The Paramount summoned Dunn and announced his intention of sending the Zulu army to attack the Swazi

(91) *Ibid.*, Ms. 1467, p.31.

(92) *Ibid.*, Ms. 1459, pp.6-7.

(93) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.120.

(94) Mitford, *Through the Zulu Country*, p.198.

kingdom, in the hope of eliminating or blunting the threat of Swazi incursions into Zululand. Dunn advised Cetshwayo not to launch an offensive against the Swazi because the risk of defeat would provide an opportunity for Cetshwayo's half-brother, Hamu, and cousin, Zibhebhu, to challenge more effectively Cetshwayo's claim to the throne.⁽⁹⁵⁾ Dunn was ever sensitive to threats to the continued pre-eminence of Cetshwayo and the Usuthu: 'he (Cetshwayo) knew that he had not the whole nation on his side, but only a small portion, and that if he suffered the slightest defeat the whole country would turn on him and that I would also suffer'.⁽⁹⁶⁾

As a viable alternative to risky military adventures Dunn proposed that Cetshwayo pursue a course of internal political consolidation as a counter to his princely rivals. Dunn suggested that the Usuthu be equipped with firearms, thus giving visible expression to the professed superiority of the Usuthu over the forces of Hamu and Zibhebhu, who, at that time, still relied on the assegai. Cetshwayo agreed to abandon the proposed attack on Swaziland on condition that Dunn supply the firearms. Accordingly, Dunn approached Natal's Lieutenant-Governor and Theophilus Shepstone for permission to import 250 rifles and the necessary ammunition. The Lieutenant-Governor, on Shepstone's recommendation, issued Dunn with the required permits to purchase arms in Durban and allow their passage across the Thukela. The 1856 civil war was still fresh in the minds of the Natal government and the bolstering of Cetshwayo's faction would serve as a deterrent to Hamu and Zibhebhu.⁽⁹⁷⁾ Shepstone reasoned that one dominant Zulu faction was preferable to two or three of equal military power. These factions might more readily indulge in warfare and Shepstone feared that domestic violence might spill over the frontier into Natal. Upon receipt of the rifles, Cetshwayo requested Dunn to instruct a complement of his warriors in the use of the new weapons.⁽⁹⁸⁾ Through his access to firearms Dunn had strengthened Cetshwayo's military capabilities and he had made a substantial profit from the transaction, receiving ten oxen for each of the 250 rifles.⁽⁹⁹⁾

(95) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.26-27.

(96) *Ibid.*

(97) *Ibid.*, p.28.

(98) *Ibid.*

(99) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.99.

Having risen in Cetshwayo's estimation, Dunn approached him and requested an additional tract of land lying in a belt between the Thukela and Amatikulu rivers. Cetshwayo assented and Dunn became chief over an *isifunda* (district) which roughly doubled his original 1858 grant.⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ One historian has interpreted Dunn's position in the Zulu political economy as an African prototype of a European feudal lord. This portrayal of Cetshwayo as liege lord and Dunn as obligatory vassal is misleading.⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Gluckman, writing over thirty years ago, offered a more accurate view of the differences between the Zulu land distribution system and the European feudal order:

In kingdoms of this kind we are not dealing with feudal-type estates, as is often loosely alleged. Despite their common insistence on personal allegiances between lords and underlings, which is one of the main characteristics of both a tribal and a feudal system, rights of land are quite different in the two types of state. Under feudalism a vassal entered into a special contract with his immediate lord in which he gave service of a demarcated kind in return for control over land and those attached to it. No one in those times could go to the king and demand land as a right, as men could do in Africa.⁽¹⁰²⁾

There was no specific contract of reciprocal obligations and privileges between Dunn and Cetshwayo. No formal oath of fealty to Cetshwayo was extracted from Dunn in return for certain lands and concessions. Dunn had, in the first instance, been invited to occupy territory in Zululand on a loose and vaguely defined promise to advise and assist the Zulu heir apparent. After Dunn had gained Cetshwayo's favour by supplying firearms he felt justified in demanding more land as a reward for his services.

His acquisition of land, and a fee of 2,500 cattle for the rifles gave Dunn the resource base needed to support an increasing population of African clients. Dunn's 'colonisation' of the Ungoye district with Natal Nguni and Zulu from other districts during the last two decades

(100) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.29.

(101) See Barber, 'John Dunn and Zululand', p.37.

(102) Max Gluckman, *Ideas and Procedures in African Customary Law* (Oxford, 1969), p.256.

of the kingdom's independence (1859-1879) was an event of major political and economic significance. Dunn stated in his notes that his aim was to:

try and get the whole of the district from the Tugela to beyond the Ungoye, under me. I had succeeded, so far, in obtaining both ends, and intended gradually to try and populate the middle district, and to get a title from the king and Zulu nation to a strip all along the coast and the Tugela, to be, as I have said, under me as an independent chief.(103)

Between 1860 and 1878 Dunn accumulated a following of almost ten thousand subjects. He made effective use of these people in exploiting the natural wealth of the Ungoye and in extending and protecting his political base. In the early years of Dunn's residence many Africans served as hunters, guides and carriers in hunting expeditions. Ivory, hides and skins were immediate sources of income for Dunn in the 1860s, as indeed, they were for the rest of Zululand and Natal. Dunn's expeditions were well organized. Equipped with guns and assegais Dunn's hunters scoured most of southern and coastal Zululand for game. As many as two thousand men were engaged in the larger hunts, but usually Dunn depended on an efficient corps of African hunters well armed with rifles and trained personally by the chief himself.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ The impact of Dunn's numerous hunts on the ecology was of such magnitude that by 1880 game was scarce throughout much of Zululand.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ S.D. Le Roux gave this appraisal of Dunn's hunting activities and their consequences:

Dunn was a great slaughterer of game. He is reputed to have shot, during his time, several hundreds of elephants, and over one thousand each of hippopotami and buffaloes, and it is to him that the denudation of Zululand of its game is in a considerable degree to be attributed.(106).

The most attractive material inducement for Africans to settle in the Ungoye was the loan of Dunn's numerous cattle to his clients for their

(103) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.29-30.

(104) *Ibid.*, p.94.

(105) D.D.P., Ms. 1459, p.3.

(106) Le Roux, *Pioneers and Sportsmen of South Africa*, p.106.

use and benefit. In the same manner as the Zulu king and other *izikhulu*, Dunn held in trust most of the cattle in his district.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ He loaned out cattle to the various kraals scattered over the Ungoye where they were tended and cared for by the kraal's inhabitants. In exchange for their services as hunters, pastoralists and agriculturalists Dunn allowed his wards to consume all the milk obtained from his cattle and to eat beasts that died. On occasion Dunn would reward his *izinduna* and favourite retainers with gifts of cattle.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Livestock as a ritual and institutional commodity were immensely important, for Dunn gave oxen to young men to enable them to pay the required *lobola* upon marriage.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Through his ownership and control of vital material resources such as land and cattle Dunn was able to demand and extract loyalty and service from African clients economically dependent on his largesse.

An examination of Dunn's rapid and successful accumulation of key resources in Zululand and their subsequent transformation into political power would be incomplete if no attempt was made to relate his ambitions to the wider spectrum of power politics in the Zulu kingdom of the 1860s and 1870s. A close scrutiny of Dunn's career in pre-war Zululand sheds a new and interesting light on the internal political dynamic of Cetshwayo's reign (1857-1879). The old orthodoxy has caricatured the pre-war kingdom as a highly centralized military monolith with an 'absolute' monarch at its head.⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Such a model is appropriate, if at all, only to the Zulu monarchy under Shaka in the 1820s. An analysis of the Zulu political economy during Mpande's later reign begs further study. Rosalind Mael's study of Mpande discussed the 'Problem of Political Integration' in the Zulu kingdom. But this thesis covers the period up to 1862 only. There is still the lacuna of the last decade of Mpande's reign to be examined. Neither Mael nor any other historian has yet attempted to explain the internal political turbulence that plagued Mpande's rule and clouded the succession issue. Mael dismisses Dunn's political role as over-rated when the mass of evidence would confirm otherwise.⁽¹¹¹⁾

(107) Krige, *Social Systems*, p.241.

(108) D.D.P., Ms. 1459, p.5.

(109) *Ibid.*, Ms. 1.092, p.2.

(110) See Omer Cooper, *The Zulu Aftermath*, pp.171-3; and E.A. Ritter, *Shaka Zulu* (London, 1968), p.14.

(111) Mael, 'Political Integration', p.264.

The period between the 1856 Civil War and Cetshwayo's coronation as King in 1873 was one of political realignment and perceptible economic change. Those members of the Zulu ruling class who adjusted to these changing conditions and manipulated them to their advantage emerged as some of the most powerful political figures during both the pre- and post-war (Anglo-Zulu War 1879) eras of Zulu history.

Cetshwayo's victory over Mbuyazi was also a victory for the subordinate chiefs who had supported and fought with the Usuthu. Mpande was allowed to live mainly because of his diplomatic ties with the Boers of the Transvaal and the British in Natal - both of whom it was feared would intervene militarily if Cetshwayo moved to kill his father and usurp the throne. In 1861 the British government, through a visitation by Natal's Secretary for Native Affairs, Theophilus Shepstone, pressured Mpande to recognize Cetshwayo as his lawful heir. The ageing king grudgingly agreed out of fear of further Boer intervention in Zulu domestic affairs. Cetshwayo had in 1861 agreed to cede land in the north-western section of the kingdom to the Boers in exchange for another brother and potential rival for the throne, Mthonga. Although Cetshwayo soon repudiated the cession of the Boers his actions were the substance of the boundary dispute which was later to be one of the causes of the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879.⁽¹¹²⁾ The unsettled nature of the royal succession demonstrates the insecurity felt by potential heirs to the throne, and - the severe political complications that succession struggles fostered when royal princes felt compelled to seek the aid of the acquisitive and intrusive white communities on its western and southern borders.

The period 1861-1872 was one in which there was a devolution of political power in the Zulu kingdom. Mpande ruled in association with his heir, Cetshwayo and the *Izikhulu* of the nation. The Civil War of 1856 had seriously eroded his position within the kingdom. However, he still performed the important ceremonial functions which only the official

(112) Wright and Edgecombe, 'Mpande Ka Senzangakhona', pp.56-57.

head of state was entitled to carry out. "Without his agreement new age grades could not be formed, existing ones could not marry, and the nation's most important public rituals, such as those connected with the annual *umkhosi* or 'first fruits' festival could not be performed".⁽¹¹³⁾

The Zulu Civil War of 1856 also served to increase the autonomy and political power of several factions which had supported Cetshwayo's claim to the throne. The most powerful of these was the Mandlakazi of north-eastern Zululand. Its chief was Maphitha, a grandson of Jama and lineage head of the most important of the collateral lines of the Zulu Royal family. Guy says that "he apparently held a unique position within the kingdom - he is described not only as a *isikhulu* but as an *umntwana*, a child of the king, with *izikhulu* of his own".⁽¹¹⁴⁾

The long distance between the Mandlakazi district and the seat of royal power on the Mahlabathini plain certainly encouraged the spirit of independence. The Mandlakazi had a large regional following whose loyalty was always first to their chiefs and second to the central authority. Maphitha's son and heir, Zibhebhu was a cousin to Mpande's sons and was considered a royal prince. He was Zululand's greatest warrior and had an aggressive and independent disposition⁽¹¹⁵⁾ - qualities which later augured ill for Cetshwayo.

A second powerful faction that rose to prominence after the 1856 Civil War was that of the royal prince Hamu. He was sired by Mpande to 'raise seed' for his full brother Nzibe who died shortly after Shaka's Balule expedition of 1828.⁽¹¹⁶⁾ Hamu was regarded as having been born to Nzibe and was considered as a cousin to Cetshwayo. He supported his brother against Mbuyazi, but his loyalties were suspect. He ruled over a strong faction in north-western Zululand stretching from the Ngome forest to the Mkuzi River. The long distances between Hamu's district and the central authority also encouraged the growth of a semi-independent chiefdom.⁽¹¹⁷⁾

(113) *Ibid.*, p.57.

(114) Guy, 'Political Structure of the Zulu Kingdom', p.9.

(115) Gibson, *Story of the Zulus*. p.31.

(116) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p.36.

(117) Gibson, *Story of the Zulus*, p.106.

A third and probably the most powerful section was that of Mnyamana, the son and heir of Ngqengele, a chief and lineage head of the Buthelezi clan and *induna* to Shaka.⁽¹¹⁸⁾ The latter assigned Ngqengele the responsibility of ruling over *amakhandu* and homesteads in the watershed of the Black Mfolozi in north-central Zululand. Following Shaka's death in 1828 Ngqengele employed the patrilineage production system to build up his political and material power along with a sizable following.⁽¹¹⁹⁾ Mnyamana succeeded his father and exercised a great deal of independence during the last eleven years of Mpande's reign. His following of supporters grew largely as a result of his policy of giving asylum to Zulu who had committed offences or who had fallen from the favour of the king, princes or other district chiefs. Mnyamana was strong enough to resist interference from both Mpande and Cetshwayo and even harboured individuals who had been sentenced to death by the central authority of the King and the Paramount.⁽¹²⁰⁾

These three sections enjoyed a great degree of autonomy primarily because they controlled the production processes within the homesteads in their respective regions. They appear to have given only a nominal allegiance to Mpande as King after the civil war of 1856. Since these faction heads were also *izikhulu* they had great influence over the affairs of the kingdom and made sure that their collective and individual interests were served when they sat in the *ibandla* or highest council of state. "Without the *izikhulu* the king could make no decisions of national importance".⁽¹²¹⁾

The paramount, Cetshwayo, also faced a dilemma with the rise of these sections. He would not have become heir-apparent if the subordinate chiefs and section heads had not supported him against Mbuyazi and Mpande. On the other hand he knew that as heir and, one day as King, these factions would always be a dangerous challenge to his authority, and, indeed, to his very own survival. In order to remedy this Cetshwayo embarked on a

(118) Webb and Wright (eds.), *James Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.12.

(119) Gibson, *Story of the Zulus*, p.31.

(120) *Ibid.*, p.109.

(121) Guy, 'Political Structure of the Zulu Kingdom', p.4.

programme to increase his own material foundations of political power within the kingdom while seeking recognition of his claims to the throne from the British government in Natal. While Cetshwayo may have been the heir-apparent and the head of a powerful section of the Zulu nation, he was still technically subordinate to his father the king.⁽¹²²⁾ In economic terms Cetshwayo did not have any significant advantages over his potential rivals that kingship conferred. He had no authority to appropriate cattle from the royal herds kept by the other sections as the king did. Cetshwayo controlled only the cattle that belonged to his Usuthu followers. Furthermore, other sections had roughly as many cattle as the Usuthu - in fact, Mnyamana of the Buthelezi, controlled the largest herds in the kingdom.⁽¹²³⁾ With his material base limited to the agricultural resources in the Usuthu district Cetshwayo sought to redress the material balance of political power in his favour by acquiring control of the existing networks of trade and tribute. In this endeavour, John Dunn's expertise proved invaluable as trade and tribute contributed to Cetshwayo's military and political power.

(ii) The Trade Factor

There is a conspicuous scarcity of discussion on the role played by trade in the Zulu political economy from the later years of Dingane's reign in the 1830s and extending through the remaining period of the kingdom's history. The white hunter-trader had long been active in Zululand beginning with the Portuguese penetration southward from Delagoa Bay in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, followed by the English traders pushing northward from Port Natal, from 1824.⁽¹²⁴⁾ These traders bartered their stocks of woolen and cotton blankets, calico, salampore cloth, brass ornaments, 'Tambo' and 'Mercandos' beads and tobacco for live cattle, hides, ivory and horns.⁽¹²⁵⁾ Guy attaches little importance to the role of trade in the Zulu political economy: '...the impact of colonial trade of this kind was slight, for the trader in Zululand was not able to introduce any product which came to be seen as essential to the Zulu way of life and which could not be manufactured within the country'.⁽¹²⁶⁾ Since cattle were the most valuable and easily

(122) Wright and Edgecombe, 'Mpande Ka Senzangakhona', p.57.

(123) Gibson, *Story of the Zulus*, p.109.

(124) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p.15.

(125) S.N.A., 1/1/7, nos. 1-57.

(126) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p.15.

transportable commodity of exchange the 'trader gained possession of the surplus commodity produced in the country and thus demanded no alteration to the process of production'.⁽¹²⁷⁾

If 'significance' is measured in terms of changes in the established pattern of production processes then trade was not a 'significant' factor in the Zulu political economy. Trade did not stimulate the development of commercial enterprise or promote the manufacture of commodities produced by the agricultural economy. But, trade in the Zulu kingdom was 'significant' if the focus is on the motives of individuals or classes in Zulu society who control and distribute trade goods. Shaka and Dingane both used trade to enhance their authority over their subjects.⁽¹²⁸⁾ Trade became the exclusive prerogative of these monarchs; they distributed the blankets, cloth, utensils and metal ornaments to the royal women of the *izigodlo*, favourite retainers and members of the ruling class.⁽¹²⁹⁾ In this manner, European trade goods became associated with exclusivity and were regarded as a further extension and magnification of royal authority.

During Mpande's reign the royal grip on trade and traders was considerably relaxed. The greater degree of political autonomy enjoyed by the district chiefs gave them and their subjects an opportunity to barter directly with white traders without fear of retribution from the king. Thus, trade goods lost their aura of exclusivity as they became more freely available to the mass of the population. Not only did Mpande lose the monopoly on trade, but, some Zulu brazenly exchanged royal cattle for trade goods - a development of which Mpande complained bitterly.⁽¹³⁰⁾ In 1868 Reverend Robertson, an Anglican missionary in Zululand, recorded Mpande's jaundiced view of traders and the loss of royal exclusivity which had been associated with trade goods:

(127) *Ibid.*, pp.15-16.

(128) Stuart and Malcolm (eds.), *Fynn's Diary*, pp.131-132.

(129) *Ibid.*, p.143; and Okoye, 'Dingane', p.229.

(130) Mael, 'Problem of Political Integration', p.214.

He (Mpande) said that I held it to be very bad that all the people should wear any kind of blanket they chose, so that there was none specially belonging to the King. ...Bad, bad indeed, but it is the fault of the white men themselves, they don't bring them to me, they go all over the country selling them to anybody. (131)

Robertson was a keen observer of economic and political conditions in Zululand during the 1860s. In an interview with Cetshwayo at Ondini he reminded the heir-apparent of the economic changes wrought in Zululand by white traders:

Again, there was a time, I told him when the face of a white man was unknown to them, now there were thousands everywhere, and in Zululand proper they were to be seen everyday. There was a time when blankets were unknown, the skins of animals being their only clothing, and the first blankets, white ones, were appropriated solely by the chiefs. It was death to any to wear one. After a time traders introduced coloured blankets, and these became royal ones. Then again these were abandoned for others. Now there is no royal colour, blankets are allowed to all. (132)

Colonial based trade from Natal could either enhance or diminish the authority of the central government depending on the degree of control exercised by the king over the agrarian society. Shaka and, to some extent, Dingane had sufficient political power to not only keep the royal herds intact but to expropriate cattle from their subjects and district chiefs. (133) Mpande's loss of political power immediately before and after the 1856 Civil War also represented a loss of material power. The district chiefs acquired enough political power to become the *de facto* owners of the royal cattle they supposedly tended for the king. The Natal traders naturally gravitated to those members of the ruling class who had the authority to exchange cattle for the trade goods desired. Shaka and Dingane controlled the majority of cattle

(131) Anne MacKenzie (ed.), *The Net Cast in Many Waters* (London, 1869), p.29. Robertson's interview with King Mpande, 16 Aug. 1868.

(132) *Ibid.*, pp.25-26. Robertson's interview with Cetshwayo, 28 May 1868.

(133) Webb and Wright (eds.), *James Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.7. Evidence of Baleka Ka Mpitikazi.

in the kingdom and thus had the means to entice the traders to bring their wares to them exclusively.⁽¹³⁴⁾ In contrast, Mpande did not have the political and military clout over the district chiefs to enforce a royal monopoly on trade, nor did Mpande have the resources to expropriate cattle at will from the districts as an inducement for traders to deal with him exclusively. The district chiefs appear to have traded their own cattle and some of the king's stock as well to the traders. The white traders adjusted to shifts in the political fortunes of the Zulu ruling class by trading with the kings, district chiefs and headmen who controlled the cattle.⁽¹³⁵⁾

While trade with colonial Natal did not bring about alterations in the productive processes of the Zulu kingdom, traders were responsible for channeling thousands of cattle and hides into Natal from neighbouring territories. From the time of earliest settlement in 1824 there was nearly always a great demand for cattle in Natal. Zulu refugees fleeing Dingane and Mpande took thousands of their cattle with them across the Thukela into Natal between 1830 and 1850.⁽¹³⁶⁾ The growing colonial economy needed cattle and oxen for meat, milk, hides and, most importantly, for draught animals used in cultivation and transport riding. Undoubtedly, livestock were the most often bought and traded commodity in an economy based on the twin supports of commerce and agriculture.⁽¹³⁷⁾

Durban based merchants also had a stake in the cattle trade with Zululand. They outfitted the hunter-traders with imported manufactured wares.⁽¹³⁸⁾

(134) Stuart and Malcolm (eds.), *Fynn's Diary*, pp.131-132.

(135) MacKenzie (ed.), *The Net*, p.29.

(136) Okoye, 'Dingane', pp.223-225.

(137) P.J. Colenbrander, 'The Zulu Political Economy on the Eve of the Anglo-Zulu War', unpublished paper presented to the Conference on the Anglo-Zulu War 1879, University of Natal, Durban, Feb. 1979, p.19.

(138) Mitford, *Through the Zulu Country*, pp.128-130.

The Durban merchants found it rewarding to cultivate trade with the Blacks of Natal and Zululand. In 1878 the Standard Bank of South Africa gave a very conservative estimate of the value of colonial trade with the African populace. The figure for Natal was approximated at L75,000, while that of Zululand was calculated at L12,000.⁽¹³⁹⁾ Contemporary estimates put the traders' profit margins between seventy-five and one-hundred percent.⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ Mitford explained the connection between the merchant and the trader:

Perhaps he is fitted out by a storekeeper in which case he gets a percentage on the profits, or the wagonload is entirely his own affair. He is away two, three, or four months, according to the number of his wagons, the success he meets with, or the route by which he travels. It is indispensable that he should be well acquainted with the native language; furthermore, he must be firm and business-like in all his dealings, for the Zulu is a hard nail at a bargain, and will always try to get as much and give as little as he can.⁽¹⁴¹⁾

Periods of political crisis and cattle disease released a larger volume of cattle and hides to Natal traders than was usually the case at times of political stability. It is difficult to estimate with any degree of accuracy the actual number of cattle and hides flowing into Natal. The Natal government, in its export statistics, did not keep separate figures for the cattle and hides that were produced in Natal and those coming from Zululand. But the export value of ox and cow hides from Natal rose sharply whenever there was a major political or economic crisis in the Zulu kingdom. Between the unstable strife ridden years of 1856 and 1861, or exactly the number of years separating Cetshwayo's victory at Ndongakusuka and his recognition as heir-apparent by Mpande and the Natal government, there was a three to fourfold increase in the value of hides exported by Natal. In 1855, a year before the second Zulu Civil War only L3,201 worth of ox hides were exported;⁽¹⁴²⁾

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- (139) *B.P.P.*, C.-2222 of 1879, Enclosure 1 in No. 55. E. Thomas, Manager, Durban Branch, Standard Bank, to Sir. B. Frere, 16 Dec.1878.
 (140) Mitford, *Through the Zulu Country*, p.p.129-130.
 (141) *Ibid.*, p.129.
 (142) *N.B.B.*, no. 6, 1855.

in 1856 the figure shot up to L11,568.⁽¹⁴³⁾ The figures doubled in 1857 reaching a peak of L21,440.⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ The figures dropped slightly in the next two years standing at L16,229 and L12,460 for 1858 and 1859 respectively.⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ In 1861 the value of exported hides was L10,551.⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ There is a significant drop in Natal's hide exports in the period of more stable political conditions beginning in 1862 when the figure is down to L5,884.⁽¹⁴⁷⁾

These figures suggest that political struggles and internal warfare between 1856 and 1861 were partly responsible for the attrition of Zululand's cattle population. The large concentrations of men under arms in the civil war period saw large numbers of cattle slaughtered to feed the contesting armies, the Ggoza dependents and refugees.⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ Political instability was not the only factor which delivered large numbers of cattle and hides into the hands of hunter-traders. A severe lung-sickness epidemic swept through Zululand from 1856 until 1860. The movement of large numbers of cattle during the civil war period probably fanned the epidemic through the cattle herds of the kingdom at a faster rate than would have been the case under more stable political conditions. Ironically, white hunter-traders from Natal were responsible for introducing lung-sickness into Zululand in the late 1850s.⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ Thus hunter-traders took maximum advantage of domestic warfare and cattle disease to secure cattle and hides in Zululand.

A renewed flare-up of lung-sickness in the late 1860s and early 1870s was certainly responsible for the precipitous rise in hide exports from Natal during this same period.⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ In 1868 ox hides exported from Natal

(143) *Ibid.*, no. 7, 1856.

(144) *Ibid.*, no. 8, 1857.

(145) *N.B.B.*, no. 9, 1858; and *N.B.B.* no. 10, 1859.

(146) *Ibid.*, no. 12, 1861.

(147) *Ibid.*, no. 13, 1862.

(148) Bryant, *The Zulu People*, p.336.

(149) Colenbrander, 'The Zulu Political Economy', p.12.

(150) *Ibid.*

were valued at L8,284. ⁽¹⁵¹⁾ The onset of lungsickness in Zululand can explain the sharp rise in hide exports in 1869 when they total L17,445. ⁽¹⁵²⁾ Between 1870 and 1875 there is a spectacular leap in Natal's hide exports which coincide precisely with the reported intensification of the lungsickness epidemic in Zululand:

Year	Value of ox hides exported from Natal	
1870	L24,409	(153)
1871	L36,225	(154)
1872	L43,980	(155)
1873	L56,062	(156)
1874	L86,028	(157)
1875	L105,279	(158)

It is ironic that Cetshwayo was held largely responsible for the further spread of lungsickness throughout his kingdom in the 1870s. Upon his coronation in August-September 1873 King Cetshwayo held a royal inspection of the nation's cattle that had been gathered from throughout the land for the occasion. This act, according to Dunn, spread the epidemic more widely over the entire country:

But, this particular muster ended in serious disaster. It was the death-blow to cattle breeding in Zululand. 'Lungsickness' had been, and was very busy with many of the herds collected, and mixing them up spread the disease all over the country, and judging from the number of hides that the traders carried from the country during the two following years, the number of cattle must have been reduced by at least half. So that Zululand, from being one of the richest, is now one of the poorest cattle countries in this part of South Africa, and I believe it will never be one-half as well off in cattle as in the olden day. Oxen are at present very scarce, and the Zulus set a greater value on an ox than a whiteman does. ⁽¹⁵⁹⁾

(151) *Ibid.*, no. 19, 1868.

(152) *Ibid.*, no. 20, 1869.

(153) *Ibid.*, no. 21, 1870.

(154) *Ibid.*, no. 22, 1871.

(155) *Ibid.*, no. 23, 1872.

(156) *Ibid.*, no. 24, 1873.

(157) *Ibid.*, no. 25, 1874.

(158) *Ibid.*, no. 26, 1875.

(159) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.57-58.

Dunn's observations were remarkably accurate. The two years following the 1873 coronation saw Natal's export value of ox hides reach their highest records in history. In 1874 and 1875 these exports were valued at L86,028⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ and L105,279⁽¹⁶¹⁾ respectively. Another observer claimed that one Durban merchant alone exported 90,000 hides that had come from Zululand.⁽¹⁶²⁾ While the above claim may well be an over-estimate of hide exports from Zululand the conclusions reached by close and intimate observers of conditions in the kingdom are all unanimous - that there was a serious if not disastrous depletion of Zulu herds in the 1870s as a result of lung sickness. In this case, the white-hunter trader had a 'negative' impact on the Zulu political economy. It was he who had first brought the scourge of lung sickness into the country. The hunter-trader was also the agent who benefited most from the national economic tragedy that was cattle disease in Zululand with exorbitant profits of seventy-five to over one-hundred percent to be made from the transactions.⁽¹⁶³⁾

While the role of trade and hunter-traders had acted as a force for political decentralisation during King Mpande's reign, it was a factor that could also be employed to centralize and enhance the position of the king. During the 1860s Cetshwayo manipulated the trade factor to increase his military power and, in the process, strengthened his claims to the throne. He knew that he did not have the manpower to prevent other factions from dealing with the traders. Cetshwayo, therefore, chose to concentrate his attentions on controlling trade in strategic rather than non-strategic luxury and utilitarian goods. By manipulating the importation of firearms he would gain a decisive edge in military technology over his rivals. Cetshwayo needed the particular skills of John Dunn to acquire a monopoly on guns and ammunition. Dunn had the business acumen and commercial contacts in the colonial mercantile world of south-eastern Africa that were

(160) *N.B.B.*, no. 25, 1874.

(161) *Ibid.*, no. 26, 1875.

(162) Colenso Collection, Natal Archives, no. 3, Annexure; Robertson to Samuelson, 20 April 1887; also cited in Colenbrander, 'The Zulu Political Economy', p.13.

(163) *B.P.P.*, C.-2222 of 1879, Enclosure 1 in no. 55. E. Thomas, Manager, Durban Branch, Standard Bank, to Sir B. Frere, 16 Dec. 1878.

necessary if firearms were to be purchased, transported and distributed to Cetshwayo's Usuthu followers. Dunn's success in obtaining large quantities of firearms may be measured in the lavish gifts of land, cattle and social and political recognition that Dunn received from a grateful Cetshwayo.

Cetshwayo's drive for a greater concentration of authority in Zululand was linked to Dunn's access to firearms which enhanced his military status throughout the kingdom. The success of this long-term domestic strategy was apparent with the 1873 coronation of Cetshwayo as undisputed king of Zululand.⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ Through Dunn, Cetshwayo limited and channelled the supply of firearms in Zululand to the Usuthu exclusively. During the 1860s and early 1870s Cetshwayo's military power grew while that of Hamu and Zibhebhu declined in proportion. On the eve of his coronation Cetshwayo could count on the support of nearly six hundred men armed with rifles, combined with Dunn's private army of several hundred hunters.⁽¹⁶⁵⁾ Both Hamu and Zibhebhu professed their loyalty to the new king.⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ Mnyamana, chief of a third powerful section in norther Zululand, also gave his hitherto uncommitted support to Cetshwayo and became one of the king's most loyal chiefs and eventually Prime Minister.⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ For six years (1873-1879) Cetshwayo ruled as the legitimate king of a Zulu nation that had not seen the symbol and substance of political authority so concentrated in the hands of a monarch since the reign of Dingane, nearly forty years earlier. However, it was only from 1873 that the cycle of devolution had been reversed and the trend toward a renewed centralization of political power begun.

(164) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.58. Dunn claimed that the 1873 coronation was successful because Cetsywayo had proved his military superiority. He said that 'after this things went on well and peacefully, owing, I am sure, to nothing but my having advised Cetywayo, and shown - to the intimidation of the rival factions - that he could produced a good stand of arms'.

(165) *Ibid.*, p.42.

(166) *B.P.P.*, C.-1137 of 1875, 'Report of the Expedition to Install Cetywayo as King of the Zulus'. Theophilus Shepstone noted that Hamu professed his allegiance to Cetshwayo at the coronation and he considered this event to be of major importance in legitimizing the new king's authority.

(167) Gibson, *Story of the Zulus*, p.123.

It is significant too that Cetshwayo's most potentially dangerous and capable rival, Zibhebhu, actively engaged in trade with both Natal traders and Tsonga and Portuguese traders based on Delagoa Bay. In the 1870s Zibhebhu turned his energies to matters of trade as a means of acquiring even greater political power. Next to Dunn he was the most active trader in Zululand and fully appreciated the significance of the trade routes which ran through Mandlakazi territory in north-eastern Zululand. He sent his agents into the Delagoa Bay hinterland and as far afield as the eastern Transvaal with 'merchandise such as beads, blankets, salampore cloth and brass ware to be exchanged for leopard, civet cat and insimango monkey-skins which were greatly in demand among the Zulus.'⁽¹⁶⁸⁾ Zibhebhu obtained his trade goods from Lourenco Marques and from parapetetic white traders from Natal. After 1873 he developed close trading ties with John Dunn; Zibhebhu traded cattle for firearms, with Dunn making all the arrangements for trans-shipment into Zululand from Delagoa Bay. Zibhebhu policed that portion of the coastal trade route which ran through his district and occasionally received gifts of guns and trade goods from Dunn for allowing Tsonga migrants to travel through the region unmolested. In the mid to late 1870s Zibhebhu is believed to have wanted to establish a trading empire in the Delagoa Bay hinterland.⁽¹⁶⁹⁾ However, his ambitions were never realized due to the coming of the Anglo-Zulu War in 1879.

The restriction or relaxation in the supply of firearms to rival factions is a highly plausible barometer in gauging how united or divided the Zulu kingdom was during this period. Before his coronation Cetshwayo restricted the access of firearms to the Usuthu out of a fear that Hamu and Zibhebhu would obtain them. Dunn owed his chieftaincy and much of his financial success to Cetshwayo therefore it suited Dunn

(168) B.H. Kemp, 'Johan William Colenbrander, 1879-1896',
(unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Natal, 1962), p.31.

(169) *Ibid.*, pp.31-32.

politically and economically to refrain from selling guns to Cetshwayo's rivals. It is no coincidence that the large-scale arming of all factions with guns occurred after 1873.⁽¹⁷⁰⁾ Cetshwayo had only gained only assurances from Hamu and Zibhebhu that they recognized him as the legitimate ruler of Zululand at the coronation. With the acquiescence of the two princes, Cetshwayo relaxed his control on the gun trade and allowed Dunn to sell firearms throughout all of the kingdom. Between 1873 and 1878 Dunn imported approximately two-thirds of the twenty thousand guns reported to have entered Zululand via the Durban Lourence Marques trade network.⁽¹⁷¹⁾ There was a mixture of internal and external political factors that contributed to the large influx of firearms into Zululand in the 1870s. As Guy concludes:

With the spread of arms amongst the Africans in southern Africa, it is likely that the Zulu, who had yet to be conquered and who retained their economic and political independence and were therefore not migrant labourers, were reluctant to fall behind in any arms race. Mpande was old and the transfer of power in Zulu society was always a critical period, and Cetshwayo needed firearms to increase the strength of the faction which supported his claim to the Zulu throne. There was also the growing threat of Boer encroachment on Zululand's north-west border. All these considerations must have played a part in Cetshwayo's decision to import firearms, and he was encouraged and advised in his decision by John Dunn, who seized this opportunity to increase his status in Zululand and, at the same time, to make a large amount of money.⁽¹⁷²⁾

Cetshwayo held a distinct advantage over his princely rivals when dealing with the British government in Natal, with Dunn performing the duties of a *de facto* foreign minister and private secretary.⁽¹⁷³⁾

(170) Guy, 'Note on Firearms', p.559.

(171) C.O. 879/15/173, no. 2, p.4. Bulwer to Hicks Beach, 27 Mar. 1878.

(172) Guy, 'Note on Firearms', p.559.

(173) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.14, 71.

Neither Hamu, Zibhebhu or Mpande employed Europeans as skilled as Dunn in the procedures of diplomacy. Theophilus Shepstone channelled the bulk of his correspondence with Cetshwayo through Dunn and considered him to be an accurate and reliable source of information on the internal politics of Zululand.⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ Until the very eve of the Anglo-Zulu war Dunn succeeded in persuading Cetshwayo to pursue a policy of caution and co-operation with Natal and refrain from military demonstrations against the Swazi kingdom and the South African Republic.⁽¹⁷⁵⁾ Dunn's own economic well-being hinged on a policy of peace with the British colony; the movement of firearms, cattle, trade goods and Tsonga labour required stable frontiers and safe, open trade routes.

Through Dunn, Cetshwayo was able to broaden his economic base and monopolize resources other than land or cattle at a time of diminishing cattle resources. A prime example was the money obtained from Tsonga migrants in the form of capitation fees and tribute. The king found it advantageous to collaborate with entrepreneurs by securing labour for the colony's sugar industry and railway construction projects. Cetshwayo levied tributary exactions on the subject Tsonga of the Delagoa Bay hinterland by coercing young Tsonga men to work on contract in Natal. White recruiters representing planters and contractors paid the king a 'head fee' for each migrant labourer recruited in this manner.⁽¹⁷⁶⁾ This additional income enabled Cetshwayo to obtain the trade goods and firearms that he desired. By 1878 Cetshwayo and Dunn had succeeded in augmenting the political and economic strength of pre-capitalist Zulu society by altering the traditional tributary obligations of the Tsonga to meet the cash needs of the king and the labour needs of a capitalist white settler community in Natal. However, cattle were the wealth of the nation and Cetshwayo was the wealthiest individual in the Zulu kingdom. The king purchased his rifles, spirits, blankets and other European articles with cattle

(174) Theophilus Shepstone Papers (Pietermaritzburg Natal Archives), Shepstone to Wolseley, 24 Oct. 1876.

(175) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.127-31.

(176) Ballard, 'Migrant Labour in Natal', pp.25-42. Chapter Four contains a more detailed study of Dunn's role in the trade and tribute networks that developed between the Zulu kingdom and the Delagoa Bay hinterland.

which were taken to Durban and sold at Benningfield and Son's auction sales.⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ John Dunn acted as Cetshwayo's financial agent with the English merchants in Natal and the Portuguese at Delagoa Bay. Dunn performed the duties of treasurer and kept the king's liquid assets in his custody. There was little semblance of a cash economy in Zululand and Cetshwayo and his agent, John Dunn, controlled the flow of European specie to and from the kingdom. On Dunn's commercial connections with the Zulu king, Frere wrote: 'occasional lots of cattle are sent to Durban for sale at public auction on account of the Zulu king, and the proceeds of such sales are forwarded to him in specie through the agency of John Dunn'.⁽¹⁷⁸⁾

In the final analysis, one must see Dunn as an agent of both centralization and devolution. Cetshwayo fused Dunn's political and economic ambitions with his own in the drive to obtain the throne and rule a united Zululand; at the same time, he had to relinquish a great deal of authority over Dunn and the Ungoye in order to secure his 'white man's' services. Thus, there was an uneasy tension and balance between Cetshwayo, in his capacity as king, and Dunn, the white frontiersman and chief. Dunn did more for Cetshwayo than 'profit by his downfall and oppose his return'⁽¹⁷⁹⁾ as Brookes and Webb conclude. He utilized his accumulated resources and political authority to support Cetshwayo.

In a comparative vein, John Dunn's career and his lifestyle was very similar to that of his northern neighbours, the Portuguese Prazeros of the colony of Mozambique. Since the sixteenth century the Portuguese settlers had increasingly acquired the habits and routines of the dominant African culture. Always few in numbers and far away from metropolitan protection, authority and social influences the white land holders or Prazeros became increasingly absorbed into the African societies which surrounded them. At the same time the Prazeros used firearms, manufactured wares and the trade in ivory and

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- (177) Ethel Campbell, *In the Brave Days of Old* (Durban, 1926), p.14. Dunn's commercial ties with the Durban Merchant, Sam Benningfield, are discussed at length in chapter five.
- (178) B.P.P., C.-2222 of 1879. Enclosure 1 in no. 55. Frere to Hicks Beach, 16 Dec. 1878.
- (179) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.99.

slaves to increase their power and status among their African clients and allies. Newitt, in his richly detailed study of Portuguese settlement in Zambesia, found that:

Where African society required the figure of a chief to maintain its cohesion and to enable it to function smoothly, the Prazo-holder might fill the role. The Portuguese senhors commonly performed six chiefly functions in African society. They received tribute in kind and in service; they enjoyed customary rights connected with game and exacted payments for the breaking of certain taboos; they had some supervisory powers over the choice of headmen; they monopolized certain economic activities; they dispensed justice and they performed certain ritual functions. (180)

The conditions which fostered the acculturation of Portuguese whites to the African environment were evident in John Dunn's life in pre-colonial Natal. The same cultural processes that had absorbed the Prazeros into neighbouring African societies were also at work among the white traders of the Port until the establishment of an effective British colonial presence in Natal in the 1840s and 50s. The political and economic survival of whites in Portuguese Zambesia and in pre-colonial Port Natal was determined largely by the success with which whites adapted to the local environment and used the institutions and customs of the local African societies to occupy dominant positions in the hierarchy of those particular societies. Newitt concluded that the Prazeros 'who were the most ready to abandon European standards were often the most successful colonists'. (181)

(180) Newitt, *Portuguese Settlement on the Zambezi*, p.172.

(181) *Ibid.*, p.170.

CHAPTER FOUR

TRADE, TRIBUTE AND MIGRANT LABOUR:

ZULU AND COLONIAL EXPLOITATION OF THE DELAGOA BAY

HINTERLAND 1818-1879

The control of the strategic north-south trade route between Natal and Mozambique was a crucial factor in John Dunn's rise to power and wealth in the Zulu kingdom. This coastal route, which stretched for 250 miles from Durban to Delagoa Bay, was more than a channel for the supply of firearms; it also served as a corridor for the passage of Tsonga migrants recruited to work in Natal in the 1870s. It is, however, insufficient to explain Dunn's role in the gun traffic and as recruiter for the Natal colonial government solely in terms of the inherent instability in the Zulu body politic and Dunn's own opportunism.

Dunn assumed control of a trade network that had been in operation since the development of Portuguese-Nguni trading ties in the eighteenth century. The suggestion that trade with Delagoa Bay was a factor in the consolidation of the Zulu kingdom begs further extension. Trade was an important factor in the political careers of John Dunn and members of the Zulu ruling elite. And trade with Delagoa Bay provided the stimulus for the Zulu conquest and exploitation of the hinterland and formed one of the cornerstones of Zulu foreign policy during much of the kingdom's history. Furthermore, the injection of commercial and planter capital into Natal in the late 1860s and early 1870s altered Zulu-Tsonga tributary relations. These adjustments appear to have accelerated the process of underdevelopment in the Delagoa Bay hinterland - a process that had begun with Shaka.

(i) Trade and Tribute

The trade hypothesis has been put forward by several scholars as an important factor in the formation of the Zulu kingdom.⁽¹⁾ However,

the trade hypothesis is controversial owing to a number of qualifications raised regarding the dearth of source material and the depressed state of trading activities in Portuguese East Africa. Thompson summarized his doubts on the unconvincing nature of the trade hypothesis:

Portuguese power in the Delagoa Bay area was at a low ebb in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The trade passing through Lourenco Marques was small and erratic, and one of the exports was slaves, who did not come from Nguni country. There is no evidence of a significant influx of imported goods from Delagoa Bay into Nguni country in the time of Dingiswayo and Shaka. There was no vestige of an emerging *entrepreneur* class in Nguni society. There is no testimony, apart from Fynn's, that suggests that Dingiswayo's primary motivation was economic. Shaka's was certainly not. Therefore, while trade may have been a subsidiary factor, it does not seem to have been a crucial factor behind political change among the northern Nguni.(2)

Following on the heels of Thompson's critique was Smith's version of the trade hypothesis which like the earlier versions, suffers from a lack of primary evidence. His work, more speculative than substantive, does perceive a connection between trade and political power beginning with Dingiswayo and extending through the reigns of Shaka and Dingane. Smith suggested that the 'simultaneous consolidation' of several northern Nguni chiefdoms in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries cannot be explained solely in terms of the 'over-population theory',⁽³⁾ as espoused by Gluckman and Omer Cooper.⁽⁴⁾ He contends that the 'development of the Zulu nation' cannot rest on this mono-causal interpretation; trade with Delagoa Bay must be considered along with the over-population theory.⁽⁵⁾ It is more than mere coincidence, as Smith implies, that Dingiswayo's preoccupation with trade occurred at a time when he was incorporating surrounding chiefdoms into the Mthethwa kingdom. He carried on an extensive trade in ivory and cattle with the

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- (1) Monica Wilson, 'The Early History of the Transkei and Ciskei', *African Studies*, vol. 18, No. 4, Sept. 1958, p.172.
- (2) Thompson, 'Co-operation and Conflict: The Zulu Kingdom and Natal', chapter VIII in Wilson and Thompson (eds.), *Oxford History of S.A.*, vol. I, p.340.
- (3) See Alan Smith, 'The Trade of Delagoa Bay as a Factor in Nguni Politics 1750-1835' in L. Thompson (ed.), *African Societies in Southern Africa*, (Ibadan, 1969), p.171.
- (4) For the relevant arguments see Gluckman, 'Rise of Zulu', p.166, and Omer Cooper, *Zulu Aftermath*, ch. 12.
- (5) Smith, 'Trade of Delagoa Bay, p.171.

Portuguese at Delagoa Bay; Smith contends that Dingiswayo considered trade so vital to his political power that he 'made all trade exclusively his prerogative' and those who disobeyed were to be executed. With articles of European manufacture Dingiswayo could win clients and collect a following.⁽⁶⁾ There is also an indication that Dingiswayo's conquests ran in a north-south pattern and overlapped the coastal route to Delagoa Bay. Smith explains:

...when Mthethwa expansion (according to Bryant) is charted, it is found that the groups he conquered, the elu Tenjeni, Tembu, Zulu, ema Mtabeni, Dhlamini, Kumalo, Dube, Cambini and Mvele, were more or less located on an axis which ran from the coast in the south-east towards the west and north. This lateral expansion could be interpreted as part of Dingiswayo's continued preoccupation with trade. Since the long distance trade with the south was gaining increasing intensity, this pattern of expansion would have afforded him greater control of the trade to the north. In this connection, it should be noted that Fynn commented that during his lifetime Dingiswayo sought to monopolize the whole of the Delagoa market.⁽⁷⁾

Dingiswayo utilized his trading ties with Delagoa Bay to forge a temporary military alliance with Maputo to defeat the rival Qwabe. With the aid of musket-carrying soldiers from Maputo Dingiswayo easily crushed the Qwabe.⁽⁸⁾ Here was a harbinger of the trade policy adopted by Dingiswayo's successor Shaka and the first of many examples in which future Zulu kings and members of the ruling elite, like Dunn, turned the connection with the Delagoa Bay hinterland to their own advantage.

The word 'empire' has been loosely applied to describe the Zulu kingdom from the rise of Shaka in 1818 until the kingdom's subjection to British rule in 1879.⁽⁹⁾ While the term 'empire' might be considered to be an albo-centric imposition on African history, it is, nevertheless

(6) *Ibid.*, p.184.

(7) *Ibid.*, p.185.

(8) *Ibid.*, p.184. The dispute between the Mthethwa and the Qwabe occurred over the refusal of the latter to surrender a pretender to the Mthethwa chieftaincy.

(9) T.O. Ranger, 'The Nineteenth Century in Southern Rhodesia', in T.O. Ranger (ed.), *Aspects of Central African History*, (London, 1968), p.118.

the most convenient label to describe the Zulu kingdom in relation to the Tsonga chiefdoms of southern Mozambique. Shaka's wars of expansion unified a vast confederation of northern Nguni chiefdoms - a confederation of peoples who spoke a common language, who were bound to each other by mythical or real patrilineal affiliations, and who demonstrated fluctuating degrees of loyalty to a common head, the king, or at least, to members of the royal family and powerful district chiefs. Shaka's wars of conquest also extended the formal authority of the Zulu empire over petty Tsonga chiefdoms inhabiting the region around the Lake St. Lucia estuary, and informal rule over large Tsonga kingdoms further north toward Delagoa Bay.⁽¹⁰⁾ The Tsonga were predominantly cultivators, much of the hinterland being unsuitable for cattle.⁽¹¹⁾ They were too weak militarily to resist the Zulu invaders and were compelled to submit to their demands for tribute and facilitate trade between Zululand and Delagoa Bay.

This exploitive network comprised several distinct yet linking processes in a descending chain of authority. Like many overlord-vassal relationships the Zulu-Tsonga combination was hydraulic, and decisions concerning the amount and type of tribute demanded emanated from the Zulu hierarchy. The Zulu king or members of the elite would command the chief of a particular Tsonga district to procure locally produced or gathered items and transport them to the king's kraals.⁽¹²⁾ It is important to note that while the Zulu elite dominated the relations of production and re-production they did not control or organize the mechanics of appropriation. Nor did the Zulu elite usually give anything in exchange, i.e. trade goods, military protection.⁽¹³⁾ Therefore the Zulu role was, in most cases, external, predatory and enforceable only with military intervention or the threat of intervention.⁽¹⁴⁾

(10) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, pp.63-64.

(11) *Ibid.*, p.64.

(12) *Ibid.*

(13) *Ibid.*

(14) Emmanuel Terray, *Marxism and Primitive Societies*, (New York, 1972). p.149. Terray says that 'What were characteristic of pre-capitalist modes of production... were non-economic bonds between producers, means of production, and sometimes also non-producers. These bonds were not only the political or ideological representation of the relations of production, but also entered into them as constituent elements. This presence clearly shows us that in these modes of production the political and ideological super-structure was dominant'.

In Tsongaland the paramount chief or district chief was responsible for mobilizing his people in the gathering of tribute. The chief organized levies of men into hunting parties if the goods required were animal products such as ivory, hides and feathers. If the tribute was agricultural produce or plant derivatives - gourds or calabashes for instance - the women and children as well as the men assisted in the collection process.⁽¹⁵⁾ This was a communal responsibility in which production was geared to exceed subsistence needs to yield the required surplus demanded by the external power.

Thus arose a tributary system that began in the 1820s and continued undisturbed, as far as can be determined, until the early 1860s. The paramount chief of Maputoland, Noziyingili, enjoyed a considerable degree of political latitude, due in large measure to the power and size of his territory. While the Zulu demanded tribute they sent gifts of cattle on occasion in recognition of Noziyingili's status.⁽¹⁶⁾

The articles most desired by the Zulu were animal products which were used to adorn the women of the king's *izigodlo* and garb the men of the *amabutho* for utilitarian and ceremonial purposes. The informant Bikwayo ka Noziwawa stated that the Tsonga sent tribute in the form of:

genet skins for the warriors' dancing girdles; blue monkey skins for the strips worn at the side of the face; leopard and otter skins for the warriors' headbands; blue cloth to be worn by the king's *isigodlo*; large red beads, and lion and leopard claws worn by chiefs, elephant tusks (for the king who would send them on to the Europeans); rhinoceros horns for making snuff boxes...beads, calabashes, gourds, etc.⁽¹⁷⁾

Shaka was the first Zulu king to exercise his authority over Tsongaland.⁽¹⁸⁾ He sent tribute-gathering *izinduna* to the St. Lucia chiefdoms,⁽¹⁹⁾ and

(15) Webb and Wrights (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.64.

(16) *Ibid.*, pp.74-70.

(17) *Ibid.*, pp.63-64.

(18) *Ibid.*, p.68.

(19) *Ibid.*, p.64.

to the more wealthy and populous Tsonga kingdom of Maputoland, then under the reign of Makasana.⁽²⁰⁾ Shaka was particularly eager to obtain pelts and feathers to distinguish as well as adorn his regiments; genet skins for dancing girdles and genet tails to decorate warriors' shields.⁽²¹⁾ Copper ingots were equally desired by Shaka primarily so his smiths could fashion 'handsome wrist-cuffs (Z.inGxota) for the king's courtiers and arm (Z.i.Songo) and neck-rings (Z-umNaka) for his wives.'⁽²²⁾ The Tsonga carried copper ingots, obtained from the interior (the Limpopo watershed) to Shaka's royal kraal at Bulwayo, and later to Mpande's Nodwengu kraal.⁽²³⁾ The collection of Tsonga tribute by the Zulu kings became a yearly occurrence. Bikwayo, a Stuart informant, stated that his father, the king's tribute-collector, would go to Tsongaland only 'after reaping and threshing took place. It was said that in summer they should be allowed to set traps and kill the bucks. The calabashes too would be dry and the seeds taken out. The beer baskets and other baskets would also have been made'.⁽²⁴⁾

Shaka's drive to extend Zulu hegemony over the hinterland appears to have grown out of a desire to monopolize the Delagoa Bay trade. He allowed the Tsonga to remain unmolested because of their usefulness as traders. By 1823 Shaka had organized trade on a large scale. Tsonga porters from Maputo carried large quantities of ivory to the Portuguese factory. The large degree of political autonomy granted to several Tsonga chiefdoms was due largely to the value attached by Shaka to their role as porters, intermediaries and commercial agents. In Maputo, Shaka's envoys did not interfere in the internal administration of the Tsonga chiefdoms and devoted their attention to matters of trade and tribute collection.⁽²⁵⁾ Although Shaka shifted his trading activities from Delagoa Bay to the British trading station at Port Natal in 1824-25 because of the superior trade goods offered, Zulu hegemony over much of the Delagoa Bay hinterland had already been well established. Moreover, Shaka laid the foundations of Zulu foreign policy in the

(20) Bryant, *Olden Times*, p.293.

(21) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.68.

(22) *Ibid.*, p.291.

(23) *Ibid.*, p.24..

(24) *Ibid.*

(25) Smith, 'Trade of Delagoa Bay', pp.186-187.

region, and he set the pattern that was to be followed by his successors in the exploitation of the Tsonga peoples.

During Dingane's reign the role of the Tsonga as intermediaries, carriers and agents took on a renewed importance as trade between Zululand and Delagoa Bay revived. The reasons for this switch back to the 'north' are attributable to the quality of Portuguese trade goods then being offered. The Portuguese traded large quantities of beads and brass ornaments for Zulu ivory. Dingane's attempts to modernize the Zulu army with firearms led him to purchase, through Tsonga middlemen, a limited number of muskets, powder, balls and caps from the Portuguese in the early 1830s.⁽²⁶⁾ Trade relations between Dingane and Port Natal deteriorated sharply when the British traders refused to supply him with guns. In 1833 the Portuguese governor at Lourenco Marques halted all arms sales to Dingane; in retaliation the Zulu king sent an expedition which annihilated the garrison at Lourenco Marques.⁽²⁷⁾ This punitive operation was an expression of Zulu determination to maintain its hegemony over an area of great strategic and economic importance.

Mpande prosecuted the tributary relationship with the Tsonga with no less vigour than his predecessors. Masoko ka Manqelo was the Tsonga coppersmith assigned to live with Mpande at the royal kraal, Nodwengu; his craftsmanship was so highly prized by the king that Masoko was rewarded with many cattle.⁽²⁸⁾ As a number of new age-set regiments were enrolled during Mpande's reign skins, pelts and feathers remained valuable tribute items for the outfitting of the *amabutho*.

Mpande also intervened to settle a succession dispute in Maputoland to his advantage. In 1854 Chief Makasana (aged ninety-six or ninety-seven) died.⁽²⁹⁾ He had named as heir his second eldest son, Noziyingili, after his first born, Hluma, had died. Makasana's brother Nonkatsha, had acquired a considerable amount of autonomy and a powerful following

(26) *Ibid.*, p.188.

(27) Mackeurtan, *Cradle Days*, p.168.

(28) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.24.
Evidence of Baleni ka Silwana.

(29) Bryant, *Olden Times*, p.293.

in Maputoland and usurped the throne. Noziyingili fled to Zululand and requested Mpande's support in reclaiming the throne. Mpande despatched seven regiments to Maputoland. The Zulu were checked by Nonkatsha's forces in a clash at Nondaka stream. Mpande rushed reinforcements to his mauled forces, and eventually Nonkatsha and many of his followers were caught and slain. Noziyingili returned to Maputoland as undisputed king and ruled from 1854 until his death in 1886.⁽³⁰⁾ By armed intervention Mpande increased his tributary grip over the Tsonga; and Noziyingili *konza'd* the Zulu kings. His throne had been saved by Zulu intervention and as long as tribute was paid annually, his position was underpinned and his power enhanced through his links with the Zulu kingdom.

Cetshwayo's victory over Mbuyazi in 1856 changed the locus of authority in the Zulu kingdom. Mpande was forced to relinquish much of his royal power and privilege; the flow of Tsonga tribute was one of these privileges which the king surrendered to the new Paramount. Cetshwayo appears to have exploited the trade network and the resources of the Delagoa Bay hinterland more effectively than any other Zulu king. His initial interest sprang from his participation as a member of the Tulwana regiment in the expedition to install Noziyingili as king of Maputoland.⁽³¹⁾ Like his predecessors, Cetshwayo collected items of tribute such as skins, pelts, feathers and calabashes, for the men of the *amabutho* and the women of the *izigodlo*. He also used the Tsonga as intermediaries in trade with the Portuguese. Bikwayo, the Stuart informant and envoy for Cetshwayo, said that 'Tsongaland was the great supplying country for Zululand...Noziyingili of course gave the largest number of things, one hundred to two hundred men being required to carry them'.⁽³²⁾ The Maputo Tsonga supplied firearms, lead pigs, caps, powder, cloth and carafes of inferior European spirits which they, in turn, obtained from the Portuguese and Banyan traders.⁽³³⁾

In the late 1860s and 1870s the coastal route north to Delagoa Bay assumed an even greater strategic and political importance for

(30) *Ibid.*, p.306.

(31) *Ibid.*

(32) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.68.

(33) *Ibid.*, pp.67-68.

Cetshwayo with the introduction of firearms. Control of the coast from Zululand to Lourenco Marques was crucial for it was the only route through which significant quantities of firearms could reach the kingdom. The governments in colonial Natal and the boers of the South African Republic effectively barred any large scale trans-shipment of firearms across their borders into Zululand. Thus, Cetshwayo, with the advice and assistance of his agent, John Dunn, secured the coastal route in order to facilitate the flow of firearms into the kingdom.

Cetshwayo was the only Zulu king who was successful in circumventing British and boer restrictions on the sale of firearms. Furthermore, Cetshwayo enhanced his personal authority and prestige among his people for he, through John Dunn, had an almost exclusive monopoly on the firearms trade and, therefore, control of the distribution of guns to his subjects. It is clear that Cetshwayo turned trade with Delagoa Bay to his political advantage and that the continuation of Zulu hegemony over much of the hinterland was a recognizable feature of his foreign policy throughout his career as Paramount and King. Morris's unfortunate statement that 'Cesthwayo ruled from month to month with no firm policy' and that 'no rudder steered the Zulu ship of state'⁽³⁴⁾ must be dismissed for what it is - a gross albo-centric distortion of African political acumen.

Dunn's contact with the Tsonga was also extensive. He frequently conducted large scale hunting expeditions in the petty chiefdoms surrounding Lake St. Lucia. The Tsonga *konza'd* Dunn because he gave the local inhabitants large quantities of game, keeping the hides and tusks of ivory and hippopotamus teeth for himself. Dunn remarked on one particular expedition in 1864 that:

(34) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.253.

The finest bag I ever made was one morning before ten o'clock - twenty three sea cows. One would think that, with all these carcasses, there would be a great waste, but not a bit was lost. The natives around St. Lucia Bay used to come down in hundreds and carry every particle of meat away...That season I killed to my own gun two hundred and three sea cows, besides a lot of other game, and was only away for under three months from the day of starting.(35)

Dunn's role as purveyor of firearms was essentially that of middleman-agent. In this particular instance Dunn may be characterized as a mercantile outrider. Merchants based in Durban provided the necessary capital and credit for Dunn to receive firearm shipments; and Dunn, through his connection with Cetshwayo, important Zulu chiefs and his Portuguese and Banyan agents took delivery of firearms and arranged for Tsonga porters to transport them south into Zululand. Cetshwayo paid Dunn for the guns in cattle, which were then sent to Durban and sold to reimburse the merchants.⁽³⁶⁾

The importance of the hinterland to the Zulu kingdom as a source of raw materials and as an access route to Lourenco Marques demanded the establishment of an administrative agency to collect the tribute and regulate trade. This agency comprised royal envoys⁽³⁷⁾ a distinct and important class of 'imperial administrators' whose sole task it was to visit the Tsonga chiefdoms and specify the nature and quantity of the tribute demanded by Zulu kings and chiefs. The tribute-collectors resided with the Zulu kings at the royal kraals when not in the hinterland, and they were given wives and cattle for their services. Shaka's most important collector was Sidhlebe ka Matula.⁽³⁸⁾ Mpande

(35) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.26.

(36) Theophilus Shepstone Papers (Pietermaritzburg, Natal Archives), vol. 66. Reverend O.C. Oftebro to T. Shepstone, 28 Nov. 1876. Oftebro was a missionary in Zululand and a reliable informer for Shepstone. In this letter Oftebro informs Shepstone that Dunn was taking 146 royal cattle to the Durban market for Cetshwayo. He assumed that Dunn would sell the cattle and purchase firearms. Oftebro remarks that 'He (Dunn) is much liked, you know, by the merchants (arms dealers) because he is a good customer.

(37) Webb and Wrights (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.63.

(38) *Ibid.*, p.68.

is recorded as having had at least ten collectors, and Cetshwayo ten messengers as well. ⁽³⁹⁾ Thus, the collection of tribute from the Tsonga chiefdoms became a well-organized political and economic activity; and its administrators, the tribute collectors, arose as a group who enjoyed special privilege and status in Zulu society.

Zulu conquests in the hinterland fostered attitudes of contempt for the subject Tsonga. In order to justify their conquest the Zulu came to look upon them as their cultural inferiors. The Zulu referred to these peoples, particularly the petty southern chiefdoms, as the *Amarubu* ('liars' or 'deceitful persons'); perhaps their (Tsonga) reputation for being shrewd traders had implied connotations of deception and moral debasement. The Tsonga were also called *amanh lwenga* (beggars) which Webb and Wright define as 'a term of contempt, connoting "worthless foreigners", applied by the Zulu to the Tsonga and neighbouring peoples living to the north-east of Zululand'. ⁽⁴⁰⁾ The Zulu envoys felt a sense of superiority as the official representatives of the Zulu king. They were fed and housed at the expense of the Tsonga chief and his people. They would dismantle the fences of the particular Tsonga kraal where they happened to be staying for firewood and took other liberties with the local inhabitants. ⁽⁴¹⁾ Bikwayo revealed the manner in which collectors approached the Tsonga for tribute:

The persons who gave various things were not presented with anything by the Zulu king. The demand used to be made of the Tsonga king, who would send out men of his own to collect and bring to us, we in the meantime having cattle killed for us and being given food. We would not collect ourselves. And when the things were ready the Tsonga king would furnish men to accompany us with the things to Zululand, they acting as the carriers. ⁽⁴²⁾

The Zulu-Tsonga tributary system continued undisturbed from the mid-1820s until the time when Cetshwayo assumed the paramountcy of the kingdom in 1857-58. All this changed in the early 1860s when a number

(39) *Ibid.*, pp.65-68.

(40) *Ibid.*, p.73.

(41) *Ibid.*, p.64.

(42) *Ibid.*, p.68.

of factors had combined to disrupt the network of trade and tribute. First, the Gaza kingdom, which lay to the north of Maputoland, from 1858 to 1862 endured a protracted civil war between two rival sons of Soshangane - Mzila and Mawewe.⁽⁴³⁾ The former turned to the Portuguese for military assistance and the latter to the Swazi kingdom. Mzilá defeated Mawewe, who fled to northern Swaziland for protection. He continued to harass his brother with guerilla-type raids in the early 1870s. Noziyingili aligned his forces with the Swazis through marriage and had succeeded in defeating Mzila's allies by the early 1870s.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Second, this political upheaval coincided with ecological disasters. The *Mbethe* or *Ngongoni* famine of 1862-1863 caused great suffering in most of south-eastern Africa, particularly the Delagoa Bay hinterland. Lack of ground water, combined with a severe lung-sickness (bovine-pleuropneumonia) epidemic, destroyed most of the cattle in the country; and a smallpox epidemic ravaged the human population.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Endemic warfare, drought, famine and epidemics drastically depleted the resources of the hinterland. These disasters reduced not only the numbers of people involved in gathering tribute-products destined for Zululand but also the amount of time allotted to collection. In addition, thirty years of systematic Zulu exploitation of the fauna of the Delagoa Bay hinterland, along with the activities of the ivory-seekers of Lourenco Marques, had contributed to the scarcity of animal products.⁽⁴⁶⁾ However, the demands of white entrepreneurs in Natal for Tsonga labour grew in the 1860s. This forced the Zulu kingdom to review its established tributary links with the hinterland and readjust the 'form' of tribute.

(ii) Colonial Intrusion

...it will certainly be wrong to look to the Natal kaffirs to get us out of the difficulty for they are themselves producers; we must rather look to the natives beyond our borders, but then there must be peace amongst them.⁽⁴⁷⁾

(43) Harries, 'Labour Migration', p.62.

(44) Ranger, 'Rhodesia', in Ranger (ed.), *Aspects*, p.124.

(45) Harries, 'Labour Migration', pp.62-65.

(46) *Ibid.*, p.45.

(47) *Natal Witness*, 26 Aug. 1870.

Thus wrote Theophilus Shepstone, Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, in reply to white settler demands for cheap African labour in 1870. This passage reveals Shepstone's proposed solution to the 'labour question' in Natal and, at the same time, the inherent risks involved in recruiting black labour from independent African states and chiefdoms.

By 1860 the production of sugar cane was considered the most lucrative and adaptable crop for Natal's settler agriculturists to develop.⁽⁴⁸⁾ However, sugar cultivation required relatively large amounts of capital, technological expertise and plantation type agricultural techniques of cultivation. But cheap, plentiful and 'reliable' labour was difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. The Natal Nguni were relatively self-sufficient within Shepstone's reserve system. They normally produced more than enough grain to meet their own needs and sold their surplus on the open market. The Natal African entered wage-labour for the settler community only on occasion to acquire the 'artificial' wants offered by European society or, in a lean harvest year, to pay their annual hut-taxes.⁽⁴⁹⁾ Therefore, the Natal Nguni were considered to be 'unreliable' workers and the settlers thought that Africans were shielded by Shepstone's administration of African affairs.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Thus, the settlers turned to Indian indentures in the 1860s as the solution to the 'labour question'.⁽⁵¹⁾ However, the disruption of Indian labour to Natal intensified settler criticism of the reserve system; this pressure from the white planters and Shepstone's own plans for exploiting the natural wealth and labour resources of the northern interior were the most substantial reasons for the colonial government's decision to recruit black labourers from the Delagoa Bay hinterland.

(48) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.80.

(49) See Bundy, 'The Emergence and Decline of a South African Peasantry', pp.369-388.

(50) H. Tinker, *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas 1830-1920*, (London, 1974), pp.28-30. Tinker's study of indenture systems has shown that Natal was but one of a dozen British colonies involved in this process of contract immigration. He states that the 'existence of this class of overseas Indians is the direct consequence of western, mainly British, economic exploitation of the raw materials of the tropics. It was their labour, along with British capital and expertise, which created the overseas wealth of Britain'.

(51) See Ballard, 'The Role of Tributary Labour in the Zulu Political Economy, 1865-1879', pp.57-73.

The architect of African administration in Natal was Theophilus Shepstone. While serving as Diplomatic Agent to the 'natives' he had persuaded or coerced approximately two-thirds of Natal's Black population into locations by 1850.⁽⁵²⁾ Initially, Shepstone endeavoured to 'civilize' the Natal Nguni by promoting European agricultural and commercial techniques. However, Shepstone's improvement schemes were largely unrealized owing to the parsimonious nature of the metropolitan and colonial exchequers.⁽⁵³⁾

The foundations of the location system rested on the support given it by the Colonial Office because it provided security at minimal expense. The cornerstone of Shepstone's power over African affairs lay in the legal framework governing the reserves. Under the strictures of Ordinance 3 of 1849, Nguni Customary Law became a separate entity from Roman-Dutch law. This legal contrivance, like its founder, was immune to the laws enacted by the settlers' representatives in the Legislative Council.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Guest gives an accurate description of African Customary Law as devised by Shepstone:

Shepstone proceeded to conduct his administration through an artificially revived tribal structure, in which fragmentary clans were grouped together and appointed or 'unborn' chiefs were installed over those tribes which lacked an hereditary ruler. Under this system Natal's African population was subject to its own traditional tribal law, in so far as it was not repugnant to humanitarian considerations. This law was administered by the chiefs themselves, with the assistance of 'white Native magistrates' and with the right of appeal to the Secretary for Native Affairs, in his capacity as 'induna' to the Supreme Chief, who was the Lieutenant Governor of the colony.⁽⁵⁵⁾

Within several years of its inception the reserve system was subjected to virulent criticism from Natal's settler community.

(52) J.R. Sullivan, *The Native Policy of Sir Theophilus Shepstone*, (Johannesburg, 1928), pp.31-75.

(53) Welsh, *The Roots of Segregation*, p.177.

(54) *Ibid.*, pp.16-18.

(55) William R. Guest, *Langalibalele: The Crisis in Natal, 1873-1875*, (Durban, Department of History and Political Science, University of Natal, Research Monograph No. 2., 1976), p.18.

Settler opposition officially manifested itself in the 'Report of the Commission of 1852-53'. The conclusions reached by the Commission set the scenario for the bitter debate between Shepstone and the settlers. The Commissioners recommended that the size of the reserves be substantially reduced in the hope of forcing the Natal Nguni to leave their overcrowded lands in search of work. The report concluded that these new units should be situated evenly throughout the colony so that all settlers could draw conveniently on the black labour reservoirs.⁽⁵⁶⁾ In the colonists' view the labour problem was synonymous with the 'native problem'.⁽⁵⁷⁾

The '1852-53 Commission Report' reflected opposition to the location policy and was enshrined by the settlers as a standing symbol of their protest as long as African administration under Shepstone remained unaltered.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Neither Shepstone nor his colleagues on the Executive Council were satisfied with the location system but the Natal Executive and the Colonial Office were firm in their belief that it would be unwise, even dangerous, to risk sacrificing security to improve the labour supply. In refusing a settler's request for location labour Shepstone explained,

the natives of this district are savages and therefore fickle and uncertain in their opinions and feelings, and their rules and motives of action cannot be judged by the principles applicable to civilized men. It is not reasonable to expect that a nation of hunters and warriors should at once become steady labourers... I am to add that in the opinion of His Honour, Lt. Gov. Pine it would not be prudent to engage in any work requiring a constant or uninterrupted supply of labour, relying solely upon that which can be obtained from the natives.⁽⁵⁹⁾

(56) Proceedings and Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Past and Present State of the Kaffirs in the District of Natal, and to report upon their future government, and to suggest such arrangements as will tend to secure the peace and welfare of the District...1852-53, 7 parts (Pietermaritzburg, 1852-53). Hereafter cited as 'Commission Report 1852-53'.

(57) Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.35.

(58) *Ibid.*, p.33.

(59) S.N.A., 1/8/3.

In 1856 a duly elected Legislative Council was created in Natal. This provided a forum for Shepstone's opposition to air their views through their elected representatives.⁽⁶⁰⁾ The majority of elected members condemned the reserve system on almost every conceivable moral and political point as a means of forcing the Natal Nguni into wage labour. The Legislative Council sought to undermine Shepstone's position by attempting to legislate for Africans. In 1858 they complained in a resolution 'that the separation of African affairs in the administrative system introduced double government and divided action' and the Council proposed measures that 'would separate the kaffir and his family from the evils of tribal association'.⁽⁶¹⁾

In the mid-1850s experiments with sugar cane in Natal had proved successful and its production was actively encouraged by the British government. Increased demands for African labour to expand sugar cultivation led to an escalation of settler attacks on Shepstone and the reserves. These persistent efforts to alter the direction of African administration were largely unsuccessful. The Colonial Office was loathe to tamper with a system that stressed security and economy.⁽⁶²⁾

Frustrated by their failures to obtain cheap black labour at the expense of Shepstone's reserve system, Natal planters explored the possibilities of importing contracted labour from outside the African continent. One of the most promising schemes was the importation of Indian indentures - this was advocated by the British High Commissioner in Cape Town, Sir George Grey. Grey pointed to the Indian labourer as the key to the prosperity of the Mauritian sugar planters.⁽⁶³⁾

(60) Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.38.

(61) *Ibid.*, p.35. Welsh makes the point that there was a narrow distinction between the economic and moral arguments used against the reserve system. The settlers sometimes supported legislation that employed a moral argument to achieve an economic end. For example, the Legislative Council unsuccessfully proposed that 'All kaffirs should be ordered to go decently clothed. This measure would at once tend to increase the number of labourers, because many would be obliged to work to procure the means of buying clothing'.

(62) *Ibid.*, p.41.

(63) Correspondence between Sir George Grey and the Secretary of State on affairs of the Cape Colony, Natal and adjacent territories, (Cape Colony Bluebook of April, 1857), pp.28-29.

From 1856 to 1858 the Natal Executive and Legislative Councils worked in common cause to obtain Indian labourers.⁽⁶⁴⁾ In June 1858 the Court of Directors of the East India Company gave official sanction to Natal's application. A spate of legislation relating to passage costs, periods of indenture and contractual obligations was passed by the Council in 1859. Law 13 of 1859 stated that Labour Recruiting Licences had to be obtained from the Lieutenant-Governor's Office.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Two other supporting bills followed the Eastern Emigration bill. The Public Law No. 14 of 1859 provided for the introduction of Indian recruits at the expense of the Natal government for their assignment under voluntary contracts to individual employers.⁽⁶⁶⁾ As a further incentive to individual initiative the Legislative Council passed Private Law No. 15 of 1859 which enabled private individuals to obtain labourers at their own expense provided that they could satisfy the Natal authorities that their finances could meet the introduction costs.⁽⁶⁷⁾

The recruitment programme was a success from the beginning. Between November 1860 and June 1861, 1,593 Indians entered Natal.⁽⁶⁸⁾ By the end of 1866, approximately 6,445 Indian indentures had entered the colony. Their labours were largely responsible for the sugar industry becoming firmly established despite the vicissitudes of a major economic crisis.⁽⁶⁹⁾

(64) Selected Documents presented to the Legislative Council, No. 9. of 1858. Lt-Governor Scott to Secretary of State, 6 Aug. 1857. These licences specified the origin, destination and costs of labourers.

(65) N.G.G., 'Schedule A of Law 13 of 1859'.

(66) *Ibid.*, 'Schedule A of Law 14 of 1859'.

(67) *Ibid.*, 'Schedule A of Law 15 of 1859'.

(68) General Report of the Emigration Commissioners, 1861, (Pietermaritzburg, Natal Archives).

(69) Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.166.

The economy of Natal was becoming increasingly linked and integrated with that of western Europe by 1860. This linkage and interdependence is apparent from the impact of the capital investment crisis of the mid-1860s which adversely affected the sugar industry. An 'investment boom' coincided with the disruption of cotton supplies to British mills during the American Civil War (1861-1865). As a result, British investors pumped capital into Indian and Egyptian cotton production to relieve the shortage. The Natal sugar industry also benefited from the boom as investors and British banking houses supplied funds to sugar planters. The end of the American Civil War in 1865 triggered a plunge in investment as American cotton once again flowed to Europe. The retrenchment of British capital forced many large loan-dependent sugar planters into insolvency.⁽⁷⁰⁾ Indian emigration which was financed in large part by loans was discontinued in 1865 and was not resumed until 1874.⁽⁷¹⁾

The temporary cessation of Indian emigration was not wholly attributable to the state of the world economy, which was recovering by 1869. The re-introduction of indentures was delayed by the British Indian government until an investigation into the alleged maltreatment of Indians by white settlers had been carried out to their satisfaction.⁽⁷²⁾ Lieutenant-Governor Keate ordered an investigation into the list of grievances: thus was born the 'Coolie Commission' of 1872.⁽⁷³⁾

The commissioners, cognizant of the importance of a renewed supply of labour to the sugar industry, recommended the correction of the more obvious abuses such as flogging, fines for sickness and inadequate medical services and facilities. The Legislative Council passed legislation embodying the recommendations of the 'Coolie Commission' in Law No. 12 of 1872.⁽⁷⁴⁾ The Indian government was eventually satisfied with Natal's attempts to remedy the more blatant abuses and lifted the embargo on Indian re-emigration in 1873.⁽⁷⁵⁾

(70) M.F. Bitensky, 'The Economic Development of Natal, 1843-1885', (unpublished M.A. thesis, London University, 1955), pp.217-218 and 238-240.

(71) N.G.G., 1873, pp.137 and 334.

(72) *Ibid.*, 1871, pp.447-450.

(73) *Ibid.*, 1873, p.358.

(74) *Sessional Papers of the Natal Legislative Council*, No. 1 of 1872, 'Report of the Coolie Commission.

(75) N.G.G., 1873, pp.137 and 334.

The period between the economic recovery of Natal in 1869 and the re-introduction of Indians in 1874 was a period of serious, if not severe, labour shortage and dislocation. Indian labour had served to establish sugar cultivation, but economic pursuits other than sugar still had to rely on and compete for African labour. The majority of settlers had never reconciled themselves to accepting Shepstone's reserve system as a *fait accompli*. The Secretary for Native Affairs enjoyed a brief respite from settler criticism during the depression years (1866-1868). This was due more to a dwindling demand for Indian and African labour than to settler acceptance of Indian indentures as the solution to the 'labour question'. The economic recovery in 1869 stimulated demands for cheap non-white labour. When this labour was not forthcoming in sufficient numbers the settlers and their political spokesmen resumed their offensive against Shepstone and the 'native' administration in a determined effort to extract black labour for the expanding economy. (76)

In 1869 Shepstone's control of African affairs was threatened when the elected members of the Legislative Council attempted to pass a bill for the amalgamation of the offices of Colonial Secretary and Secretary for Native Affairs. Its object was clearly '...the transfer of the control of the Natives from the Crown to the local legislature...', so that '...a still larger quota of money should be contributed than at present for public purposes by the Natives, and that they should supply with certainty and at a cheap rate the manual labour required by the colonists...'. (77) Shepstone survived this assault on his authority because it ran counter to the prevailing policy of the Colonial Office which desired strong executive control over African affairs.

Settlers were also angered by the siphoning of Natal's African labour to the newly opened diamond fields along the western reaches of the Vaal in the late 1860s and early 1870s. There was strong incentive among the Natal Nguni to seek employment at the diggings because remuneration

(76) Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.180.

(77) Guest, *Langalibalele*, p.121

was attractive. In addition to a variety of manufactured goods, Africans were eager to be paid for their labours with firearms, the most prized possession to be had.⁽⁷⁸⁾ Bitensky estimates that well over ten thousand Natal Africans found work in the diggings.⁽⁷⁹⁾

White settler claims that there was a chronic shortage of African labour appeared constantly in the journals, letters and memorials of nineteenth century Natal colonists. In many cases, settlers were prone to gross exaggerations in their estimates of labour shortages, and their statements must be weighed with care. But, during the period between Natal's economic revival in 1868 and the lifting of the ban on Indian immigration in 1874, the evidence would suggest strongly that there was indeed a critical shortage of cheap (translated black) labour. In 1874 crops were rotting on the ground according to the report of the Wragg Commission.⁽⁸⁰⁾ The sugar planters of the coastal districts of Alexandra, Durban, Inanda and Tugela were particularly hard hit and appealed to the government for relief.⁽⁸¹⁾ Ironically, Shepstone came to the aid of the planters by employing the system of *isibhalo* - a system of forced labour normally used by the Natal government to draft levies of Africans from the reserves to labour on public projects. This institution was extremely unpopular among both Natal Africans and settlers because *isibhalo* drained black labour away from private employers into the service of the colonial government.⁽⁸²⁾ However, in 1874 Shepstone considered the labour shortage so critical that he instructed the district magistrates of the coastal districts to summon *isibhalo* labour to harvest the sugar crop:

His Excellency requests you to summon before you all the chiefs and headmen under your jurisdiction, and inform them of this state of things; the practice of combined effort to prevent the gifts of the season from being lost for want of being reaped is familiar to the natives as between each other, and the Supreme Chief (Lt.-Governor)

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- (78) Shula Marks and Anthony Atmore, 'Firearms in Southern Africa: A Survey', *Journal of African History*, XII, 4 (1971), pp.517-530.
 (79) Bitensky, 'Economic Development', p.217.
 (80) Kondapi, '*Indians Overseas 1838-1949*', (London, 1951), p.21. The Wragg Commission information contained in 'Brief of Instructions issued to the Delegates of the Government of India to the Conference (1926)', p.2. Despatch dated 26 Aug. 1873.
 (81) Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.123.
 (82) *Natal Mercury*, 4 Mar. 1864.

wishes it to be impressed upon them that the practice should be considered by them to be a duty to the white man also, under whose government the natives enjoy so much protection and so many privileges.(83)

Intensified criticism of Shepstone's administration occurred at a time when political and economic factors combined to limit and even diminish the available supply of African and Indian labour. Shepstone displayed an amazing resilience to settler attempts to destroy or compromise his powers as Secretary for Native Affairs, and with it the reserve system. Yet Shepstone responded to the 'labour question' with a solution that was supported by the Legislative Council; his plan was to import Tsonga migrants from their territorial homeland which lay between Delagoa Bay and northern Zululand.⁽⁸⁴⁾ Correspondence between Shepstone and John Dunn in 1863 indicates that the Secretary for Native Affairs considered the Tsonga people a viable source of labour for Natal.⁽⁸⁵⁾ The Legislative Council followed Shepstone's lead and passed Law 13 of 1859 which provided legal entry for Tsonga migrants on three year contracts. Shepstone prevailed upon Mpande to allow Tsonga labourers through Zululand on their way to Natal.⁽⁸⁶⁾ However, a number of complications doomed this early recruitment scheme to failure. First, Cetshwayo, Mpande's son and heir-apparent, was the *de facto* ruler of a large portion of Zululand by 1863. Cetshwayo's acquisition of political power gave him control of key economic resources, one of these being the tribute collected from Tsongaland. Not wanting to appear un-cooperative with the Natal government, Cetshwayo relayed a message to Shepstone, through Dunn, promising to restrain the Zulu from molesting the Tsonga. However, Cetshwayo was reluctant to allow the Tsonga to migrate freely to Natal for fear of losing already diminished manpower that procured the annual tribute. Dunn's letter to Shepstone indirectly reveals Cetshwayo's empty promises of co-operation and feigned helplessness in protecting Tsonga travellers from the rapacity of his subjects:

(83) S.N.A., 1/8/10. Instructions from Shepstone to magistrates Inanda, Tugela, Alexandra and Durban, 12 Jan. 1874. Also quoted in Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.123.

(84) Etherington, 'The Rise of the Kholwa', p.61.

(85) S.N.A., 1/1/13 of 1863. Dunn to Shepstone, 8 July 1863.

(86) N.G.G., 1863, p.280.

Cetshwayo has promised to do all in his power to assist in the people coming safely through the country, but it is true enough what he says, that he daren't be too strict with his people as they would leave him and go to Natal; there is a great jealousy amongst the people in the country here, about the Amatongas being allowed to go through as a free nation. It is hardly to be wondered as the Zulus until lately got their chief supply of cat and other skins from the Amatongas, but since the Amatongas have taken to work the supply has dropped.(87).

Cetshwayo's natural reluctance to aid the further disintegration of the tributary system was matched by an aversion on the part of the Tsonga to being yoked to a three-year indenture contract. This measure was adopted by the Legislative Council to ensure labour reliability and applied to all 'foreign' labourers entering the service of Natal employers.⁽⁸⁸⁾ Dunn informed Shepstone of his failure to enlist any significant number of Tsonga to work in Natal:

They wish to be allowed to come out in small bodies of from six to ten and work whenever they like. Now I do not think this would do the labour question much good as they generally go to those that least require them and the planters would not be benefited by them. They also object to being bound for three years.(89).

The threat to Zulu-Tsonga tributary relations posed by Natal's capitalist economy never materialized in the 1860s. Nevertheless, the amount of tribute decreased during this decade. This process continued in the 1870s with the lure of the diamond fields attracting many Tsonga from their increasingly impoverished land.

With the recovery of the Natal economy and the increasing impoverishment of the hinterland Tsonga labourers trickled into the colony in response to new opportunities. Planters and agriculturists were pleased that the Tsonga were coming into Natal to work but there were problems concerning the sometimes perilous passage of migrants through Zululand. This had the effect of discouraging a regular supply of labour. The

(87) S.N.A., 1/1/13, Dunn to Shepstone, 8 July 1863.

(88) N.G.G., 1863, p.372.

(89) S.N.A., 1/1/13, Dunn to Shepstone, 27 Sept. 1863.

Natal Executive was also concerned about security for no system existed to control the migrants coming into the colony. Both the colonists and the Natal government wanted sufficient labour and legal controls on their employment and movement in Natal. With this in mind, a select committee of the Legislative Council submitted a report in 1872 recommending that a migrant labour system be created with adequate recruiting and security controls.⁽⁹⁰⁾ Shepstone supported the committee's proposals and attached a memorandum to the report, (entitled the 'Supervision and Control of Native labourers from Inland Tribes').⁽⁹¹⁾ His approval was well received by the Legislative Council, as his memo testified:

From what I have seen of the effect of private efforts of planters to secure the services of these people (Tsonga) by means of paid agents, each for his own employer, I am strongly of the opinion that the government should act paternally towards them, as it does toward Indian immigrants, and take charge of them the moment they enter the colony by means of officers appointed for that purpose.⁽⁹²⁾

In addition to his support, the memorandum explicitly stated Shepstone's programme for regulating the African migrants once inside the boundaries of Natal. The importance that Shepstone attached to security requirements in the reserves was now extended to include black migrants. Shepstone also advocated measures in which the District Magistrates and white employers would co-operate in discouraging desertion and in securing additional revenue through taxation.⁽⁹³⁾

While Shepstone sympathised with the settlers' need for cheap black labour, security against the threat of African rebellion and unrest remained the determinant in his administration of African affairs. The

(90) Selected Papers presented to the Legislative Council, No. 12, 13 Nov. 1872. Hereafter abbreviated as L.C.

(91) *Ibid.*

(92) *Ibid.*, p.7. Shepstone's memorandum of 13 Nov. 1872.

(93) *Ibid.*

Secretary for Native Affairs supported a trans-territorial migrant labour system to avoid further settler sallies against the reserves which, in his eyes, would erode the security that the reserves ensured. Shepstone, once committed to importing African migrants, felt compelled to extend his control over them both within and without Natal's boundaries. Etherington explains the motivation behind Shepstone's pre-occupation with regulating the African populace:

Above all, Shepstone worked to maintain external and internal security. It little profited a servant of the Crown in southern Africa if he protected African land rights, provided cheap labour, and civilized the heathen, but did not at the same time avoid expensive military operations. His tenure in office depended on keeping the frontier quiet and the colony secure against rebellion. In the pursuit of the first of these goals, Shepstone relied on adventurous diplomacy. (94)

In order to understand fully the regularization of an extra-territorial migrant labour system in Natal one must appreciate the external political complexities at work. By the late 1860s the British colonial authorities in Natal were expressing an interest in extending British influence into the Delagoa Bay hinterland. Shepstone supplied the motivation for establishing a British presence in the region immediately south of the Portuguese port of Lourenco Marques on Inyack Island. (95) Shepstone saw in a British acquisition of territory in the hinterland an opportunity to thwart moves by the South African Republic to secure an outlet to the sea and to secure Tsonga labour for Natal. However, the Natal authorities were fully aware that the Zulu were *de facto* rulers of the hinterland, and not the Portuguese colonial government. Natal's Lieutenant Governor Keate confirmed this view in correspondence with Cape Governor and High Commissioner Sir Henry Barkly:

(94) Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', p.62.

(95) 'Mpande: Extracts and Letters relating to Mpande (1858-1871)', (K.C.L.), File 13691, No. 5. Extract of letter from Lt. Governor Keate to Sir Henry Barkly, 17 Dec. 1871.

With regard to the exercise of Portuguese authority south of that island (Inyack) it should not be lost sight of that in point of fact the whole of the country extending from the northern borders of Natal along the sea coast as far as the southern shore of Delagoa Bay, including Inyack Island is under the Supreme Native Chieftainship of Panda the Zulu Chief, whose authority is now exercised by his son Cetewayo. Nozingili the Tonga Chief whose territories lie along the south coast of Delagoa Bay from Point Culatto, to where the country of the Chief of the Amahlamini, Umzila, commences, is a subordinate chief, tributary to Cetewayo, though in the internal affairs of his own country independent of Cetewayo's control. (96)

Shepstone and Natal officials realized that the systematic and uninterrupted procurement and transportation of Tsongalabourers hinged on the establishment of an accord with the Zulu kingdom. There is evidence to suggest that Tsonga labourers and petty traders were harassed, robbed and intimidated by Zulu when passing through Zululand to and from Natal. (97) What Shepstone needed was an opportunity to negotiate with Cetshwayo to settle a number of outstanding issues, the unrestricted passage of Tsonga labourers being among them. The death of Mpande in September or October 1872 gave Shepstone an opportunity to bargain with the heir-apparent. The chance for diplomatic discussions was provided when Cetshwayo extended an invitation to Shepstone to attend his coronation and bestow the British government's approval. (98)

Cetshwayo's power had increased since the unstable years immediately following the 1856 civil war, but a number of problems still plagued him at the time of the coronation. The most dangerous problem centred around an unresolved boundary dispute with the South African Republic in the Blood River district. (99) The threat to Zulu sovereignty was compounded further by the informal alliance that existed between the Transvaal boers and the traditional enemies of the Zulu in Swaziland. (100)

(96) *Ibid.*

(97) S.N.A., 1/1/13. Saville to S.N.A., 24 June 1863.

(98) B.P.P., C.-1137 Aug. 1873, 'Report of the Expedition to Install Cetewayo', pp.4-24. Hereafter cited as 'Installation Report'.

(99) Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', pp.184-188.

(100) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.68-69.

A third factor contributing to Cetshwayo's uneasiness was the existence of two potential dynastic rivals. These were the royal princes Hamu and Zibhebhu, half-brother and cousin respectively; each commanded large and powerful followings in northern Zululand.⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Cetshwayo was well aware of his weaknesses and was anxious to conclude an alliance with Natal. His aim was to strengthen his claim to legitimacy and to enrol British support against the South African Republic.

Shepstone was aware of Cetshwayo's weaknesses and sought to wring certain political and economic concessions from the new King in return for Natal's recognition of his paramountcy. On 1 September 1873, Shepstone 'installed' Cetshwayo as King of Zululand on behalf of the British Crown.⁽¹⁰²⁾ The importance of this occasion was not the actual recognition of Cetshwayo but the intensive negotiations on the items listed on Shepstone's agenda. The subjects discussed and agreed upon were as follows:

1. The relations of Natal with the Zulus, which should be continued on the same footing on which they had been heretofore under Panda's reign,
2. The new laws to be proclaimed by me (Shepstone) on Cetshwayo's installation, the full particulars of which, as given hereafter, were fully agreed upon at this meeting and which amount to a kind of Bill of Rights,
3. The position of the missionaries and their converts in Zululand,
4. The introduction of labourers from beyond, through Zululand, by means of an organized system of resting or feeding places.⁽¹⁰³⁾

Cetshwayo's failure to persuade Shepstone to commit the British government to an alliance against the South African Republic was the only point not agreed upon. Although the worsening relations between Zululand and the Transvaal prompted the most heated arguments, the discussions concerning the passage of Tsonga labourers occupied more of the

(101) *Ibid.*, p.41.

(102) *B.P.P.*, C.-1137 Aug. 1873, 'Installation Report', p.14.

(103) *Ibid.*

negotiators' time than any other topic, lasting two full days. (104)

Shepstone began the negotiations by explaining Natal's need for Tsonga labourers. He then proceeded to impress upon Cetshwayo the desirability of establishing recognized corridors of transit along which rest stations and stores of provisions would be conveniently placed to house and feed the migrants while *en route*. Shepstone went on to explain that the Natal planters did not expect 'unemployed Zulus' to work in Natal, but that the Natal government did expect 'that no obstacle to reaching Natal through Zululand would be placed in the way of members of tribes beyond, who were not only willing but anxious to earn wages by labour, and that on their return to their own country these labourers would be protected from being robbed of the wages they had thus earned'. (105)

Cetshwayo countered Shepstone's arguments with several objections. First, Zulu who lived along the coast route were plagued by Tsonga travellers who raided gardens and mealie patches in search of food. Second, Cetshwayo expressed deep reservations over the erection of rest-stations and boarding-houses in Zulu territory for fear of an influx of Europeans bent on occupying land. (106)

According to Shepstone's own account, he reaffirmed the determination of the Natal government to procure Tsonga labourers, and assured that the implementation of a European supervised labour transit system would benefit the Zulu:

I (Shepstone) explained that this slow and uncertain mode of passage through Zululand was objectionable in every respect; that the planters wanted thousands... but that it would be a great burden to the Zulus to feed so large a number of travellers; that the planters did not want to impose this burden upon them; they would provide the food themselves; that they wanted a route established by which a stream of labourers might travel both ways with the certainty of being protected and fed without dispersing among, or otherwise inconveniencing the Zulus; that but one white man would have charge of

(104) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.49-50.

(105) *B.P.P.*, C.-1137 Aug. 1873, 'Installation Report', p.20.

(106) *Ibid.*

each route; that the duties of the white man would be to see that food was always to be had by travellers at these stations.(107)

Cetshwayo eventually consented to Shepstone's proposals for establishing a migrant labour corridor along the coast. The choice of who was to take charge of this apparatus was the subject of a sharp debate between Cetshwayo and Shepstone. The Zulu king insisted that his white adviser, John Dunn, be put in charge. It is logical to assume that Dunn had intimated to the king his desire to be given preference over other candidates. Dunn was present with Shepstone and Cetshwayo during the negotiations and Shepstone knew from his correspondence with Dunn in 1863 that the opportunist hunter-trader wanted to control a lucrative labour monopoly. In 1871 Natal sugar planters had formed a labour league and paid Dunn a retainer fee of £100 per annum, plus five shillings for every Tsonga migrant transported through Zululand to Natal.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Dunn, however, had soon fallen from grace with the league when its members found that he was concluding other labour contracts.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ This infuriated league members because it reduced the number of Tsonga recruited for the league planters. Moreover, Shepstone was reluctant to grant Dunn the labour concession.⁽¹¹⁰⁾

The reasons for Shepstone's reluctance are quite obvious: the Secretary for Native Affairs was alarmed at Dunn's influence over Cetshwayo.⁽¹¹¹⁾ The Zulu king had grown to rely on Dunn since his arrival in Zululand in 1858. In return for Dunn's valuable services Cetshwayo had lavished land and cattle on his favourite, so that by 1873 Dunn had become one of the most powerful chiefs in Zululand.⁽¹¹²⁾ Shepstone would have preferred someone more amenable to his control, but in the face of Cetshwayo's unyielding stance he agreed to appoint Dunn as labour agent.⁽¹¹³⁾

John Dunn was the best equipped individual to run the migrant labour machinery. Through his support of Cetshwayo Dunn had acquired access

(107) *Ibid.*

(108) *Natal Witness*, 9 May 1871.

(109) *Natal Colonist*, 18 April 1873.

(110) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.101.

(111) *Ibid.*

(112) Guy, 'Firearms in the Zulu Kingdom', pp.557-570.

(113) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.49.

to political and economic resources in Zululand, such as land, cattle, followers and trading monopolies. Dunn's commercial links stretched from Durban to Delagoa Bay; his wealth was based on a substantial trade in firearms, cattle, ivory, hides and European goods.⁽¹¹⁴⁾ Furthermore, Dunn was on cordial terms with Somkhele chief of a large *isifunda* (district) that stretched along the Zululand coast to the north of Dunn's *isifunda*; it was through this area of the kingdom that the 'migrants trail' ran before it reached the southern coastal district controlled by Dunn. Somkhele himself also gained by facilitating the flow of Tsonga labourers southward for he received gifts of cattle and trade goods from Dunn on occasion. Zibhebhu, chief of the Mandlakazi, received gifts from Dunn for allowing the Tsonga to pass through his north-eastern district. He was active in trade and realized the advantages that trade with Delagoa Bay could bring.⁽¹¹⁵⁾ Trade and tribute were increasingly recognized by several of the most prominent men of the Zulu kingdom as important factors in the advancement of their political careers.

Shepstone had Dunn appointed Protector of Emigrants in Zululand in February 1874. Dunn also received a salary of £250 a year, £30 for horse hire and £20 for the salaries of his African messengers.⁽¹¹⁶⁾ Shepstone said of Dunn's appointment that,

Mr. J. Dunn has since undertaken charge of the coast route, and no one possesses greater facilities for successfully establishing it. I also feel satisfied that it is quite within his power to achieve the great object of bringing together the multitudes beyond Zululand who wish to be employed, and those in Natal who are anxious to employ them, but of course all depends upon the zeal which he brings to bear upon the work he has taken in hand.⁽¹¹⁷⁾

Dunn assumed his responsibility with zeal, for in addition to his salary, he received six pence per labourer for one night's food and lodging that

(114) *Ibid.*, p.97.

(115) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms Dun. 2.09, Ms 1459.

(116) S.N.A., 1/1/23, Dunn to Shepstone, 24 Oct. 1873.

(117) B.P.P., C.-1137, Aug. 1873, 'Installation Report', p.20.

he provided along the route to Natal. The transit costs were borne by the prospective employers in Natal, and Dunn received his commission either through the Natal government or directly from the employers themselves. Labour agents representing large business concerns (i.e. railroad construction companies and large sugar estates) would offer Dunn and Cetshwayo handsome capitation fees for procuring gangs of Tsonga labourers. The contractors engaged in building the government railroads paid as much as £1 per head for Tsonga migrants. Dunn's salary was small in comparison to the transport and capitation fees to be gained from the recruiting monopoly. (118)

An essential factor in ensuring an uninterrupted and regular flow of Tsonga labourers to Natal was a guarantee of safe passage through Zululand. Dunn resolved this problem in two ways; first he prevailed upon Cetshwayo to command the chief of the coastal district, Somkhele, to restrain his people from molesting or interfering with the Tsonga. Second, Dunn provided sufficient quantities of foodstuffs to feed the migrants while in transit. This measure, Dunn quite rightly perceived, served to minimize the level of violence that had occurred in the past when hungry Tsonga migrants raided gardens provoking Zulu retaliation against theft. (119) Two months after the coronation negotiations Dunn revealed his plans to Shepstone:

...I beg to say that I will undertake the protection of labourers passing through the Zulu country, and put up five stations, over an extent of one hundred and fifty miles of country from the Tugela along the coast toward Delagoa Bay, and find food sufficient for each labourer, to consist of mealies, mealie meal or sweet potatoes. I would charge 6d. a piece for each labourer putting up at the stations and getting fed for a night, or one day and a night...(120)

Dunn swiftly erected five rest stations along the coastal route; one at the Hluhluwe river on the border between Zululand and Tsongaland, three at thirty to forty-mile intervals along the Zululand coast and one at the

(118) *B.P.P.*, C.-2220 of 1878, Enclosure 1 in No. 66.

(119) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.52-53.

(120) *S.N.A.*, 1/1/23, Dunn to Shepstone, 24 Oct. 1873.

lower drift of the Thukela on the boundary separating Natal from Zululand. (121)

Dunn found Cetshwayo amenable to an agreement whereby in his dealings with white applicants for labour he would give preference to those willing to pay a head-fee to the king and over and above Dunn's transit charges. In return Cetshwayo pressured Noziyingili and other Tsonga chiefs to 'encourage' or force their young men into the migrant system. (122) Dunn used honey as well as vinegar in his dealings with Noziyingili, and resorted to bribery. This 'diplomacy' is well illustrated in Dunn's correspondence to Shepstone:

I would advise that a government messenger be sent to Noziyingili informing him of the arrangements that have been entered into with Cetywayo and the English government, and of my position in the Zulu country, and also as you know the effect of a present from you, I should think that if a small present were sent it would have a good effect in getting him to induce his people to go to Natal to work, as the diamond fields are likely to take a number of his people in that direction. (123)

Shepstone's coronation negotiations began to bear fruit in the early months of 1874. Near the end of December 1873, Dunn had completed a chain of five rest-stations along the coastal route and the number of Tsonga labourers going to Natal increased. Dunn reported to Shepstone 'that within the last four months three or four hundred labourers from Noziyingili's country and tribes beyond have past (*sic*) out to work in Natal'. (124)

In Natal Shepstone and the Legislative Council set up the legal and administrative machinery to register, assign and control the black migrants. The Legislative Council enacted legislation in 1874 combining African Immigration with Indian Immigration. (125) The increased supply of Tsonga workers under the new system prompted Dunn to write to

(121) *Ibid.*, Dunn to Shepstone, 16 Sept. 1873.

(122) *B.P.P.*, C.-2220 of 1878. Enclosure 1 in No. 66.

(123) *S.N.A.*, 1/1/24. Dunn to Shepstone, 18 Feb. 1874.

(124) *Ibid.*

(125) *N.G.G.*, 3 Mar. 1874.

Shepstone advising him to appoint a processing agent at the lower drift of the Thukela 'to keep a check on all parties coming out, as I do not think that the planters who most require the labour gain much benefit from the labour, in the way it is now coming in'.⁽¹²⁶⁾

Shepstone acted on Dunn's recommendation and appointed J.F. Jackson as Immigration Agent at the lower drift of the Thukela.⁽¹²⁷⁾ Shepstone and the Legislative Council had prepared legislation to meet the requirements of introducing migrant labour with the passage of Law 15 of 1871. Under the provisions of Sections 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 of this law the system function as follows:⁽¹²⁸⁾

4. Planters and others wishing to introduce labourers overland from countries beyond the border of the colony, must apply to the Protector of Immigrants at Maritzburg for the licence prescribed by Section 15 of Law 15 of 1871.
5. On receipt of the licence, the applicant must send it by his own messenger to Mr. Dunn, by whom it will be endorsed, and the messenger will then be at liberty to proceed and collect the labourers he requires. The messenger will be guided by such instructions as he may received from Mr. Dunn.
6. On reaching the confines of Natal at the lower Tugela drift, the immigrant labourers will be reported to, and inspected by, the Immigration Agent who will forward to Mr. Dunn, by the first opportunity, a receipt for the number of persons delivered over to him.
7. It will be the duty of the Immigration Agent to furnish, at the expense of the introducer of the labourers, a messenger for the safe conduct of such labourers to the office of the nearest resident magistrate.⁽¹²⁹⁾

From 1874 till the Anglo-Zulu war the number of Tsonga migrants recruited, through incentive or by coercion, for work in Natal increased markedly. In 1874 nearly 2,500 Tsonga entered Natal via the government-sponsored

(126) S.N.A., 1/1/24, Dunn to Shepstone 18 Feb. 1874.

(127) N.B.B., 1878, vol. 29. Jackson was officially appointed on 12 Mar. 1874, at a salary of £150 per annum.

(128) N.G.G., 3 Mar. 1874.

(129) *Ibid.*

recruiting programme. During the month of September alone 496 migrants were registered by the immigration authorities. Yearly immigration returns rose steadily until a peak was reached in 1878 with the recruitment of over 5,000 Tsonga. During the first six months of 1878 Dunn reported that 1,990 Tsonga had entered the colony;⁽¹³⁰⁾ a total of 2,557 migrants were introduced by Dunn alone in that year.⁽¹³¹⁾

For the years 1873-1876 the vast majority of Tsonga migrants were employed on the sugar plantations. Although Indian immigration resumed in 1874 it did not solve the labour shortages experienced by the planters. Many white agriculturists preferred Africans to Indians. The planters' bias in favour of black labourers was based on the assumption that Africans possessed greater strength and stamina to perform hard manual tasks.⁽¹³²⁾ Africans, especially Tsonga, were in great demand because of the lower costs involved in their procurement. It is little wonder that white employers preferred Africans to Indians when one considers that it cost an applicant as much as £30 to obtain one Indian indenture after contributions to passage and lodging had been totalled. On the other hand, it cost an applicant roughly £1 to obtain a Tsonga migrant through the centralized recruiting scheme of the Natal Immigration Department. One planter echoed the attitudes of many when he gave evidence before the 'Coolie Commission':

Coolies frequently have applied to me for employment, they know me well, but I don't care to take coolies at 15s. per month when I can get kaffirs - who are superior field hands - for 11s. to 12s. per month. Kaffir food is also cheaper. My kaffirs are Natal, Basuto, and Amatonga; they live harmoniously together.⁽¹³³⁾

Natal settlers required labourers who were reliable and who could be depended upon to fulfil contract periods. Dependable labour was

(130) *B.P.P.*, C.-2220 of 1878. Enclosure 1 in No. 66.

(131) *S.N.A.*, 4/38/88.

(132) Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, pp.180-181.

(133) *L.C.*, No. 1, of 1872, 'Report of the Coolie Commission', p.17.

especially necessary for sugar planters and cash-crop agriculturists during the crucial planting and harvesting periods. Tsonga 'reliability', which was highly commended by white settlers, was pre-determined to a large extent by environmental conditions. This restricted, and at the same time regulated, travel to and from the colony to the winter months. As Harries explains:

The 'reliability' of Tsonga labour was determined by the length and harshness of the route and the restrictions placed on summer travel; in the wet summer season swollen streams had to be crossed and the potential migrant preferred to work in his fields. Although considered the best route through Zululand, the coastal route was plagued by malaria and black water fever and was considered dangerous during the wet summer months. Thus the migrants were obliged to travel in winter, and this necessitated a minimum residence of six months in Natal.(134)

Competition for Tsonga migrants increased in the second half of the 1870s with the construction of the Natal government railways. This five-year programme pushed lines south to Isipingo, north to Verulam and inland over rugged terrain from Durban to Pietermaritzburg.⁽¹³⁵⁾ The Natal government took steps to ensure that the labour intensive railway project did not siphon Natal Africans away from the planters and other white agriculturists. Section 13 of the Railway Contract required the contractors, Wythes and Jackson, to import at their own cost, from beyond the colony, two-thirds of the labourers employed.⁽¹³⁶⁾

Approximately half of the labour used to build the railways was imported overland from the hinterland. From early 1876 until 30 June 1877, 2,237 black migrants out of a total labour force of 4,420 were employed.⁽¹³⁷⁾ Arthur Shepstone, Superintendent of Labour for the contractors, struck an agreement with Cetshwayo and Dunn whereby Wythes and Jackson paid the king 'a bonus or head money of £1 per man for every man he sent into work'. In addition to the 'bonus' Cetshwayo made

(134) Harries, 'Labour Migration', p.63. Harries states that 'of the 11,442 Tsonga migrants entering and leaving through the southern Tugela Magistracy in 1881 and 1882, over seventy percent travelled in the winter months'.

(135) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, pp.121-122.

(136) L.C. No. 18 of 1877, 'Statements of Labour Employed in the Construction of the Natal Government Railways', p.1.

(137) *Ibid.*, p.2.

prior arrangements with the Tsonga labourers whereby they would remit a third of their wages to the king through Arthur Shepstone. The eight hundred Tsonga 'recruited' through Cetshwayo's assistance in this manner were bound to a six month contract and total wages paid to these migrants for the period amounted to £5,000. Arthur Shepstone stated that the migrants 'dutifully' remitted one-third of their wages to him for the Zulu King. Whether this tribute was paid voluntarily is open to question for Zulu *izinduna* employed by the labour superintendent collected the money on behalf of the king. The tribute payment amounted to £1,701 'which was paid in gold to the king by Arthur Shepstone'. (138)

The competition for Tsonga migrants to help meet the labour needs of agriculturalists and the railway construction project had a drastic effect on the wage structure. In the early 1870s sugar planters employed Tsonga and Natal Africans at wages varying between five and ten shillings per month. (139) After government sponsorship of Tsonga migrants was established in 1874 'the ruling rate of wages for Amatongas was at this time fifteen shillings per month'. The increased demands for Tsonga labour in the mid to late 1870s pushed wages upward. The railways paid a wage of £1 a month to its black workers over and above head fees and rations. (140)

Working conditions varied as much as wages. The quality and quantity of food rations received by the black migrants depended on the means and inclinations of white employers. The Immigration Department recommended three pounds of mealie meal per day and four pounds of meat per week as sufficient to meet the nutritional requirements of African migrants. (141) It is evident that many employers, particularly settler agriculturalists were less generous and fed the migrants only mealie meal and little or no meat. (142) One sub-contractor employed by Wythes and Jackson reduced his workers' grain rations in order to feed Africans in his private employ and the migrants refused to work

(138) *B.P.P.*, C.-2220 of 1878, No. 66.

(139) L.C. No. 1. 'Report of the Coolier Commission', p.17.

(140) *B.P.P.*, C.-2220 of 1878, Enclosure 1 in No. 66.

(141) *Ibid.*

(142) *Ibid.*

in protest. Oxen, suffering from lung-sickness, were purchased cheaply by unscrupulous contractors in order to comply with the 'recommended' meat ration. (143)

The centralized recruiting of Tsonga migrants envisioned by Shepstone and the Legislative Council fell short of achieving all that it was designed to do. Hunter-recruiters either ignored or circumvented Shepstone's registration and influx control measures. These recruiters, including agents of Wythes and Jackson, were guilty of funnelling Tsonga migrants into Natal without registering them with a district magistrate. The Natal government wanted to regulate the wages of the migrants in order to keep black labour 'cheap'. (144)

To achieve this the architects of the migrant labour system tried to control the labour market by requiring all applicants to obtain migrants from the government's immigration services. This measure was designed to limit the activities of private recruiters who competed for Tsonga labour, and thus might drive wages upward. However, the system failed to control the workings of the open labour market. Wages spiralled well over the fifteen shilling mark in the late 1870s as recruiters representing the railroads and large sugar estates made private arrangements with the Zulu King and the government's own agent, John Dunn, in securing large numbers of migrants. (145) The impact of the private recruiter was sufficient to disrupt the government's attempts to stabilize wages and control the supply and distribution of migrants both within and outside the borders of Natal. Harries says that 'in 1877, despite the raising of Voluntary Emigration Labour wages to a par with existing wage rates in Natal (15s.), Shepstone complained that, of the 1,345 Tsonga contracted to work on the Natal railways, 1,232 had been recruited by hunter-recruiters working either directly in Maputo or on the coastal route. Thus the Tsonga migrants effectively rejected centralized recruiting in favour of the open labour market'. (146)

(143) *Ibid.*, Enclosures 1 and 2 of No. 66.

(144) Harries, 'Labour Migration', p.63.

(145) *B.P.P.*, C.-2220 of 1878, Enclosure 1 in No. 66.

(146) Harries, 'Labour Migration', p.63.

The impact of an expanding capitalist economy in Natal and the Transvaal stimulated a substantial alteration in the productive processes in Zulu-Tsonga tributary relations. Cetshwayo was quick in seizing opportunities offered by a labour-hungry economy in Natal. Recent historical research suggests that there was a crisis in the production of Zululand's most important resource, cattle. Anthrax, quarter evil and especially bovine pleuropneumonia (lung sickness) diminished the kingdom's herd in the last decade of independence (1869-1879)⁽¹⁴⁷⁾. The decline of the royal herds occurred at a crucial time when cattle were being exchanged for firearms. This was done in order to oppose more effectively dynastic rivals, the South African Republic and their Swazi allies, and ultimately the British government.⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ Cattle were easily converted or exchanged for hard currency i.e. sterling or gold.

Cetshwayo's need for hard currency prompted him to co-operate with white labour recruiters in extracting contract labour from the petty Tsonga chiefdoms in Somkhele's district. Tributary obligations were now paid mainly in cash derived from the wages of Tsonga labourers. The first known incidence of tribute alteration and the role played by Tsonga labour, occurred in 1872. In response to a request from a Natal recruiter, Cetshwayo ordered several hundred Tsonga to work in Natal on a six-month contract. A European traveller visiting the St. Lucia chiefdoms at this time disapprovingly remarked on the king's coercion of the Tsonga:

Cetshwayo being a despot, with command of life and death over his people, and especially over the Amatonga (Tsonga) who are looked upon by the Zulus as dogs, has compelled the small tribes...to turn out numbers of men (between three hundred and four hundred) to work in Natal...they cannot fight and if they refuse to go, they die...They were bound for six months at 8s. per month = 48s. The 8s. they got to buy a blanket, the 30s. went to Cetshwayo.(149)

(147) Colenbrander, 'Warriors, Women, Land and Livestock'. pp.1-2.

(148) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.27-28. And Guy, 'Notes on Firearms in the Zulu Kingdom', p.559.

(149) David Leslie, *Among the Zulus and Amatongas*, (Edinburgh, 1875), p.288.

This analysis of Zulu-Tsonga tributary adjustment in response to nineteenth century capitalist intrusions attempts to show that pre-capitalist Zulu and capitalist colonial societies could co-exist and benefit each other. Tsonga labour became the desideratum of both the Zulu kingdom and the white settlers. The additional income derived from Tsonga migrants bought trade goods and firearms; which in the process, contributed to Cetshwayo's political ascendancy in Zululand. Firearms also enhanced the reputation of the Zulu army and curbed external threats from the South African Republic and Swaziland.

In the final analysis the very pertinent question of which mode of production dominated the relations of production and reproduction must be raised. The evidence would overwhelmingly suggest that the colonial capitalist mode made demands on the pre-capitalist tributary mode, stimulating the latter to readjust in order to survive. However, it was the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879 which destroyed Zulu hegemony over the Tsonga. The evidence available from various official and unofficial sources indicated that the flow of Tsonga labour was severely disrupted during the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879. Rumours of imminent war between Britain and the Zulu kingdom spread among Natal's African population as early as October 1878. Hundreds of Tsonga labourers on the sugar plantations and the colony's public works projects broke their work contracts and left Natal to return to the Delagoa Bay hinterland. The border agent stationed at the lower drift of the Thukela, F. Bernard Fynney, reported to the Colonial Secretary's office in November 1878 that hundreds of Tsonga were 'returning home through Zululand in the event of hostilities'.⁽¹⁵⁰⁾

Several factors combined to reduce drastically the number of Tsonga entering Natal during the eight-month war. First, the border between Natal and Zululand was closed in December 1878 to all commercial traffic, only that related to the conduct of British military operations was allowed through. Second, the migrant labour machinery ceased to operate - this was largely because John Dunn, the Protector of Immigrants

(150) C.S.O., No. 682, 472/1879.

in Zululand, had, in late December 1878, crossed over into Natal with his family, clients and cattle as a precaution against a possible attack by the Zulu army.⁽¹⁵¹⁾ Thus his economic and political links with Cetshwayo and the Tsonga chiefs were severed. Natal's Lieutenant-Governor Bulwer did not re-appoint Dunn to the post of Protector of Immigrants mainly because there were few, if any, Tsonga to be recruited. Lastly, British imperial and colonial authorities were suspicious of Tsonga loyalties. Noziyingili and the Tsonga chiefs of the St. Lucia region were vassals of Cetshwayo and their Tsonga subjects were seen as a potentially subversive element of Natal's African population and were, therefore, unwanted in the colony.⁽¹⁵²⁾ Bikwayo ka Noziwawa, a Stuart informant, claims to have been the *induna* in command of a contingent of Tsonga troops drafted to fight with the Zulu army against the British at Gingindhlovu on 2 April 1879. He said the 'Amarubu fought at Gingindhlovu and were cut to pieces there'.⁽¹⁵³⁾

The sugar planters of Natal's coastal districts appear to have suffered most from the disruption of Tsonga labour, and the siphoning of thousands of Natal Nguni into the service of the British armed forces in the invasion of Zululand further aggravated the labour situation. The resident magistrate for the Umlazi division stated in his annual report for 1879 that:

...the sugar crop for this year is much below the average. This is attributable in part to the drought and frost of previous years...and also to the precarious supply of labour. Those sugar growers who have had to rely entirely on native labour have this season, for want of hands, lost the whole of their crops, which are now rotting on the ground...although wages are high, ranging from 40s. to 60s. per month.⁽¹⁵⁴⁾

(151) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.94-95.

(152) C.S.O., No. 682, 472/1879. Fynney to C.S.O., 1 Dec. 1878.

(153) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*. vol. 1, p.63. Evidence of Bikwayo ka Noziwawa.

(154) *N.B.B.* 1879, No. 30. J.J.5 Report of Resident Magistrate, Umlazi Division.

The resident magistrate for Inanda reported the same story of distress among the planters of his district: 'Native labour is scarce and dear' and 'the large sums acquired by natives during the war, in the form of wages, hire of wagons and oxen, and sale of cattle, have made many of them independent of work'.⁽¹⁵⁵⁾

The introduction of large numbers of Tsonga migrants and the resumption of Indian immigration pushed sugar exports upwards generally; and a pattern of relative stability in production is discernible from 1874 to 1878. However, drought, the disruption of Tsonga labour traffic and feverish competition for African labourers for the British war effort had disastrous consequences for the sugar industry as the export figures for the period 1874-1879 reveal:

Year	Production cwts.	Average price per ton	Value in sterling	
1874	136,655½	£28. 7s. 1 ⁵ /7d.	£159,078	(156)
1875	155,514	£27. 3s. 4d.	£169,815	(157)
1876	151,482	£25. 6s. 3d.	£135,201	(158)
1877	182,163	£30. 17s. 0d.	£184,788	(159)
1878	148,568	£35. 18s. 0d.	£141,077	(160)
1879	60,201	£33. 1s. 0d.	£ 56,958	(161)

The defeat of the Zulu kingdom by British forces in the Anglo-Zulu war disrupted Tsonga labour traffic into Natal, but only for the duration of the war. In 1880 Tsonga migrants resumed their trek southwards through Zululand to Natal. In the same year John Dunn was re-appointed as Protector of Immigrants for the colony; he recruited 2,539 Tsonga migrants at a fee of five shillings per head and received £634. 15s.⁽¹⁶²⁾

(155) *Ibid.*, J.J.9 Report of Resident Magistrate, Inanda Division.

(156) *Ibid.*, 1874, No. 25.

(157) *Ibid.*, 1875, No. 26.

(158) *Ibid.*, 1876, No. 27.

(159) *Ibid.*, 1877, No. 28.

(160) *Ibid.*, 1878, No. 29.

(161) *Ibid.*, 1879, No. 30.

(162) S.N.A., 438/1888. Secretary for Native Affairs to Lt.-Governor, 8 July 1888.

Official reports of the labour situation for 1880 reveal a dramatic improvement over 1879. The resident magistrate for Umlazi reported that 'the scarcity of labour so much deplored some time ago, is ceasing to make itself felt, as Amatongas are again flocking into the division to seek work'.⁽¹⁶³⁾ The magistrate for the Borough of Durban states that 'the complaints of scarcity of native labour have not been so great as in former years; the wants of the European inhabitants in this respect being met by the large numbers of Amatonga labourers who come to seek employment here...'.⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ Sugar exports rose dramatically to 234,107 cwts., valued at £215,191.⁽¹⁶⁵⁾

This survey has attempted to describe and analyse the role of John Dunn in relation to the system of trade and tribute that existed in the Delagoa Bay hinterland before the imposition of European colonial rule upon its peoples. It is also suggested that the underdevelopment of southern Mozambique can trace its origins to the introduction of mercantile capital through Delagoa Bay and the resultant rivalry and conflict that emerged between various northern Nguni societies for control of this trade system. The subjection of the St. Lucia chiefdoms and Maputoland to Zulu overlordship was necessary if the Zulu ruling class was to maintain their control of trade with Delagoa Bay. Zulu hegemony over the Tsonga was translated into the systematic exploitation of material and human resources and this was a likely factor that may have contributed to the underdevelopment of southern Mozambique long before the establishment of an effective Portuguese presence here.

A monopoly on strategic goods, like firearms, imported through Delagoa Bay was crucial in sustaining and promoting the political careers of the King and the ruling class, notably Cetshwayo and John Dunn. The processes of exploitation and underdevelopment were intensified

(163) *N.B.B.*, 1880, No. 31. JJ 96. Report of Resident Magistrate, Umlazi Division.

(164) *Ibid.*, JJ 93. Report of Resident Magistrate, Borough of Durban.

(165) *Ibid.*, p.251.

further with the demands for Tsonga labour from colonial Natal superimposed over and above the demands made on manpower by the tributary exactions of the Zulu elite. Whether merchant capital or colonial based agricultural and mining capital, there emerged a definite structural subordination of northern Nguni economies to a capitalist economy. Nineteenth century Zulu and Tsonga societies became increasingly enmeshed in the web of international trade and developing capitalism, with the powers of decision-making eventually taken out of their grasp.

CHAPTER FIVEJOHN DUNN AND THE COLONY OF NATAL

Although John Dunn left the colony of Natal in 1857 he never thought it possible or practical to sever his links completely with the settler community. His deep involvement in the political economy of the Zulu kingdom, his influence over Cetshwayo, and his labour and trade monopolies made him a power in the land and someone who could not be ignored by those Natal officials, clerics, merchants and traders with interests in Zululand.

The 'official' or colonial administrative class is appropriately illustrated in the career of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, Secretary for Native Affairs and Administrator of the Transvaal. Shepstone looms large in Dunn's career and their relationship requires detailed examination. The period under study will deal primarily with the years immediately before and during Lord Carnarvon's confederation scheme (1861-1878). Dunn's control of Tsonga labour and his extensive trade in firearms to the Zulu kingdom vitally affected the interests of sugar planters and large commercial houses in Durban. Dunn was a good customer who placed substantial orders for guns, powder, lead, caps, liquor, cloth, tools and implements. Sam Beningfield, the 'merchant prince' of Durban, and Colonel Harry Sparks, a large cattle trader, were good friends and warm supporters of Dunn. The Durban merchants were only too willing to supply Dunn with guns destined for the Zulu kingdom.

Before embarking on an exploration of Dunn's relations with Natal's various 'interest groups, a brief analysis of his image and 'place' in settler society is necessary. With the further entrenchment of British customs and social routines in the life of the colony, white attitudes toward social 'deviants' became more rigid and intolerant. Dunn was a social outcast and unacceptable to 'decent' society. His marriages to black women were abhorrent to the 'average' white colonial mind. However, Dunn remained unrepentant.

The observance of acceptable social and moral habits in colonial Natal was an essential prerequisite to respectability. It is significant that with the influential position achieved by Dunn as adviser to the most powerful African ruler in southern Africa he was never once extended an invitation to a Government House social function, reception or fete. The mere mention of Dunn's name was anathema to clerics, administrators and the watchdogs of Natal's moral life. Theophilus Shepstone would only see Dunn socially on his journeys to Zululand, and then only when it coincided with official business. Sir Garnet Wolseley is the only British official of high rank on record known to have dined formally with Dunn.⁽¹⁾

(i) Shepstone - Supporter and Adversary

Theophilus Shepstone was born in 1818, the son of Methodist missionaries working among the southern Nguni. He spoke Nguni dialects fluently; it was this skill that enabled him to enter public service as interpreter to the Cape Governor, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, during the eastern frontier wars. After a stint as Diplomatic Agent to the Natives at Fort Peddie, Shepstone, aged twenty-eight, was appointed Diplomatic Agent for Natal in 1846.⁽²⁾

Shepstone's career has always been the centre of controversy. The British author H. Ryder Haggard portrayed Shepstone as a first-rate administrator of Africans whose goals were frustrated and attacked by belligerent settlers and an unsympathetic and ill-informed Colonial Office.⁽³⁾ David Welsh sees Shepstone's 'reserve system' as the forerunner of present-day segregation and separate development in South Africa.⁽⁴⁾ Most historians have perpetuated the myth that Shepstone was an innovator. They attempt to identify Shepstone's administration of African affairs in Natal with Sir

(1) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.116.

(2) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.56.

(3) H. Ryder Haggard, *Cetywayo and His White Neighbours*, (London, 1890), p.65.

(4) See Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, Chapter 1.

Frederick Lugard's policy of 'indirect rule' in Nigeria. However, Norman Etherington has challenged the old assumptions. Through extensive research, based on missionary records and the papers of the Secretary for Native Affairs, he has demolished the notion of Shepstone as innovator and skilled administrator. Etherington refutes the idea that Shepstone envisaged a system of indirect rule. Shepstone's method of rule over Africans was 'malevolent depotism'.⁽⁵⁾ It was based on Shepstone's own exaggerated and simplistic belief that the northern Nguni were 'born and brought up with the notions of the most implicit obedience to their rulers'.⁽⁶⁾ A system of unquestioned authority had to be established to 'enforce "good behaviour", control inflow and outflow of Africans, encourage and regulate employment of Africans by white settlers, and do all in his power to promote the production of saleable export commodities'.⁽⁷⁾ Essentially, the 'Shepstone system' was a make-shift apparatus designed to control Natal's two hundred thousand Africans. A host of compliant chiefs (appointed by Shepstone), white magistrates and colonial militia, enforced the authority and decrees of the Secretary for Native Affairs. It was an oppressive system - one that limited freedom of movement, with pass laws that forced African males to perform *corvée* (*isibhalo*) labour on the colony's public works,⁽⁸⁾ and, ultimately, it was a system that relegated the Natal Nguni to a position of political and economic inferiority.

Shepstone's attitude toward the Zulu kingdom was another matter altogether. In short, Theophilus Shepstone was an imperial visionary and expansionist. He believed that Natal was the gateway to central Africa. As Etherington remarks:

To recapture the possibilities which seemed to lie open a century ago, draw one line from Durban to Mombasa and another line from Durban to Kinshasa. These lines enclose an arc of roughly forty-five degrees containing vast human and material resources. Visionaries in Shepstone's day perceived that triangle both as a wedge of pie to be gradually eaten up and

(5) Etherington, 'The Rise of the Kholwa', pp.16-18.

(6) S.G.O. XXXVIII, T. Shepstone to S.G.O. 26 April, 1846.

(7) Etherington, 'The Rise of the Kholwa', p.17.

(8) Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, Chapter Three.

as a funnel directing the wealth of Africa to the port of Natal.(9)

Shepstone backed his convictions with action. He gathered much information on the topography, mineral wealth, military power and political development in African states and chiefdoms as far north as the Zambezi river. He put his resources at the disposal of exploring parties going into the northern interior. In 1870 he sent one of his border agents, Captain Frederick Elton, and his official messenger Elijah Kambula, to assist agents of the London and Limpopo Mining Company in their successful negotiation of a mining concession in Matabeleland.(10)

Shepstone, however, had to cast his acquisitive eye no further than Zululand for he wanted to annex a triangle of land between the Zulu kingdom and the South African Republic in order to re-settle Natal's 'surplus' African population. Shepstone's plan offered several advantages. It would deny the South African Republic access to the sea through Zululand; and it would push the frontiers of British expansion further north into the fabled interior. Ultimately, Shepstone saw the slice of Zulu territory as a field for white settlement with African labour from the 'surplus' population providing the man-power requirements of a settler community.(11)

By March 1861 the foundations of Anglo-Zulu relations had been laid. Political power was shared between Cetshwayo, the king, Mpande and the *izikhulu*.(12) Cetshwayo had eliminated no less than six rival princes from the line of succession. And another royal prince, Mkungo, was in exile living under the protection of Shepstone and Bishop Colenso.(13)

However, the insecure paramount had unwisely entered into negotiations with boer adventurers who demanded an extensive grant of Zulu territory in the same Blood River district that Shepstone coveted

(9) Etherington, 'The Meaning of Shepstone's Coronation of Cetshwayo', p.10.

(10) *Ibid.*, p.11.

(11) *Ibid.*, p.5.

(12) Mael, 'Political Integration', pp.108-128.

(13) Etherington, 'Cetshwayo's Coronation', p.45.

in exchange for yet another rival prince, who had sought asylum in the Transvaal. Cetshwayo withdrew quickly from the agreement and denied that he had given land to the Boers.⁽¹⁴⁾ Thus, the scene was set for Shepstone's first major foray into Zulu politics; it was also his first expedition to Zululand. He purposely misinterpreted Cetshwayo's request that he (Shepstone) cease threatening his paramountcy with the royal hostage, Mkungo. Shepstone read the request as an invitation for him to ratify Cetshwayo's assumed paramountcy on behalf of the British government. The Secretary for Native Affairs wanted to use this opportunity to negotiate the cession of a strip of land in north-western Zululand to Natal.⁽¹⁵⁾

Shepstone arrived at Mpande's royal homestead, Nodwengu, in July 1861 accompanied by his son, Henrique, and his *izinduna*, Ngoza and Zatsuka. Mpande held discussions with Shepstone and half-heartedly agreed to proclaim Cetshwayo his heir. The Zulu king acquiesced to Shepstone's conditions mainly because Shepstone had made it clear that it was impossible for British troops to enter Zululand and support Mpande against Cetshwayo's Usuthu. Mpande then summoned Cetshwayo to appear at Nodwengu to meet Shepstone.⁽¹⁶⁾

There is much evidence to suggest that Cetshwayo was irritated by Shepstone's presumptions interference in the kingdom's internal affairs. The harbouring of Mkungo and wild rumours of an imminent British invasion only heightened Cetshwayo's suspicion and mistrust of the Secretary for Native Affairs.⁽¹⁷⁾ He was equally perturbed by Mpande's summons, for the king had intentionally failed to mention the purpose of Shepstone's visit.⁽¹⁸⁾

In a fit of anxiety Cetshwayo sent messengers in search of John Dunn demanding his immediate presence. When Dunn received the urgent command he raced from a hunting expedition near Lake St. Lucia and at once faced the wrath of his benefactor who accused him of deserting in the wake of Shepstone's coming and the rumoured massing of troops

(14) *Ibid.*

(15) *Ibid.*, p.7.

(16) Binns, *The Last Zulu King*, p.49.

(17) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.94.

(18) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.30.

on the border. Dunn reassured Cetshwayo that he knew nothing of the present difficulties, as he had been away in the remote fastness of northern Zululand for over a month. (19)

Still suspicious of Shepstone, Cetshwayo told Dunn to proceed ahead of his entourage and ascertain Shepstone's intentions. Dunn agreed and held an interview with Shepstone; he delivered the news of Shepstone's intentions to recognize his paramountcy to a somewhat relieved Cetshwayo. (20) Soon Cetshwayo arrived at Nodwengu accompanied by his *izinduna* and four thousand warriors. (21) The day before Cetshwayo and Shepstone were to meet Dunn called on the heir-apparent and found him in a flurry of rage, expressing a desire to kill Shepstone's induna, Ngoza, for having entered the sacred precincts of Mpande's *isigodlo*, a flagrant violation of Zulu etiquette punishable by death. The following day Dunn visited Shepstone again and advised him to caution Ngoza; according to Dunn, Shepstone was grateful for the warning about Cetshwayo's displeasure. With nothing further to detain him, Dunn left Nodwengu for Mangete to attend to his cattle. (22)

The day after Dunn's departure, Cetshwayo met Shepstone for a second session during which he demanded that Mkungu be returned to Zululand; this Shepstone refused. Incensed at this rebuff, Cetshwayo unleashed a torrent of threats and abuse centering on Ngoza's behaviour. (23) The confrontation verged on violence as Cetshwayo and many of his followers became incited at Ngoza's presence and Shepstone's refusal to let his *induna* speak in his own defence. (24) Order was restored but Shepstone was shaken by the stormy encounter. His mission was a failure, as Bishop Hans Schreuder of the Norwegian Missionary Society noted in his narrative:

(19) *Ibid.*

(20) *Ibid.*, p.31.

(21) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.158.

(22) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.31.

(23) Ruth Gordon, *Shepstone, and the Role of the Family in the History of South Africa*, (Cape Town, 1968), p.241.

(24) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Stuart Archive*, vol. I, p.159.

On Thursday Ketchweyo asked Mr. S. what he had come for? He said to acknowledge him as successor. Ketchweyo replied, we do not thank you for that, the Zulus can settle that for ourselves and we have settled it. What have you come for, you had some great thing to say, what is it? Mr. S. said I think it is a great thing that Panda has acknowledged you in my presence as his successor. No Mr. S. that is not a great thing he has done so three times before and it is just as uncertain as ever as far as he is concerned. What have you come for Mr. S.? He (Cetshwayo) then became very angry and said many things he ought not to have said, his captains interfered to quiet him and the meeting broke up in great excitement. The next morning Ketchweyo sent to Mr. S. to say that they had been very angry the day before and as he did not wish to part so asked him to see him again. Mr. S. replied, you killed me yesterday and I cannot see you again. . . . Ketchweyo also demanded the return of the prince with the Bishop and told him that he was the cause of all the slaughter among them and that they should never leave off killing one another till they had all the royal family in the land.(25)

Shepstone's 1861 mission failed to achieve its objectives. First, Mpande and Cetshwayo both refused even to discuss the cession of Zulu territory to Natal; second, Cetshwayo attached no great importance to Shepstone's ratification of his status as Paramount;⁽²⁶⁾ third, Shepstone had been verbally abused and threatened by Cetshwayo in the presence of his frightened son and hundreds of Zulu. It took all of Shepstone's stamina to retain his composure during the heated debate. Cetshwayo also expressed his extreme displeasure when Shepstone refused to return Mkungu to Zululand. Cetshwayo emerged the victor in his first confrontation with Shepstone. He had been recognized Paramount by the British government; no cession of Zulu sovereignty or territory had been given to Shepstone; and his internal enemies were checked because they could not now point to Mkungu as the legitimate heir in exile.⁽²⁷⁾

The Secretary for Native Affairs returned to Natal empty-handed, but he was shrewd enough to embellish his report on the proclamation

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- (25) Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Papers, 2/3/1, Natal Archives, Pietermaritzburg. Blencowe to Pearse, 27 July, 1861. Also quoted in Etherington, 'Shepstone's Coronation'. p.8.
 (26) *Ibid.*, p.7.
 (27) *Ibid.*, p.8.

mission, making it appear a diplomatic triumph; (28) he would later use his 1861 mission as a pretext for entering Zululand to ratify Cetshwayo's coronation as King. Although Dunn had not been present at the dramatic meeting between Shepstone and Cetshwayo, the former held Dunn personally responsible for what he (Shepstone) considered to be the extreme danger that he and his son had found themselves in at the proclamation ceremony. In his notes Dunn offers his reflections on Shepstone's animosity:

Much to my surprise, I heard some years afterwards that Mr. Shepstone stated that his life had been threatened, and that, knowing the danger, I had left without warning him. If I had seen any necessity for remaining, or if Mr. Shepstone had thrown out the slightest hint that he wished or expected me to remain to the last, I would have done so . . . I was warned and told to be on my guard, as Mr. Shepstone was one of my bitterest enemies. (29)

Dunn did not, in all probability, comprehend the extent of Cetshwayo's outrage at Ngoza's disregard for the sanctity of the *isigodlo*. Cetshwayo had ample reasons to loathe Ngoza for, in addition to his transgressions into the King's *isigodlo*, Shepstone's *induna* had sheltered another rival prince, Mtonga, in his recent flight from Zululand to Natal. (30) The biographer of the Shepstone family offers evidence that Ngoza entered the *isigodlo* bearing messages from Mtonga to his two sisters who were in residence there. (31) This devious action would have further aroused Cetshwayo's hatred for Ngoza and suspicion of Shepstone.

In defence of his absence at the proclamation ceremony, Dunn minimized the danger to Shepstone's life:

I am certain there was no danger, as I knew Cetywayo's aim, at the time I am writing of, was to keep on good terms with the English government, and it was nothing but the conduct of Ungoza which exasperated him and made him speak in the way he did . . . (32)

(28) See the wording in *B.P.P.*, C.-1137, Aug. 1873, 'Installation Report'.

(29) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.32.

(30) *Ibid.*

(31) Gordon, *Shepstone and the Family*, p.241.

(32) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.32.

From the few revelations that are available, it is evident that Shepstone professed no admiration for John Dunn; yet, true to his supposed character, the Secretary for Native Affairs never openly reproached Dunn for leaving him alone to face the wrath of Cetshwayo.⁽³³⁾ Shepstone realized the importance of Dunn's favour with Cetshwayo and, powerless to stem Dunn's influence in Zululand, treated Dunn with a cool civility. He preferred to use Dunn to his advantage rather than alienate him.

Dunn, a perceptive and calculating man in many ways, professed ignorance of Shepstone's animosity until many years later. In his numerous dealings with Shepstone, Dunn encountered the diplomat not the adversary. An estimate of Shepstone's attitude is amplified in Dunn's impressions of the man:

At the same time, Mr. Shepstone has never said an indignant word to me on the subject (Cetshwayo's proclamation ceremony) but, on the contrary, whenever he met me he always professed a friendly and fatherly spirit, and always expressed his pleasure at my getting on.⁽³⁴⁾

Shepstone had been outmanoevred by Cetshwayo in 1861, but he kept the question of annexation alive in his mind. He had little knowledge of Zululand in 1861, but he made amends for this by co-opting a number of the kingdom's frustrated white missionaries into his espionage network. Bishop Schreuder, and O.C. Oftebro of the Norwegian Society, Robert Robertson and R.C. Samuelson of the Anglicans, and Karl Hohls of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society, willingly supplied the Secretary for Native Affairs with their own prejudiced but fairly accurate accounts of political and economic conditions in Zululand.⁽³⁵⁾ More important, Shepstone considered it vital to exploit John Dunn's commanding influence with Cetshwayo. Shepstone communicated practically all of his messages to the king through Dunn; and replies to Shepstone were couched in Dunn's rather complicated phraseology. The tone was always respectful but never servile, and Dunn's predilection for caution in Zulu foreign affairs was well known to Shepstone. Yet the Secretary for

(33) *Ibid.*

(34) *Ibid.*

(35) Etherington, 'Social Theory and the Study of Christian Missions in Africa'. p.36.

Native Affairs felt uneasy knowing that the ambitious and capable Dunn was so close to Cetshwayo.⁽³⁶⁾ What were Dunn's loyalties - to Briton or to Zulu? Or was Dunn a man with no loyalties - a mercenary and a ruthless opportunist? These are the questions that Shepstone and many of his fellow colonists asked. But, it was not until the Anglo-Zulu war that Dunn was forced to make a choice.

Following the burial and official mourning of Mpande in February 1873, Cetshwayo summoned John Dunn and the principal *izinduna* to his main residence at Mangwini to decide on the course of action to be taken concerning the investiture of a new king.⁽³⁷⁾ The festering boundary dispute with the boers in the Utrecht district was also discussed during this session. Cetshwayo regarded the encroachment of the South African Republic into Zulu territory as a more serious menace than any pompous pretensions on the part of Shepstone to interfere in the domestic affairs of the Zulu people. Therefore it was decided to invite Shepstone, as the Natal government's representative, to recognize Cetshwayo as king and, if possible, secure a British commitment to Zulu interests as a check to boer claims on the north-western marches of the kingdom.⁽³⁸⁾

In late February 1873 John Dunn led a delegation of Zulu envoys to Pietermaritzburg and presented an oral request to Shepstone which, duly recorded and sworn on 1 March 1873, read:⁽³⁹⁾

The nation asks that Somtseu (Shepstone) may prepare himself to go to Zululand when the winter is near, and establish what is wanting among the Zulu people, for he knows all about it, and occupies the position of father to the king's children. . .(40)

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- (36) Cetshwayo was always suspicious of Shepstone; and Bishop Colenso did not gain Cetshwayo's favour until after the Langalibalele Affair of 1873.
- (37) *Ibid.*, p.33.
- (38) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.97.
- (39) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.33.
- (40) *B.P.P.*, C.-1137, Aug. 1873, 'Report of the Expedition to Install Cetywayo', paragraph 631.

In effect, Shepstone was asked to recognize Cetshwayo as king in the name of the Natal government and, more important, to assume a role of ally to the Zulu nation, as indicated in a further passage of the message: 'The Zulu nation wishes to be more one with the government of Natal; it desires to be covered with the same mantle...'⁽⁴¹⁾

The Secretary for Native Affairs interpreted Cetshwayo's request for recognition and alliance with the British authorities in a different manner than that intended by the Zulu heir-apparent. At once Shepstone saw an opportunity to extend British political control over a hitherto independent African state. Sir Benjamin Pine, who had arrived in Natal in May to serve his second term as Lieutenant-Governor, gave his consent to Shepstone to proceed to Zululand.⁽⁴²⁾

On 8 August 1873 Shepstone crossed the Thukela, leading 110 officers and men, mostly comprising members of the Volunteer Corps in Natal. Two field-pieces accompanied the Royal Durban Artillery and over three hundred African levies brought up the rear.⁽⁴³⁾ The tension mounted as Shepstone's armed escort proceeded into Zululand, for rumours were rife that Shepstone was bringing Mbuyazi who would be installed instead of Cetshwayo. There was no substance to the tale, but the Usuthu had never found Mbuyazi's body among the slain *Gigoza* at Ndondakusuka in 1856 and fears fed on this mystery.⁽⁴⁴⁾

On 18 August Cetshwayo and his vast entourage of nine thousand followers arrived in the Intomjanini valley where the coronation was to be held. Dunn was approached by the *izinduna* who asked him the procedure of the coronation ceremony. Professing ignorance as to the agenda to be followed, Dunn consulted Cetshwayo who informed him of the rituals. Concerned about the intensions of the *izikhulu* to

(41) *Ibid.*

(42) *Ibid.*, paragraph 63.

(43) *Ibid.*, paragraph 27.

(44) *Ibid.*, paragraph 29, and Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.42. Moreover, Cetshwayo's departure for the meeting with Shepstone was delayed for two days when Dunn's eldest son fell gravely ill. Dunn requested Cetshwayo to proceed without him but he refused, and instead sent his witch-doctor to offer a sacrifice for Dunn's son. Dunn was sceptical of Zulu witchcraft but the sacrifice and attendant incantations coincided with the boy's improvement and Dunn, much relieved, rejoined Cetshwayo.

honour their pledges of support to Cetshwayo, Dunn became uneasy.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Cautious and well-informed on the intrigues that divided the Zulu nation into several competing factions, Dunn worried over the safety of his benefactor. 19 August was the most critical day of the proceedings, as the uncertain loyalties of Hamu, Zibhebu and Mnyamana were tried and dissolved as the royal rivals hailed Cetshwayo as heir in a rare display of national and family unity.

With much of the Zulu nation now assembled in the Intomjanini valley, the elder *izinduna* at the instigation of the prime minister, Masiphula, gave Cetshwayo the royal salute and proclaimed him King of the Zulu people. Masiphula pre-empted Shepstone and satisfied the vast majority of Zulu who looked upon Natal's blessing as gratuitous interference into the affairs of a sovereign state.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Shepstone noted the prime minister's actions and tried to minimize the demonstration of Zulu nationalism in his Installation Report: 'It was known that Masiphula represented the conservative feeling of the country; that he thought it derogatory to Zulu dignity to call in the assistance of foreigners to install a Zulu king'.⁽⁴⁷⁾

The coronation of Cetshwayo was Masiphula's last act of service to a Zulu royal house that spanned the reigns of Dingane and Mpande. After performing the ceremony Masiphulu visited Dunn and told him that his work was finished and later that same evening the aged statesman was suddenly taken ill and died.⁽⁴⁸⁾

The death of the prime minister caused a further delay in Shepstone's arrival. Dunn informed the Secretary for Native Affairs that a portion of the coronation ceremony had been carried out and that an additional four days grace would be required for the official mourning and burial of Masiphula. An air of uncertainty hung over Shepstone's presence. He felt that the dignity of the Natal government had been affronted by the several delays and Cetshwayo's abrupt shifting of the agreed meeting-place in the Intomjanini valley.⁽⁴⁹⁾

(45) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.38.

(46) *Ibid.*

(47) *B.P.P.*, C.-1137, Aug. 1873, 'Installation Report', paragraph 38.

(48) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.55.

(49) *B.P.P.*, C.-1137, Aug. 1873, 'Installation Report', paragraphs 35, 39 and 40.

Cetshwayo sent Dunn to see Shepstone and soothe his feelings. On 24 August Shepstone met Dunn at the Norwegian Mission Station and arranged the first of several meetings with Cetshwayo.⁽⁵⁰⁾ The rumours of Mbuyazi's return were re-echoed throughout the Zulu camp and on 26 August an apprehensive Cetshwayo approached Shepstone's party. Acting on Dunn's advice, the Natal agent walked ahead of his escort as a gesture of reassurance that the English would not spirit him away. Thus began a series of discussions that culminated in Shepstone's 'crowning' of Cetshwayo on 1 September 1873.⁽⁵¹⁾ John Dunn performed the role of intermediary, and was to a large extent responsible for the successful completion.

More important than the actual crowning of the Zulu king were the earnest political discussions entered into by Shepstone and Cetshwayo. Principal among the five specific topics outlined by Shepstone were:

1. The position of Missionaries and their converts in Zululand.
2. The foreign relations of the Zulus and the circumstances which have brought about a strong feeling of estrangement between them and the subjects of the South African Republic.
3. The introduction of labourers from beyond, through Zululand, by means of an organized system of resting or feeding places.
4. The relations of Natal with the Zulus, which should be continued on the same footing on which they had been heretofore under Panda's reign.
5. The new laws to be proclaimed by me (Shepstone) on Cetywayo's installation, the particulars of which, as given hereafter, were fully agreed upon at this meeting, and which amount to a Bill of Rights, which may be pleaded by any Zulu subject suffering under oppression in the future.⁽⁵²⁾

In a radically revised view of Shepstone's 'coronation' expedition, Etherington contends that the so-called 'coronation' ceremony was not the solemn and impressive picture that Shepstone and later

(50) *Ibid.*, paragraph 55.

(51) *Ibid.*, paragraph 58.

(52) *Ibid.*, paragraph 60.

historians have painted, but a 'laughable failure'. There is little reason to dispute the contemporary judgments of Natal politician John Akerman who claimed that 'the tin-pot coronation of Cetwayo is laughed at everywhere, except where the farce had been used to make political capital of.'⁽⁵³⁾ One of Shepstone's most valuable missionary informers, Reverend Robert Robertson, told Lieutenant-Governor Bulwer in 1878 that, 'As far as Cetywayo was concerned I believe his coronation by Sir T. Shepstone to have been a sham - he never meant to be bound by it, and what is more, I do not believe that he would have carried it into effect in its entirety had he wished...In order to please the anti-English party he was crowned by native rites while Mr. Shepstone was on his way for the same purpose'.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Dunn's impression of Shepstone's 'coronation' reinforces the view that the mission was not a spectacular success for the Secretary for Native Affairs. Cetshwayo expressed disappointment at Shepstone's gifts and he looked upon Shepstone's 'coronation' only as British ratification of his succession. Dunn recalled: 'He had been proclaimed king by Masipula before the arrival of Mr. Shepstone, and now this had merely been confirmed by him, and now he was the acknowledged king of the country by the Natal government as well as by the Zulus'.⁽⁵⁵⁾

Shepstone fared little better in obtaining the five objectives on his agenda. His missionary allies were disappointed that no concessions had been granted them. In fact, Cetshwayo had wanted to expel them all from his country and Shepstone barely persuaded the new king to maintain the *status quo* - so their position was unchanged.⁽⁵⁶⁾ The 'introduction of labourers from beyond has already been discussed; but it should be noted that it was the only objective that Shepstone achieved fully. Shepstone and Cetshwayo barely managed to reach agreement on four of the five issues. The boundary dispute with the South African Republic generated the most heated discussions, out of which Cetshwayo extracted only Shepstone's vague promises of support for Zulu claims in the region. However, Shepstone did manage to avoid entering into any written pledge that would smack of an Anglo-Zulu alliance. In his much embellished 'Installation Report' to the

(53) Etherington, 'Shepstone's Coronation', p.22.

(54) C.S.O., vol. 1925, Special Border Agent Reports, No. 19, Robertson to Bulwer, 28 Oct. 1878.

(55) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.49-50.

(56) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.49-50.

Colonial Office Shepstone stated that it was futile and inexpedient to enter into 'written treaties with the savage nations'.⁽⁵⁷⁾ Dunn shared Cetshwayo's enmity for the boers of the Transvaal and was disappointed that the Secretary for Native Affairs had failed to give a concrete commitment to Zulu aspirations in the Blood river claims.⁽⁵⁸⁾

The events surrounding Cetshwayo's 1873 coronation mark a watershed in Anglo-Zulu political and economic relationships. Shepstone's 'adventurous' diplomacy had not succeeded in establishing his influence over Zulu internal affairs and other expedients would have to be employed. The interference of Shepstone in Zulu domestic laws was most evident in his proclamation of a Zulu 'Bill of Rights':

1. That the indiscriminate shedding of blood shall cease in the land.
2. That no Zulu shall be condemned without open trial and the public examination of witnesses for and against, and that he shall have a right to appeal to the king.
3. That no Zulu's life shall be taken without the previous knowledge and consent of the king, after such trial has taken place, and the right of appeal has been allowed to be exercised.
4. That for minor crimes the loss of property, all, or a portion, shall be substituted for the punishment of death. (59).

(57) *B.P.P.*, C.-1137, Aug. 1873, 'Installation Report', paragraph 4.

(58) *Ibid.*, paragraph 60. Shepstone's memorandum of 11 June 1873. Prior to the expedition Shepstone revealed his intention to minimize the Zulu-Boer boundary dispute to his Colonial Office superiors, thereby justifying his case for non-alliance with the Zulu kingdom. He wrote: 'Then again, there are the perpetual discussions about boundary lines, and the tampering which is believed in the Zulu country to have been attempted with Cetshwayo's most powerful and influential brother Uhamu; but Uhamu's fidelity to his brother is at the moment undoubted in the Zulu country, and if there be any real foundation for the strong belief there that such attempts were made, I am of the opinion that they were entirely unauthorized by the Transvaal government and were mere personal efforts by individuals interested in the acquisition of territory'.

(59) *Ibid.*, pp.15-16.

Shepstone expediently interpreted Cetshwayo's approval of the 'Bill of Rights' as a solemn coronation vow given in exchange for British recognition of his rule. Cetshwayo, Dunn and the Zulu headmen did not see the motive behind Shepstone's proclamation as a manoeuvre to impose legal controls on Zulu domestic affairs. They mistakenly believed that the coronation summit had committed both the British government and the Zulu king to maintaining the *status quo*. As Dunn remarked a decade later, Cetshwayo accepted Shepstone's proclamation as 'but a lecture of advice'.⁽⁶⁰⁾ Self-interest had stimulated Dunn and the king to promote the recruitment and passage of Tsonga migrants. Thus, Dunn became a servant of both the Zulu state and the British Crown - his position as Protector of Immigrants placed his political activities on behalf of the Zulu King under the eye of the Secretary for Native Affairs, and later the Colonial Office. The outcome of the coronation negotiations served to erode further the independence of Dunn, Cetshwayo and the Zulu people.

This division of loyalties eventually compromised Dunn's integrity and freedom of action, and by 1878 he was to fall from grace with both Cetshwayo and Shepstone. Although despised and no longer trusted, in 1873 John Dunn was still at the height of his power in the Zulu kingdom and the period began auspiciously enough with the successful crowning of Cetshwayo, the fourth and final independent monarch of the Zulu state.

British imperial policy in southern Africa changed from one of caution and economy to one of expansion and consolidation when the Earl of Carnarvon became Colonial Secretary in 1874. Carnarvon envisaged the confederation of Britain's settler communities in the Cape, Natal and Griqualand West. Moreover, he deemed it necessary to incorporate the independent Voortrekker Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State in addition to all independent African states south of the Zambezi river. Carnarvon believed that this scheme would relieve the imperial government of financial burdens, especially defence,

(60) Kennedy, 'The Fatal Diplomacy', p.250.

and bolster Britain strategically and politically. (61)

Mystery still surrounds the exact outcome of Carnarvon's 1874 discussions with Shepstone when the latter was summoned to England to explain his role in the Langalibalele Affair and give advice on African administration. However, Etherington has produced evidence which reveals Shepstone's 'breathtaking vision of empire':

That ultimately this (strip of territory) will also be occupied by Europeans cannot be doubted, but if the land can be acquired, and put to the purpose I have suggested, the present tension in Natal will be relieved, and time be gained to admit of the introduction of a larger proportion of white colonists... But it will be a mistake to suppose that the relief afforded by this measure would be but temporary or that the difficulty it is proposed to abate could ever again reach its present dimensions; because the outlet being to the north, the abatement admits of permanent extension towards a climate unsuited to Europeans but not so to natives...(62)

Shepstone's vision was adopted as policy by Carnarvon and the knight-hood and high rank bestowed on Shepstone testify to his influence at the Colonial Office. The Zulu kingdom stood astride a 'road to the north' and the fan-shaped district of Zululand known as the 'disputed territory' was a target of Shepstone's expansionism.

Through this one simple annexation unhappy Africans in Natal would find happier homes, a vital labour migration route would be permanently secured against interference from Afrikaners and Zulus, the Boer republics would be shut off from the sea, and a road would be opened to the north which was capable of infinite extension if governed by Shepstonian methods.(63)

Sir Theophilus Shepstone was given the responsibility of annexing the South African Republic and, through persuasion or coercion, convincing the Voortrekkers to accept confederation. On 12 April

(61) C.F. Goodfellow, *Great Britain and South African Confederation (1870-1881)*, (Cape Town, 1966), pp.51-72.

(62) Etherington, 'Shepstone's Coronation', p.24.

(63) *Ibid.*

1877 Shepstone formally annexed the Transvaal to the Crown.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Having emerged as one of the Colonial Office's principal advisers on African affairs, Shepstone aimed to use his enhanced reputation and position as Administrator of the Transvaal to destroy Zulu sovereignty and bring the country under British rule. Historians of the confederation era have stressed that Shepstone shifted his support in the boundary dispute between Zululand and the Transvaal to the latter. However, as Kennedy suggests, what is discernible in Shepstone's actions is not an abrupt shift from Zulu to boer but a series of manoeuvres designed to exploit the office of Transvaal Administrator to reduce Zululand to the status of a British protectorate. Not until 1874 did Shepstone's expansionist aims in Zululand coincide with the policy of the Colonial Office.⁽⁶⁵⁾

The political activity leading up to Shepstone's takeover of the Transvaal involved Dunn and opened a breach in their relationship. Shepstone returned to Natal from England in October 1876 armed with Carnarvon's instructions to proceed to the Transvaal and effect annexation.⁽⁶⁶⁾ At that juncture he was uncertain about Cetshwayo's current intentions toward the Transvaal. Before leaving for London, Shepstone had written to Dunn in April urging him to 'impress upon Cetywayo the importance of abstaining from and preventing any act of aggression on the part of his people',⁽⁶⁷⁾ against the boer settlements in the Blood river area. In addition, Shepstone requested Cetshwayo to draft a statement explaining the nature of his people's grievances against the South African Republic which he would place before the Colonial Secretary at the confederation conference scheduled for July. Dunn transcribed Cetshwayo's reply which emphatically denied any right or claim for land by the boers against the Zulu nation.⁽⁶⁸⁾ Cetshwayo advised Shepstone that the Swazi kingdom, the traditional foe of the Zulu and lately the allies of the Transvaal boers,

(64) Goodfellow, *S.A. Confederation*, pp.111-115.

(65) Kennedy, 'Fatal Diplomacy', p.318.

(66) Goodfellow, *S.A. Confederation*, pp.111-115.

(67) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.126.

(68) *Ibid.*,

'needs punishment from us - the cattle that they have were originally the property of the Zulus'.⁽⁶⁹⁾

Shepstone had no intention of presenting or supporting Zulu grievances at the London Conference; instead he used the document to impress upon Carnarvon the vulnerability of the boers to Zulu aggression and the necessity of annexing the Republic and Zululand to ensure stability and promote unification. Upon his return to Natal, Shepstone decided to evade any direct communication with Cetshwayo over the reception of the Zulu policy statement in order to fathom the king's present intentions towards the boers and the Swazis. To obtain this information Shepstone wrote to Wolseley explaining that 'I have therefore asked John Dunn to pay Natal a visit after having seen Cetywayo and told him as a matter of news that I had arrived. I shall be able to ascertain from Dunn what the actual state of things is'.⁽⁷⁰⁾ Dunn was suspicious of Shepstone's evasion of Cetshwayo and remained silent having decided not to reveal Cetshwayo's plans.⁽⁷¹⁾ Three weeks elapsed and Shepstone grew anxious. In a despatch to Sir Henry Barkly at the Cape Shepstone appears to have been puzzled at Dunn's silence: 'I can't account for this and do not like to leave Natal until I can, because it is of great importance to my mission to know to what extent the Zulu difficulty will press the Transvaal government and to be able to judge what effect my going to the Transvaal may have upon Cetywayo'.⁽⁷²⁾

Shepstone considered it vital to contact Dunn. To achieve this end, he waited in Durban until mid-December hoping that he might catch Dunn on one of his periodic visits to the port. Venting his frustration to Barkly for a second time Shepstone wrote despairingly that he had been waiting 'in vain for Mr. Dunn; he has gone up to Cetywayo's residence but has not returned and makes no sign'.⁽⁷³⁾

(69) *Ibid.*, p.31.

(70) Theophilus Shepstone Papers, (Natal Archives, Pietermaritzburg). Shepstone to Wolseley, 24 Oct. 1876.

(71) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.126.

(72) Shepstone Papers, Shepstone to Barkly, 23 Nov. 1876.

(73) *Ibid.*, Shepstone to Barkly, 12 Dec. 1876.

On 23 December Shepstone's patience was rewarded when he was made privy to a letter written by Dunn to a friend in Natal. From this he learned the entire Zulu attitude toward the Transvaal:

I've had a long talk with Cetshwayo and he has come to the conclusion that as affairs have gone on so long without the intervention of the English government, although requested to do so several times, he will allow matters to take their course, especially as he heard about the move said to be taken by the British government in the Transvaal; Cetshwayo is, however, determined to hold the boundary against the Dutch.(74)

Shepstone left Natal for the Transvaal on 27 December, angered and disappointed at Dunn for not having personally informed him of Cetshwayo's attitude toward the Transvaal.⁽⁷⁵⁾ Relations between the two men deteriorated after this. Shepstone afterward wrote to Lieutenant-Governor Henry Bulwer, saying: 'I fancy that Dunn is as thorough a Zulu and as big a liar as the rest of the king's advisors'.⁽⁷⁶⁾ Aware of Shepstone's self-imposed detachment from Zulu grievances, Dunn advised Cetshwayo to avoid any conflict with the British government over the Zulu-Boer boundary issue, and to wait patiently for the question to be settled by arbitration. Dunn unequivocally defended Zulu claims against the Transvaal, accusing Shepstone of purposely deceiving Cetshwayo:

One of the most unfair features in the case is this, that the head of the Transvaal government, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, has always advised Cetshwayo to remain quiet, and not to go to war with the boers in disputing the boundary, promising to see him righted, if it had been left to the Zulus and the boers themselves, I am sure the boers would have got the worst of it.(77)

This exchange between Dunn and Shepstone illustrated Dunn's prominent role in Zulu affairs. Earlier claims by historians that Dunn's role was minor, even peripheral, are dispelled by the evidence. Shepstone realized that Dunn enjoyed Cetshwayo's confidence and that

(74) *Ibid.*, Shepstone to Barkly, 18 Jan. 1877.

(75) Uys, *In the era of Shepstone*, p.224.

(76) Shepstone Papers, Shepstone to Bulwer, 18 Feb. 1878.

(77) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.69.

he exercised considerable influence in Zulu foreign affairs.⁽⁷⁸⁾ With one telling sentence - 'I shall be able to ascertain from Dunn what the actual state of things is' - Shepstone substantiates Dunn's political pre-eminence in the Zulu kingdom. Missionary informants were reliable up to a point, but they did not enjoy the king's favour and did not have access to intimate councils of state. Shepstone even cross-examined Herbert Nunn, a veteran Zululand trader, who lived with Hamu, but he was still not satisfied and fretted impatiently for news from Dunn.⁽⁷⁹⁾ Moreover, it took a good deal of soul-searching for Shepstone to beg information from Dunn for he was alarmed at, and perhaps jealous of Dunn's influence. He realized how entrenched was Dunn's influence when Cetshwayo insisted on Dunn becoming Protector of Immigrants. Shepstone had wanted to give the labour agency to someone more amenable to his control. As a reminder not to assume too much authority Shepstone wrote Dunn a stiffly worded letter clearly stating that he would never recognize Dunn as an independent power in Zululand.⁽⁸⁰⁾ In his notes Dunn pouted over Shepstone's admonishment: 'Sir Theophilus wrote me a rather severe letter, I thought, warning me not to assume too much authority, as he could not recognize it. At this I felt much hurt as I had given no cause for his saying so...'⁽⁸¹⁾

(iii) Speculators, Merchants and the Gun Trade

John Dunn's political aspirations in Zululand were inseparably linked to his economic interests. His labour agency and his large trade in cattle, hides, liquor and guns grew as a result of favourable political and economic developments between Natal and Zululand up to the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879. Dunn's position as chief and adviser to Cetshwayo did not go unnoticed by the merchants and speculators of Natal. Dunn had several commanding advantages. First, he spoke Zulu fluently; second, he was knowledgeable of Zulu diplomatic protocol and social etiquette; third, he was receptive to any scheme that would increase his wealth.

(78) See Mael, 'Problem of Political Integration', pp.262-264.

(79) Shepstone Papers, Shepstone to Barkly, 23 Nov. 1876.

(80) S.N.A. 1/1/23, Shepstone to Dunn, 18 Sept. 1873.

(81) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.51.

John Dunn was ostracised from the social and religious life of Natal, but he was readily acceptable as an intermediary for the business sector in negotiating with the Zulu in speculative ventures. In 1862 the Natal Land and Colonization Company, at the instigation of Natal's two largest landowners, Jonas Bergtheil and Adolf Coqui, approached Dunn with an offer for Cetshwayo which would cede roughly one fifth of the Zulu homeland to the company for three thousand pounds sterling. (82) Seeing an opportunity to enrich himself Dunn presented the company's proposal to Cetshwayo and Mpande impressing upon them the advantages to be accrued by accepting the terms. Cetshwayo appeared receptive to Dunn's arguments in favour of the transaction; and in a spirit of optimism Dunn transmitted this information to the Natal Land and Colonization Company. (83) Bergtheil in turn notified the London directors of the company, who forwarded a draft Deed of Cession in August with the instruction:

...trusting that you will get the grant secured in the most effectual way possible so as to facilitate our our movements in obtaining the recognition and sanction of government with the view to annexation of this territory to the Colony. (84)

Dunn received the draft Deed presenting the document to Cetshwayo for final approval. The heir-apparent was now hesitant to consent to the sale of land. He claimed that his freedom of action was limited by the powerful Council of *izinduna* who had to be consulted on such weighty issues as the alienation of land. The Council of *izinduna* was intransigent, rejecting all appeals by Cetshwayo and viewing the proposed sale of Zulu land as further European encroachment. Although recognized as chief claimant to the throne, Cetshwayo stated that he had to yield to his councillors, for to act contrary to their majority voice would only weaken his position; and, in any event, he could not exercise royal prerogatives for he was not yet king. (85)

(82) Natal Land and Colonization Company records, (Natal Archives Pietermaritzburg), Mss. 209. Memo of agreement between Dunn and the Natal Land and Colonization Company, 31 Dec. 1861.

(83) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.56-7.

(84) Land and Colonization Record, Mss. 209. J.T. McKenzie and F.C. Drummond to Bergtheil and Behrens, 4 Aug. 1862.

(85) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.57.

Disappointed by the failure to clinch the deal, Dunn relayed the rejection of the draft Deed of Purchase to the Natal Land and Colonization Company, thereby killing an exploitive scheme that would have reduced the Zulu homeland by a fifth and, in all probability, would have accelerated the pace of colonial encroachment of Zululand.

This is the first recorded instance of Dunn's duplicity in supporting policies detrimental to Zulu interests. Dunn's 'loyalty' to Cetshwayo was conditional and influenced by economic ambitions that overshadowed any concept of allegiance to the Zulu polity, or in a narrower sense to its rulers. Dunn's commitment to Cetshwayo was directly related to his own material well-being; in his notes Dunn indicates clearly that his advice to the paramount coincided with his own interests. (86)

Dunn's extensive trading activities brought him into frequent contact with the leading commercial firms in Durban. Prominent among these were Randles Brothers and Hudson, A. Fass, A. Bennet, Beningfield and Sons, and Lipperts and Deutzelman. (87) Most of Dunn's dealings were with Beningfield and Sons. Its founder, Sam Beningfield, was one of Durban's oldest and most prominent settlers. He was born in England in 1802 and emigrated to South Africa as an 1820 settler. In 1840 he moved to Port Natal and established himself as a cattle-trader, storekeeper and Natal's first auctioneer. (88) Beningfield saw at once that Zululand was an area rich in cattle, and he emerged as one of the largest buyers of Zulu cattle in Natal. He either bought Zulu cattle from independent traders operating in the kingdom or gave a commission-percentage to agents sent into Zululand. Few cattle from Zululand escaped Beningfield, for practically all cattle sold in Durban fell under the hammer of Beningfield's auction sales, held weekly in Market Square. (89)

(86) *Ibid.*, pp.13, 27, 101.

(87) C.O. 879/15/173, Enclosure in No. 3, p.5. Bulwer to Hicks Beach, 3 April 1879.

(88) Campbell, *In the Brave Days of Old*, p.6.

(89) *Ibid.*, p.14.

The port of Durban was the terminus of Dunn's trade network; it provided a large and ready market for cattle, hides, pelts and ivory. Dunn was a favoured customer of the Durban merchants for he placed substantial orders for firearms, ammunition, agricultural implements, blankets, cloth, tin and copper utensils.⁽⁹⁰⁾ The numerous sportsmen who hunted with Dunn were entertained lavishly, and imported wines, liquors, tobacco and other European luxuries were obtainable only in Durban.⁽⁹¹⁾ In addition to his own material needs, Dunn acted as an agent for Cetshwayo, purchasing for him guns, blankets and other articles of European manufacture. A considerable quantity of liquor was purchased by Dunn for the consumption of the Zulu ruling elite. There is evidence to suggest that Dunn monopolized most of the liquor traffic in Zululand before the Anglo-Zulu war. While Cetshwayo considered drunkenness to be a social evil, he did not consider it to be a problem of sufficient magnitude to warrant its prohibition. Thus the distribution of spirits was to be controlled through Dunn and confined to the wealthier upper strata of Zulu society. Cetshwayo gave evidence before the Cape Government Commission on Native Laws and Customs stating that he had 'not commenced stopping that trade, because it was only brought in by John Dunn'.⁽⁹²⁾

Sam Beningfield was Dunn's biggest supplier and an influential friend and supporter of the white 'renegade'. Dunn had a large account at Beningfield's and paid for the majority of his purchases with cattle - the most common and universally acceptable medium of exchange between Zululand and Natal. Dunn's own large herds and those sent by Dunn on Cetshwayo's behalf made him the largest cattle-trader in Zululand. Colonel Harry Sparks, a prominent Durban businessman, was one of Beningfield's cattle-buyers. He recalled that 'Sam Beningfield was one of his (Dunn's) greatest pals and through him I was introduced to Jantoni (Dunn's Zulu name)'.⁽⁹³⁾ Sparks bought hundreds of cattle

(90) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459.

(91) *Ibid.*

(92) C. de B. Webb and J.B. Wright (eds.), *A Zulu King Speaks, Statements made by Cetshwayo ka Mpande on the History and Customs of His People*, (Pietermaritzburg, 1978), p.91.

(93) Lucy Heywood, 'Reminiscences of John Dunn by Colonel Harry Sparks', (unpublished manuscript, K.C.L., Folio 26954), p.1.

from Dunn each year in the 1870s and 1880s. He said 'After the Zulu war I visited his three stations in Zululand frequently buying cattle'.⁽⁹⁴⁾

In 1874 Sam Beningfield died.⁽⁹⁵⁾ He was succeeded in the business by his son Frank Beningfield.⁽⁹⁶⁾ Dunn maintained cordial relations with Frank Beningfield, who collaborated with Dunn in the re-exportation of firearms from Durban via Delagoa Bay into Zululand. In the mid and late 1870s Dunn, Beningfield and several other Durban merchants, circumvented the Natal government's ban on the export of firearms across the colony's borders into Zululand by adopting the perfectly legal measure of transshipment to Portuguese Mozambique, thence South into the Zulu kingdom. Dunn and the British merchant houses in Durban were responsible for the dramatic increase in the number of firearms in the Zulu kingdom from 1873 until 1878. During Cetshwayo's six year reign (1873-79) threats to Zulu sovereignty posed by the South African Republic and later the British government, grew larger. The enhanced political and military power and prestige attached to an army equipped with firearms provided the economic conditions favourable for Dunn and his merchant compatriots to sell an estimated twenty thousand guns in six years.⁽⁹⁷⁾ However, the arms traffic conducted by Dunn in Zululand was considered harmful to Britain's confederation scheme. The entire question of the Zululand arms trade came under official investigation with the approach of the Anglo-Zulu war. The activities of the Natal arms merchants and their mercantile outrider, John Dunn, did not go unnoticed.

After 1875 Shepstone opposed Dunn and saw him as a foe of the Transvaal and therefore of confederation. Dunn's fall from the British government's grace occurred mainly as a result of his introduction of firearms into Zululand. While it is to be remembered that Shepstone gave Dunn permission to convey two hundred and fifty guns to Cetshwayo in the 1860s, it was never the intention of the

(94) *Ibid.*

(95) *Natal Mercury*, 2 July 1874.

(96) Ethel Campbell's Notes, K.C.L. Book O, p.22.

(97) *B.P.P.*, C.-1961 of 1878, No. II, pp.30-31.
Chesson to Carnarvon, 27 July 1877.

Natal government to allow any significant quantity of firearms to fall into black hands. The Legislative Council had enacted Law No. II of 1862 which forbade the sale or exportation of firearms from the colony to Zululand or neighbouring African States.⁽⁹⁸⁾ Only in extraordinary cases, like Dunn's, did the Natal authorities consider it appropriate and expedient to permit limited quantities of arms to cross the Thukela. Subsequently, Dunn's later applications for firearms permits were, in most instances, denied. Between 1867 and 1872 Dunn made thirteen applications to the Attorney General's Office for permits allowing him to import into Zululand a total of four hundred guns and nine hundred pounds of powder. A later investigation of Dunn's trade in arms revealed that 'only fifty guns, powder and caps in moderate quantities were granted to Mr. Dunn, and solely for sporting and hunting purposes.'⁽⁹⁹⁾

In January of 1872 Cetshwayo pressed Dunn to obtain one hundred rifles and five hundred pounds of powder to counter the arms build-up in Swaziland and the always constant threat of further boer aggression. Dunn made one last attempt to persuade the Natal government to grant a permit. The Attorney-General referred Dunn's request to Shepstone who, in turn, promptly rejected it with a brief explanation attached:

Under existing circumstances I am satisfied it would be mistaken policy to go on arming any section of the Zulu people to the exclusion of the other portion, as complying with this request would certainly be. Panda's (Mpande's) death cannot be very far off, and it appears to me this eventuality and the possibility of a territorial quarrel with the boers, which it is aimed at, being provided against.⁽¹⁰⁰⁾

Effectively barred from importing firearms from Natal, Dunn turned to an alternative source in Mozambique. Dunn had two motives for supplying large quantities of arms and ammunition to the Zulu. First, Cetshwayo was determined not to fall behind in any arms race with the hostile boers and Swazis. The growing estrangement between Zululand

(98) C.O. 879/16/173, No. 5, p.5.

(99) *Ibid.*, No. IX, pp.63-64.

Bulwer to Hicks Beach, 3 April 1879.

(100) *Ibid.*

and the British government following the annexation of the Transvaal prompted the King to sever his frustrating ties with Natal and seek arms from territories not ruled by Britain. Therefore Dunn was forced to use Lourenco Marques as an arms entrepot or risk losing Cetshwayo's favour.⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Second, the trade in guns to Africans was immensely profitable. In 1860 Dunn had bought two hundred and fifty Tower muskets for 2/6d apiece; he resold them to Cetshwayo at a fixed rate of one gun for ten oxen, which sold on the Durban market for five to seven pounds per head.⁽¹⁰²⁾ Since the Zulu were bent on having firearms Dunn reasoned that he should use his extensive trading contacts to monopolize the gun trade, thus enriching himself and maintaining his influence with Cetshwayo.

From the time of the 1873 coronation until 1878 Dunn emerged as 'the' major supplier of firearms to the Zulu kingdom. The British Vice-Consul stationed at Lourenco Marques estimated 'that between 1875 and 1877 an average of twenty thousand guns (together with percussion caps), five hundred breech loaders, and ten thousand barrels of gunpowder passed through the port annually and that three-quarters of these went to Zululand.'⁽¹⁰³⁾ Dunn's conduct in the arms trade was legal in terms of Natal law. He did not engage in the smuggling of guns across the Thukela; rather he took advantage of a legal loophole and re-exported firearms from Durban to Lourenco Marques; whence they were sent southward to Zululand. The Durban firms of Lipperts and Deutzelman, A. Bennet, Beningfield and Sons, Randles Brothers and Hudson and A. Fass, purchased the guns for Dunn and re-exported them to Delagoa Bay.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ Once in Lourenco Marques, Dunn's Portuguese and Banyan agents would arrange for off-loading and transport to Zululand.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾

The large traffic in firearms to Zululand was first brought to Carnarvon's notice in July 1877 in a letter from Frank Chesson, Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society, who charged Dunn with

(101) Guy, 'Note on Firearms', p.560.

(102) Binns, *Last Zulu King*, pp.44-45.

(103) Guy, 'Note on Firearms', p.560.

(104) C.O. 879/15/173, Enclosure in No. 3, p.5. Bulwer to Hicks Beach, 3 April 1879.

(105) *Ibid.*, No. IX, p.64, Bulwer to Hicks Beach, 17 Feb. 1879.

being the principal agent:

As your Lordship is aware, the Natal government is represented in Zululand by Mr. John Dunn, who receives from the colonial exchequer a stipend of £300 a year. Mr. Dunn is also the king's chief adviser and agent, and in the latter capacity he has been the means of introducing into Zululand large quantities of arms. When in 1875 a correspondent of ours was at Lourenco Marques he spoke to a party of natives who informed him that Mr. Dunn had sent them to that place to bring back a parcel of five hundred guns...John Dunn is the chief though not the sole importer there.(106)

Carnarvon was alarmed at Chesson's accusations against Dunn and immediately despatched a copy of the letter to Lieutenant-Governor Bulwer, saying 'the allegation against Mr. Dunn, the agent for the Natal government in Zululand, is a serious one, and I have to instruct you to furnish me with a full report upon the statement that he supplied the natives with arms and ammunition'.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ After drawing on the information supplied by missionaries, traders and the consular staff at Lourenco Marques, Bulwer reported to the Colonial Office that Dunn was deeply implicated in the arms trade and that there was no reason to doubt the truth or accuracy of Chesson's statements.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ The Natal press published excerpts of Chesson's letter and added its' own accusations that Dunn was indeed the main culprit involved in arming the Zulu. As a result of the adverse publicity, Dunn became extremely unpopular with Natal settlers.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

Carnarvon resigned his post as Colonial Secretary in the early months of 1878. His successor, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, was as equally determined to stop the arms trade with the self-governing African states.⁽¹¹⁰⁾ He initiated a lengthy inquiry which was embodied in despatches entitled 'South and East African Arms Trade and Proposed Commercial Arrangements with Portugal'. Hicks Beach pressured the Portuguese government into prohibiting the entry of firearms bound for

(106) *B.P.P.*, C.1961 of 1878. No. II, pp.30-31, Chesson to Carnarvon, 27 July, 1877.

(107) *Ibid.*, No. VI, p.32, Carnarvon to Bulwer, 1- Aug. 1877.

(108) *B.P.P.*, C.-2222 of 1879, No. XXIII, p.103. Hicks Beach to Frere, 26 Dec. 1878.

(109) *Natal Mercury*, 4 June 1878.

(110) Goodfellow, *S.A. Confederation*, pp.111 and 153.

Zululand through Delagoa Bay. A British warship was sent to patrol the Mozambique channel and make a practical demonstration of Britain's resolve to curtail arms importation into foreign territories that bordered her South African colonies. In his capacity as Commander-in-Chief and Admiral of Natal, Bulwer reported to Hicks Beach on 27 March 1878 that the presence of the H.M.S. "DANAE" in Mozambique waters 'will have a beneficial effect at this moment and will be of service in staying the wholesale introduction of arms through that port'. (111)

Hicks Beach also instructed the Consular staff at Lourenco Marques to provide additional information on the extent, the participants and the mechanics of the arms trade. In September 1878 the Vice Consul reported to his superiors:

At least three-quarters of the guns imported into Zululand were imported for the account of John Dunn, and the payment for same made in cattle to his agents in Durban, Natal. These are the facts that I can vouch for, and I have from time to time brought same before the colonial press, but nothing has come of it. I do not wish to mention the names of firms who have been engaged principally in this trade, but they are mostly English. (112)

In April 1879 Bulwer reported to the Colonial Secretary: 'It cannot be said that this trade in guns between Natal and Delagoa was ever a large one when compared to the large numbers imported into the diamond fields', and 'the returns show that during the period 1872-1877, 19,608 were imported to Delagoa Bay'. (113) However, Natal's Lieutenant-Governor deplored the connivance of British merchants in Durban who used deficiencies in the government regulations to allow the export of arms to Zululand, via Mozambique. He reminded the Colonial Secretary of this fact in the same despatch: 'The one respect then as I have observed in which the colony of Natal has departed from the spirit of its own regulations has been in allowing the trans-

(111) C.O. 879/15/173, No. 2, p.4. Bulwer to Hicks Beach, 27 Mar. 1878.

(112) *Ibid.*, Enclosure 2 in No. 4, p.6. Thompson to the Colonial Office, 22 Sept. 1878.

(113) *Ibid.*, p.34. Bulwer to Hicks Beach, 29 Apr. 1878.

shipment of a number of cheap guns from Port Natal to Delagoa Bay'. (114)

Dunn was not without rejoinders to the 'official' disapproval of his arms transactions. He defended his arming of the Zulu in a letter to Bulwer in February 1879 outlining the approval of his actions by Natal officials, Dunn cited two instances, one in 1861 and the second in 1869-70, when Theophilus Shepstone had given Dunn permits to take guns across the Thukela into Zululand. The first occasion was at the time of Shepstone's ratification of Cetshwayo's paramountcy in 1861 and the latter permit was issued by Shepstone and Lieutenant-Governor Keate to thwart boer aggression in the disputed territory. Dunn also maintained that in 1869 the Attorney General and Acting Colonial Secretary, Michael Gallwey, warned him that there was an 'envious feeling in Natal' among colonists jealous of his success in Zululand. Dunn claimed that Gallwey had advised him to import firearms through Delagoa Bay in order to avoid embarrassment to the Natal government. In 1873 Dunn insisted that he had accepted the labour agency from Shepstone on the condition that he 'be allowed to carry on his private business and continue arming the Zulus'. He justified his arms deals with the argument that by arming the Zulu the South African Republic would be checked in its aspirations to grab Zulu territory and gain an outlet to the Indian Ocean through the kingdom. (115)

The hint of Gallwey's collusion and unofficial approval of Dunn's arms transactions prompted Hicks Beach to request an explanation from the Attorney General. Gallwey drew up a lengthy and thorough report in which he repudiated Dunn's accusations: 'I certainly never advised Mr. Dunn to get his supplies for any purpose whatever from Delagoa Bay'. (116) Gallwey also produced copies of Dunn's applications for firearms permits, most of which had been rejected. Gallwey claimed that it had never been the policy of the Natal government to arm the Zulu and Dunn's political views were not those of Natal:

(114) *Ibid.*

(115) *Ibid.*, Enclosure 1 in No. 9, p.62. Bulwer to Hicks Beach, 17 Feb. 1879.

(116) *Ibid.*, Enclosure 2 in No. 9, pp.63-64. Bulwer to Hicks Beach, 17 Feb. 1879.

It will be found that the supply of guns was time after time refused, because of the pending territorial disputes, and the unsettled state of Zululand, and because it was feared that by granting permission to Mr. Dunn to arm his people, the arms supplied for hunting might be used for a different purpose. Indeed in March 1872, an application to purchase only five guns was refused.(117)

Even before Gallwey's report had been asked for Hicks Beach felt that Dunn had 'acted in a manner quite inconsistent with the position of an agent of the Natal government', (118) and requested Bulwer to consider whether Dunn should be allowed to retain his position as Protector of Immigrants. The Colonial Secretary clearly desired Dunn's dismissal; but his role as intermediary between Cetshwayo and the British government on the eve of the Anglo-Zulu war precluded any immediate suspension, as Hicks Beach cautioned:

but should you agree in the opinion that his services should be dispensed with, you will of course bear in mind, in deciding on the time at which this should be done, the exceptional relations now existing between the Natal government and the Zulus, and the influence which Mr. Dunn, perhaps now the only white resident in Zululand, may be capable of exercising over Cetshwayo.(119)

The appointment of Sir Bartle Frere as South African High Commissioner in 1876 only compounded the erosion of Dunn's political and economic base in Natal and Zululand. Carnarvon had invested wide civil and military powers in Frere in the hope that he would take the initiative and carry through a South Africa confederation. By mid-1877 Frere had decided that unification could only be achieved through the implementation of self-government in the colonies and the subjugation of independent African peoples in the Transvaal, the Transkei and Zululand. (120) The High Commissioner agreed with his Colonial Office superiors and his colleague Shepstone that the proliferation of firearms in Zululand would only endanger further the safety of settler communities in Natal and the Transvaal. Frere sent alarming reports

(117) *Ibid.*

(118) *B.P.P.*, C.-2222 of 1879, No. XXIII, p.103.

(119) *Ibid.*

(120) Goodfellow, *S.A. Confederation*, p.155.

to Hicks Beach which repeatedly stressed the menace of a Zulu army equipped with firearms; 'it seems to me almost childish to expect Europeans in Natal to feel security of life or property when the only changes they can hear of in Zulu habits or aspirations is in the possession of large numbers of improved firearms and in the earnest desire to use them against whites'.⁽¹²¹⁾ Dunn's duplicity in the arms trade was considered intolerable by Frere and he referred to Dunn as 'a soiled rag'.⁽¹²²⁾ He agreed with Hicks Beach and Bulwer that Dunn's role as purveyor of firearms to Zululand was inimical to the interests of confederation, and that Dunn's name should be struck from the Natal Civil List.

The investigation of the arms trade in Zululand yielded more incriminating evidence on Dunn's role during the Anglo-Zulu war. By 1 January 1879 Dunn had evacuated his family, retainers and cattle from southern Zululand for the safety of Natal. On 18 January advance units from Colonel Pearson's invading column found a letter amid the charred remains of Dunn's Mangete residence, it was from Dunn's Portuguese agent in Lourenco Marques, Manuelo Tenisa, acknowledging the distribution of guns.⁽¹²³⁾ A copy of the letter eventually reached Hicks Beach via Frere, it read:

Referring to my letters of the 11th and 15th inst., and other previous communications, the messengers have arrived to whom I have delivered the guns, viz:

6 guns from Beningfield and Sons.	
732 Prussian rifles - Lippert & Deutzelmann	
106 rifles from Beningfield and Sons.	
also one package containing	254) Bullet moulds belonging
" " "	237) to the Prussian rifles.(124)
" " "	252)

The letter from Tenisa was a godsend to Bulwer and Gallwey for here was concrete evidence of Dunn's large-scale trafficking in firearms. The Colonial Office knew the name of Dunn's agent in Lourenco Marques and

(121) B.P.P., C.-2222 of 1879, No. LVIII, p.226.

Frere to Hicks Beach, 27 Dec. 1878.

(122) J. Martineau, *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Bartle Frere*, (London, 1895), vol. I, p.357.

(123) *The Commercial Advertiser*, 11 Feb. 1879.

(124) C.O. 879/15/173, Enclosure in No. 10, p.67. Frere to Hicks Beach, 24 Feb. 1879. Tenisa wrote this letter to Dunn on 29 Nov. 1877.

the Durban merchants involved in the re-export trade. In a despatch to Hicks Beach, dated 3 April 1879 Bulwer stated categorically that it was 'unquestionable that Messrs. Beningfield and Sons of Durban were engaged in exporting arms to Delagoa Bay'.⁽¹²⁵⁾ By 1878 Dunn had clearly fallen from the favour of highly placed metropolitan and colonial officials. Dunn's trade in firearms was finished by mid-1878 and his position in the kingdom tenuous. It would take British military reverses during the Zulu war and significant changes in imperial personnel before Dunn would be presented with opportunities to re-gain political and economic power in post-war Zululand.

(125) *Ibid.*, No. 10, p.Z. Bulwer to Hicks Beach, 3 Apr. 1879.

CHAPTER SIX

WAR AND SETTLEMENT

The Anglo-Zulu war of 1879 had tragic and far-reaching consequences for the Zulu people. Their army was defeated, their King deposed and exiled, and their independence destroyed. The war also dramatically affected John Dunn's career in Zululand; self-interest and the safety and well-being of his family and clients compelled Dunn to compromise his neutrality and support the British imperial policy. He regained his political and economic power by serving with the British invasion army, and later by acting as one of the most influential of the thirteen appointed chiefs chosen to rule post-war Zululand. Dunn's moral and political credibility suffered irreparable harm as a result of his 'defection' from Zulu to British political service. He was branded a traitor by many Zulu and he was equally despised by white settlers, missionaries and government officials.

Dunn was in a dilemma; he had to decide whether to support the Zulu King and the kingdom that had given him wealth, power and status, or to aid the forces of British imperialism. Moreover, Dunn's controversial actions during the war have never been adequately linked with imperial coercion which really holds the key in explaining Dunn's political transformation.⁽¹⁾

(i) The Anglo-Zulu War of 1879

The greatest obstacle to British expansion in Zululand was the Zulu King. Cetshwayo was as equally determined to defend Zulu sovereignty against white intrusion and maintain the *status quo* within the kingdom. He held a deep reverence and respect for the cultural heritage of his people. He made no serious attempt to alter the basic fabric of Zulu society in the face of European

(1) For a sketch of Dunn's career during this period see C. Ballard 'The Political Transformation of a Transfrontiersman; The Career of John Dunn in Zululand, 1857-1879', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, No.3, vol. VII, May 1979.

pressures on the spiritual, economic and political life of the northern Nguni state. He annually attended and presided over the important ceremony of the feast of the first-fruits, rewarded and punished his subjects for deeds and misdeeds according to Zulu law, and dedicated himself to strengthening those values on which the Zulu empire had been founded and flourished. Cetshwayo displayed little inclination to implement or even experiment with western European concepts of law and religion. In cross-examination before the Cape Government Commission on Native Laws and Customs, Cetshwayo was asked whether he could alter the laws relating to the *lobola* system. He replied:

... No, the king says he cannot alter a law like that, because it has been the custom in Zululand he supposes ever since the nation was created. Every king has agreed to the law, and so must he. The nation would say that anyone who tries to change that law was a bad king.⁽²⁾

Once King, Cetshwayo made no radical changes in the government of the kingdom; unlike his predecessors, Shaka and Dingane, he preserved the prevailing order as far as the political hierarchy was concerned. Hamu, Zibbebhu and Mnyamana still retained much of their autonomy although they had professed their loyalty and obedience to the King. Cetshwayo initiated no purges of his potential rivals and sought instead to reach an accord with his powerful kinsmen.⁽³⁾ In essence, Cetshwayo was a 'traditionalist'.

By 1877 Lord Carnarvon had met with little success in his bid to achieve confederation. The settler community and the administration of African affairs had only just been brought under firmer Colonial Office control by Wolseley in 1875. The Natal Charter of 1856 had been amended for a period of five years (1875-1880) to reduce the powers of the elected members of the Legislative Council - most of whom were opposed to imperial control of finances and African affairs.⁽⁴⁾

(2) 'Cetshwayo's Evidence to the Cape Government Commission on Native Laws and Customs' in Webb and Wright (eds.), *A Zulu King Speaks*, p.67, question fifteen.

(3) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, pp.37-39.

(4) See Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, Chapters I and III.

Shepstone was *en route* to annex the Transvaal and there was no guarantee that he would succeed. What Carnarvon now needed was an administrator capable of completing the process of unification in its entirety. The Colonial Office Secretary considered Sir Henry Barkly unequal to the difficult task. Carnarvon's choice to succeed Barkly was the Indian proconsul, Sir Bartle Frere.⁽⁵⁾ Frere was given sweeping powers not only in the Cape Colony but in Natal, Basutoland, the Transkei and Griqualand West. Frere arrived in Cape Town in April 1877.⁽⁶⁾

Sixteen days after Frere's arrival Shepstone annexed the Transvaal and events in that region came to occupy much of Frere's attention. As special administrator, Shepstone attempted to win the loyalty of the boers to the British Crown. In order to accomplish this feat, Shepstone felt that he had to convince the boers that British policy placed the interests of Europeans above those of the African population. During the era of the South African Republic the boers had laid claim to extensive tracts of land just as they had done in the Cape Colony before the Great Trek of the 1830s. Afrikaner settlers had moved into Zulu territory following the Treaty of Waaihoek in 1861; by 1873 the Blood River area was home to hundreds of boers.⁽⁷⁾

Shepstone reasoned that a successful pacification of the Afrikaners depended on a demonstration of Britain's will to recognize boer claims by grabbing land belonging to the Zulu in the Blood River territory. Frere was convinced by Shepstone that an independent Zulu kingdom did not serve the interests of confederation and that only by the complete subjugation of Zululand could union be realized.⁽⁸⁾ The High Commissioner mounted an aggressive diplomatic and political offensive to persuade the Colonial Office that Zululand was a savage and barbaric state that threatened the stability of southern Africa.

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- (5) Wilson and Thompson (eds.), *Oxford History*, vol. II, chapter VI. Thompson, 'Great Britain and the Afrikaner Republics', p.297.
 (6) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, p.155.
 (7) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.100.
 (8) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, p.155.

To achieve his ends Frere used a variety of moral, political and economic arguments to impress upon the British government the 'barbarism' of Cetshwayo's rule. Frere's zeal to achieve unification was reinforced when in February 1878 Lord Carnarvon abruptly resigned. The architect of confederation was disillusioned by the growing Afrikaner resistance to British rule, African uprisings in the eastern Cape, and disagreement with Disraeli over British policy toward Turkey. Carnarvon's successor, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, was immediately engaged in the growing crisis with Russia over power-play manoeuvres in Turkey and on the north-western frontier of India.⁽⁹⁾ Frere was now left to his own devices and he was more determined than ever to carry out the confederation scheme. Zululand obsessed Frere and he capitalized on every border incident and intemperate action committed by the Zulu as a pretext for justifying a punitive war.⁽¹⁰⁾

When the uDlondlo and uDloklo regiments sought their brides in 1876 five unwilling young women were executed and scores fled to Natal. Sir Henry Bulwer sent Cetshwayo a stiff message reminding him of his 'coronation vows' not to shed blood indiscriminately. The Zulu King had resented Shepstone's gratuitous interference in the internal affairs of his nation. Cetshwayo replied to Bulwer's reprimand with a militant message, without consulting Dunn, who was absent.⁽¹¹⁾ Bulwer let the matter drop until Frere resurrected Cetshwayo's message two years later. The High Commissioner used this document as evidence of Zulu 'barbarism'.⁽¹²⁾

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- (9) Adrian Preston (ed.), *Sir Garnet Wolseley's South African Journal 1879 (Transvaal and Zululand)*, (Cape Town, 1973), p.2.
- (10) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.134.
- (11) *B.P.P.*, C.-2220 of 1878, No. 45, p.182. Frere to Hicks Beach, 22 Nov., 1878.
- (12) *Ibid.*, and C.-2222 of 1879, No. 58, p.226. Frere to Hicks Beach, 27 Dec. 1878. Frere bombarded the Colonial Office with correspondence that constantly compared Cetshwayo with Shaka. He painted the worst image possible of the Zulu King and denigrated every facet of his character; 'I have not yet met in conversation or in writing with a single one who could tell me of any act of justice, mercy or good faith, or of anything approaching gratitude which had ever been related by a credible witness of the present King. The monster Chaka is his model, to emulate Chaka in shedding blood is as far as I have heard his highest aspiration'.

Expenditure on military intervention in foreign territories by the British government was often justified on the strength of the increased trade balances that would be realized. Economic arguments figured prominently in Frere's tactics. The High Commissioner compared the higher trade figures of the Natal Nguni with the much lower figures recorded for Zululand. Frere expressed confidence that British trade with the Zulu people would increase substantially once Cetshwayo's oppressive rule had been abolished. (13)

Frere claimed further that the Natal Nguni were enjoying the benefits of British rule and this enabled them to avail themselves of European articles of trade; 'Yet this population, so largely recruited by pauper refugees, earns here the means of purchasing imported manufactures, clothing, hardware, tools, ploughs, etc., to the value of about £75,000 per annum, and the trade is increasing'. (14)

Frere viewed the arms trade in Zululand as an extremely dangerous development. (15) He did not consider guns a positive and legitimate item of trade and took the opportunity to enlighten the Colonial Office on the supposed obsession of Cetshwayo to arm his soliders:

The enclosed returns, however, do not include guns. The king purchases a good many and fines all headmen who do not provide themselves with some sort of firearm. Such gun trade is, of course, a poor substitute for other commerce, whilst the taste to which it ministers is inimical to the peace of all within reach of the king, anxious to emulate the sanguinary fame of his Uncle Shaka. (16)

Frere also capitalized on missionary discontent in Zululand and used their complaints of persecution against Cetshwayo to bolster his case for British intervention. Cetshwayo frowned upon missionary endeavour. He thought that their teachings were seditious and that

(13) *Ibid.*, p.213. Frere to Hicks Beach, 16 Dec. 1878.

(14) *Ibid.*

(15) *Ibid.*

(16) *Ibid.*, Enclosure 1 in No. 55. Frere to Hicks Beach, 16 Dec. 1878.

they gave aid and comfort to misfits, social outcasts and criminals.⁽¹⁷⁾ Zululand's missionaries were deeply frustrated because very few Zulu were ever converted to Christianity. The patrilineage-production system provided the Zulu with a sound socio-economic foundation. A distinct division and allocation of labour power kept most Zulu fully occupied; the men tended the cattle, built huts and performed duties around the kraals of the King and the headmen; women attended to domestic duties and cultivated the fields. The Zulu kingdom was practically self-sufficient in its national needs. Therefore, the very strength of the patrilineage-production system made it impervious spiritually to such an alien ideology as Christianity. There were nearly twenty-five mission stations and fifty missionaries in Zululand by 1877, but there were probably fewer than five hundred Zulu converts to show for over twenty years of work.

The most militant and uncompromising of the missionaries was Reverend Robertson of the Anglican Church and Reverend Oftebro of the Norwegians. Unlike the sympathetic Bishop Colenso, these men made no attempt to understand the spiritual or social nature of Zulu society and every custom that conflicted with Christianity was considered uncivilized and should therefore be abolished. Robertson and a number of other missionaries wrote vicious and exaggerated accounts of Cetshwayo's oppression of Zulu Christians.⁽¹⁸⁾ In August 1877 most of the missionaries fled to Zululand at the height of an alarm on the Transvaal border. They did so on the advice of Shepstone who wanted Cetshwayo to appear as the 'heathen' persecutor of Christian teaching.⁽¹⁹⁾

Frere and Shepstone skilfully played on the colonists' fears of African rebellion by accusing Cetshwayo of being in league with the rebel chieftains Kreli and Sandili in the Cape Colony.⁽²⁰⁾ The High Commissioner and the Transvaal Administrator vigorously promoted the idea that the Zulu King was at the root of black unrest in southern Africa. Frere and Shepstone asserted that Zulu independence inspired rebellion against British rule as far south as the Cape and northward

(17) Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', p.191.

(18) *B.P.P.*, C.-2220 of 1879, No. 129, p.340. Frere to Hicks Beach, 23 Oct. 1878.

(19) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.283.

(20) *Ibid.*, p.286.

into the Transvaal.⁽²¹⁾ However, Cetshwayo never gave advice or assistance to the rebel Cape chiefs and had only offered to ally himself with Sekhukhuni against their common enemy, the Transvaal boers in 1876.⁽²²⁾ John Dunn defended the King and refuted Frere's allegations of a conspiracy of African rebels inspired by Cetshwayo:

There is no notion which has been more generally entertained, from Table Mountain to Zoutpansberg, than the very plausible idea that Cetshwayo has been the prime instigator of all the mischief which has been abroad ever since he became king. The foundation of known fact, upon which this charge rests, is but slight indeed. Dunn says that it is absolutely false. Between Cetshwayo and Kreli there was no intercourse worth the name, and between the king and Sandili none at all ... It is also admitted that there was an understanding between Cetshwayo and Sikukuni to act in concert against the Transvaal boers. This was arranged after President Burgers had retired with his commando from the Bapedi Reserve in August 1876; and the execution of the plan was only prevented by the endeavours of Dunn and the urgent representations of the government of Natal.⁽²³⁾

Determined to strip Zululand of its independence by armed force, Frere ordered Lieutenant-General Sir Frederic Theesiger, later Lord Chelmsford, the commander of imperial forces in South Africa, to draw up a contingency plan for the invasion of Zululand. Theesiger had arrived in the eastern Cape in March 1878. He immediately began a campaign against the rebellious Ngqikas and Gcalekas whom he succeeded in crushing by July 1878. Chelmsford arrived in Natal in August and after five months of intensive preparation, informed Frere in early November that eleven battalions of imperial troops, one thousand colonial volunteers and seven thousand Natal Nguni were poised for an invasion of Zululand.⁽²⁴⁾

Frere overcame one other obstacle in the path leading to war. He

- (21) *B.P.P.*, C.-2222 of 1879, No. 56, p.109. Frere to Carnarvon, 19 Oct. 1878.
- (22) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.251.
- (23) J.W. Colenso, *Bishop Colenso's Commentary on Frere's Policy*, (Bishopstowe, 1882), pp.630-631.
- (24) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.286.

rendered meaningless the findings of the Zululand and Transvaal Boundary Commission of 1878. The instigator of the Commission was Lieutenant-Governor Bulwer who earnestly desired a peaceful solution to the developing impasse between the British subjects in the Transvaal and Natal with Zululand. Bulwer offered Cetshwayo a negotiated settlement based on the findings of an investigation of all aspects of the disputed boundary in the Blood River district. Cetshwayo accepted Bulwer's proposals and on 7 March 1878 Michael Gallwey, Attorney-General of Natal, John Shepstone, Acting Secretary for Native Affairs, and Lieutenant-Colonel Anthony Durnford met at Rorke's Drift to examine the claims. After four months evaluation of the evidence, Gallwey concluded that practically the entire Blood river area should be awarded to Zululand. (25)

Frere was shocked at the Commission's findings for they raised his fears of a revolt by the Transvaal boers should the award be granted. In order to counter the effects of the Boundary Commission findings Frere delayed sending the full context of the award to London until Chelmsford had perfected his invasion plans; and until minor incidents between Zululand and Natal could be used as a pretext to initiate hostilities. By mid-November 1878 Frere had successfully exploited events to the point where he could instruct Bulwer to deliver an ultimatum to the Zulu king which required him to surrender his nation's independence or suffer the consequences of a British invasion. (26)

With the approach of the Zulu war Dunn's influence over Cetshwayo also diminished. The King came to view Dunn's motives with suspicion. Britain's disregard for Zulu claims against boer encroachment and Frere's aggressive campaign to emasculate Zulu sovereignty appeared to contradict Dunn's view that the British government would see justice done to the Zulu. The first instance of strained relations with Cetshwayo was mentioned by Dunn in a letter to John Shepstone, the Acting Secretary for Native Affairs, on 20 October 1878:

I think I am right in informing you, for the information of His Excellency, the Lieutenant-Governor, that I found

(25) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.277.

(26) *Ibid*, pp.292-293.

the Zulu king in a very excited state today. He said that rumours had reached him from Natal that the Natal government had taken steps to completely surround him; and that I was only blinding him as regards the movements of the Natal government.(27)

As Dunn's influence with Cetshwayo waned that of the more militant *izinduna*, notably Sihayo and Rabaniana, grew. These two men came to exercise a considerable sway over Cetshwayo and urged the king to defy the demands of the Natal government. Acting on their advice Cetshwayo ordered Dunn to write a defiant letter to Lieutenant-Governor Bulwer. Refusing to comply Dunn told Cetshwayo that he would have nothing to do with any correspondence that expressed the hostile opinions of Sihayo and Rabanina and he would, furthermore, wait until Hamu, Mnyamana and Zibhebhu had been consulted.(28)

Dunn explained his position saying:

I, however, waited until the indunas arrived, and I explained to them what had taken place, and that I refused to go further with Cetywayo in sending messages to the government with only Sirayo and Rabanina as his advisers, as I could plainly see that they were leading him astray.(29)

Dunn's presence at the royal kraal now became untenable as Cetshwayo made preparations for hostilities and summoned his regiments to Ulundi to be doctored for war. Many Zulu now regarded Dunn as little more than a spy and Sihayo and Rabanina even requested Cetshwayo to have Dunn put to death. Exultant warriors paraded through Dunn's camp and threatened his life. Realizing that his influence with Cetshwayo was now of little worth Dunn informed the King that he was leaving and could be contacted at his Mangete residence.(30)

This was the last time that Dunn and Cetshwayo saw one another --

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- (27) *B.P.P.*, C-2222 of 1879. Sub-enclosure 10 in enclosure 2, No. VI, p.53. Dunn to J.W. Shepstone, 20 Oct. 1878.
 (28) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.71.
 (29) *Ibid.*
 (30) *Ibid.*, pp.72-73.

it was the end of a unique relationship.⁽³¹⁾ In twenty years Dunn had come to know the Zulu King as no other white man. Theophilus Shepstone had met Cetshwayo twice only and Bishop Colenso did not meet the king until after the war. While their relationship grew out of mutual interests, Dunn and Cetshwayo were good friends. Cetshwayo had lavished gifts of women, cattle, land, hunting privileges and trading monopolies on his 'white man'. Dunn gave Cetshwayo an expensive carriage, liquor, firearms and other articles of European manufacture.⁽³²⁾ Now Dunn was scorned and excluded from the King's councils especially those sessions devoted to political relations with Natal and the Transvaal.⁽³³⁾

Before the approach of war Dunn was not in full agreement with all the King's policies and actions. He opposed the custom of 'smelling out' and the execution of so-called *abathakathi* or witches. The number of executions ordered by Cetshwayo were mild in comparison to the degree of bloodshed that marked the reigns of Shaka and Dingane. However, incidents happened that Dunn felt to be unjust and cruel; it caused him to remark that 'Life was held very cheap in Zululand in those days, and if Cetywayo has, in some future day, to give an account of all the lives he has taken in cold blood, he will have a heavy score to settle'.⁽³⁴⁾

A third and very personal factor reinforced Dunn's belief that Cetshwayo was in some respects a 'bloodthirsty' monarch. In 1871 Dunn took as one of his wives a Zulu woman from the northern part of the kingdom. This wife became a favourite but after the young woman came to live at Mangete she committed adultery with one of Dunn's *izinduna*

(31) *Ibid.*

Dunn gave this version of his parting with Cetshwayo who began by saying: 'I am not a child; I see the English wish to have my country; but if they come in I will fight. I said 'Yes, I see, it is no use talking to you anymore; your soldiers are leading you to a precipice and you will be pushed over yourself'.

(32) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.208.

(33) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.30.

(34) *Ibid.*, p.29.

and fled from the Ungoye. When Cetshwayo heard of this offence he immediately sent a party of his hunters in pursuit. Eventually the wayward wife was captured and Dunn, now fearing for her life, sent one of his hunters to bring her back to Mangete. While *en route* to Dunn's residence the young woman was executed by Cetshwayo's party and her body thrown into a crocodile pool. Dunn was distressed when he learned of his wife's fate and held Cetshwayo responsible for her death.⁽³⁵⁾ Cetshwayo felt that Dunn's honour took precedence over any mercy for an adultress and he had acted in accordance with the usages of Zulu law.

Three weeks after Dunn's departure from Ulundi he received a message from Cetshwayo requesting him to attend the announcement of the British government's boundary award on 11 December 1878.⁽³⁶⁾ Dunn complied and on the appointed day he arrived at the lower drift of the Thukela with three principal *izinduna*, eleven minor chieftains and forty retainers. Representing the British authorities were John Shepstone, Charles Brownlee, Henry Francis Fynn and Colonel Forestier Walker of the Scots Guards. At 11 a.m. Shepstone announced that the disputed territory in the Blood River district had been awarded to the Zulu nation. Shepstone then read the nullifying clause which stipulated that boer families resident there must be compensated by the Zulu if they chose to leave and those that remained would be protected by the Crown with a British resident stationed at Utrecht to enforce their rights. After reading the award Shepstone imparted the demands that Frere had drawn up - which amounted to an unworkable ultimatum designed to destroy the independence of Zululand.⁽³⁷⁾ The terms and conditions of the ultimatum read as follows:

- 1). The surrender of Mbilini, a Swazi chief living in Zululand under Cetshwayo's protection, who had made a raid into the Transvaal and killed a number of its African inhabitants.
- 2). The surrender of the brother and sons of Sihayo.
- 3). A fine of five hundred cattle for Cetshwayo's failure to comply with the Lieutenant-Governor's demand for this surrender.

(35) D.D.P., (K.C.L.) Ms. Dun 2.09, 1459, pp.12-14.

(36) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.74-75.

(37) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.286.

- 4). A fine of one hundred cattle in connection with the Smith-Deighton case.

The last six demands were harsh and substantive conditions that directed the inhabitants of a sovereign African state to repudiate their national traditions and submit to foreign rule. They were:

- 5). The stationing of a British Resident in Zululand.
- 6). The disbanding of the Zulu army.
- 7). The granting to the young warriors of permission to marry.
- 8). The observance of the king's coronation promises regarding the unjust shedding of blood.
- 9). The re-admittance of the missionaries into Zululand.
- 10). The undertaking only to make war with the consent of the British Resident and the National Council.⁽³⁸⁾

The ultimatum of 1879 was the climax of Sir Bartle Frere's two year campaign to destroy Zulu military power and Zulu independence in the name of South African confederation. He deemed it essential to subjugate the remaining sovereign black states in order to stabilize the frontiers of white settlement in the Cape colony, Natal, and the newly annexed Transvaal.⁽³⁹⁾ That Frere had not received the prior blessing of Disraeli's government to deliver an ultimatum is well known; Frere's compatriot in pressing for a British confrontation with the Zulu kingdom was the Administrator of the Transvaal, Sir Theophilus Shepstone.

There was no doubt in Dunn's mind that the British government was bent on subjugating Zululand by military force. In the face of such harsh terms Dunn prudently decided not to convey the contents of the ultimatum to Cetshwayo personally for fear of his life. Instead, he retained the original copies and sent his messengers to Ulundi with the full purport of the ultimatum.⁽⁴⁰⁾ After receiving Dunn's messengers, Cetshwayo sent runners to Dunn requesting him to write to the Natal government asking for an extension on the twenty-day deadline in order to collect the cattle demanded.

(38) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.134.

(39) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, p.155

(40) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.75.

Dunn complied.⁽⁴¹⁾ Frere vetoed Cetshwayo's request and instructed John Shepstone to reply to Dunn's letter of the 18th: 'I would express satisfaction at the receipt of his letter but inform Mr. Dunn that the word of the government as already given cannot now be altered'.⁽⁴²⁾

Cetshwayo viewed war with the British government as an unnecessary calamity but the few battalions of imperial troops that were stationed in Natal failed to impress him. The King and his army had no comprehension of the reserve might of the British armed forces or of the devastating effects of disciplined fire power. Sihayo's eldest son was a commander of the inGobamakosi regiment, and the army would resist any attempts on Cetshwayo's part to surrender him or his kinsmen to the Natal government. Any attempt to have yielded to Frere's demands for the disbanding of the Zulu regimental system would have been fiercely resisted by the majority of the people and Cetshwayo would have been confronted with a real threat of rebellion. His request for additional time to meet the ultimatum deadline was an evasive tactic designed to delay the inevitable British invasion and allow additional time for defensive preparations.

Dunn relayed Frere's refusal to the King at Ulundi, and this apparently convinced Cetshwayo that war was inevitable. Cetshwayo sent Dunn a second message offering him neutrality and reassured him that he 'might himself, if he pleased, sit still close to the border, and the Zulus should not harm him'.⁽⁴³⁾ Thoroughly alarmed at Cetshwayo's militant tone, Dunn informed the Natal government of the King's latest posture on 30 December 1878: 'He has now quite changed his tone and now is determined to fight, as he says that from what he hears of the forces that are to be sent against him he can easily eat them up one after the other'.⁽⁴⁴⁾

(41) *B.P.P.*, C-2222 of 1879. Enclosure 1 in No. 59.

Dunn to J.W. Shepstone, 18 Dec. 1878.

(42) *Ibid.*, Enclosure 2 in No. 59. Frere to Bulwer, memo of 24 Dec. 1878.

(43) *B.P.P.*, C-2242 of 1879. No. 5, p.12. Dunn to J.W. Shepstone, 30 Dec. 1878.

(44) *Ibid.*

In Natal there was a good deal of speculation among official observers as to Dunn's whereabouts and intentions. In early November the Special Border Agent for Umvoti, J.E. Fannin, informed the Colonial Secretary of the unsettled conditions in Dunn's district: 'Nothing fresh up here, but this; that last night three kraals of John Dunn's people came over here as refugees, and it is said that more are coming'.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Fannin emphasized that the flight of Dunn's people would surely endanger his life if he were still at Ulundi:

I do not see what will become of the people if they come over here, where starvation is setting in fast.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Dunn's head wife has not heard from him for four weeks, and has sent up to him to hear how matters stand. They are, I think, all afraid to stay in Zululand; but it will, most likely, be his death warrant if they run away.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Dunn left Ulundi in mid-November 1878 and news of his estrangement from Cetshwayo filtered back to Fannin via refugees from the Ngyoe. He wrote to the Colonial Secretary: 'Mr. John Dunn is out of favour with all. He is blamed for not having warned the king and the nation of the danger they were incurring by the course of conduct they were pursuing'.⁽⁴⁸⁾

The coming of war threatened to destroy Dunn's livelihood and his lifestyle. Dunn had attempted to ingratiate himself with both British and Zulu political leaders and until the annexation of the Transvaal he had been successful in this. His political and economic base rested on a policy of peace and cooperation between Natal and Zululand. The hostility that came to characterize the political relations of the two governments left little room for a man in Dunn's dual position. The British and the Zulu both expected Dunn's undivided loyalty and support.

(45) *B.P.P.*, C-2308 of 1879. Enclosure 1 in No. 7., p.16. Fannin to Colonial Secretary 12 Nov. 1878.

(46) 1878 was a year of severe drought and food shortages in Natal and Zululand.

(47) *B.P.P.*, C-2308 of 1879. Enclosure 1 in No. 7., p.16. Fannin to Colonial Secretary 12 Nov. 1878.

(48) *Ibid.*, Sub-enclosure to enclosure 1 in No. 7., p.21 Fannin to Colonial Secretary 4 Dec. 1878.

Anxious for the safety of his family and followers in the event of a war in Zululand, Dunn requested an interview with Lord Chelmsford, commander of the invasion army, to discuss his predicament. In the course of the conversation Chelmsford asked Dunn what his intentions were should war break out. Dunn replied that he had no quarrel with the Zulu and that he wished to remain neutral. Chelmsford stated that neutrality was unacceptable and that Dunn must support the British government or lose his lands and possessions in a post-war Zululand. The British commander advised Dunn to cross the Thukela into Natal where he and his people would be accommodated and fed at government expense. Dunn was completely at the mercy of the British authorities and had little choice but to accept Chelmsford's terms. On 30 and 31 December 1878, the naval brigade ferried Dunn's train of two thousand people and three thousand cattle across the Thukela.⁽⁴⁹⁾ Several days later Dunn filed a report to the Border Agent, Fynney, indicating a willingness to volunteer his squad of hunters for the defence of the Natal border:

I beg to report the crossing of my people from Zululand into Natal, according to the desire of the General Lord Chelmsford and Commodore Sullivan who said you would receive instructions to feed and locate them. I may also state that my people are perfectly loyal and would be willing to act in any way, in defence of the border, under my instructions.⁽⁵⁰⁾

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- (49) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p,94. Dunn decided to leave Zululand when he learned that all Zulu regiments, including those near his district, had been summoned to Ulundi to attend the feast of the first-fruits ceremony. The slaughter of helpless dependants at Ndondakusuka in 1856 made a lasting impression on Dunn and he was determined to avoid a similar risk with his own dependants. It is evident that Dunn did not place much faith in Cetshwayo's assurances not to harm him or his subjects.
- (50) *S.N.A.*, Vol. 33, No. 28/1879. Dunn to Fynney. 4 Jan. 1879.

Dunn's private army of over two hundred hunters were considered a competent and veteran body of men by most colonial observers both military and civilian. The Deputy Adjutant General, Major Huskisson recognized the quality of Dunn's men and advised Bulwer 'that if John Dunn's men were armed they would prove a valuable force'.⁽⁵¹⁾ Lieutenant-Governor Bulwer was loathe to arm substantial numbers of Africans for the war effort and at this stage refused to allow the arming of Dunn's men.⁽⁵²⁾ Moreover, Frere viewed Dunn with suspicion and contempt and had given explicit orders for Chelmsford to disarm Dunn's corps.⁽⁵³⁾ Chelmsford also reneged on his promise to feed Dunn's people and Dunn was forced to slaughter his own cattle and purchase grain from the army commissariat at inflated prices. Disgusted with the turn of events Dunn acidly remarked that 'Lord Chelmsford broke his promise as to feeding my people and I had to do so myself at a very heavy expense ... so much for the word of anyone representing the authority of a military government'.⁽⁵⁴⁾

During the first three months of 1879 Dunn was kept busy attending to the needs of his people. Their crowded location was conducive to the spread of malaria and dysentery; these afflictions claimed the lives of nearly one hundred of Dunn's followers. To add to his financial problems, Dunn lost three hundred cattle through tick fever; and his position as Protector of Immigrants was finally cancelled by Bulwer, owing mainly to the disruption of traffic from Tsongaland caused by the war.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Dunn's fortunes were at their lowest ebb since he had moved to Zululand in 1858. But, just as imperial expansion into Zululand had deprived Dunn of his political and economic resources, the military disasters that accompanied that expansion presented Dunn with an opportunity to regain what he had lost.

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- (51) C.S.O., vol. 683, No. 560/1879. Huskisson to C.S.O. (telegraphic) 28 Jan. 1879.
 (52) *Ibid.*, C.S.O. to Huskisson (telegraphic), 28 Jan. 1879
 (53) B.P.P., C-2242 of 1879, No. 5, p.12. Dunn to J.W. Shepstone 30 Dec. 1878.
 (54) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.95.
 (55) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.93-94.

Chelmsford's forces invaded Zululand on 11 January 1879. On 22 January a British column was all but annihilated by a Zulu army at Isandlwana. British forces withdrew to the Thukela and Chelmsford ordered the column under Colonel Pearson advancing along the Zululand coast to Eshowe to do the same. Pearson had advanced thirty miles into Zululand by the time he received the order to withdraw; rather than risk a retreat through hostile territory Pearson decided to fortify Eshowe and await the arrival of reinforcements. Pearson notified Chelmsford that the garrison had sufficient provisions to last only until April. Chelmsford's first priority was to relieve Eshowe before embarking upon a second invasion.⁽⁵⁶⁾ The entire area from the lower drift to Eshowe lay in Dunn's domain and Chelmsford was determined to use Dunn's intimate knowledge of the terrain to augment his own reconnaissance network.

Chelmsford sent for Dunn on 21 February and reiterated to him that he could not remain neutral and expect to be reinstated to his former position at the end of the war. Dunn again promised the general that he could use his hunters as scouts provided that the British government armed them. Chelmsford accepted Dunn's offer but made no mention of Dunn's active participation at this meeting.⁽⁵⁷⁾ By early March Chelmsford decided that Dunn must be persuaded or coerced to accompany the relief column and conveyed his decision in writing:

I think it will be very advantageous if you yourself were to accompany me as far as the Inyezani river. I would not ask you to go further. Your presence with me would ensure the efficient scouting of your men, and I feel sure that I should myself derive much assistance from your experience of Zulu warfare and from your knowledge of the country passed through.⁽⁵⁸⁾

(56) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, pp.427, 434, 437 and 452.

(57) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.93-94.

(58) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459, pp.8-12.

Chelmsford had manoeuvred Dunn into a position where he could no longer withhold his personal involvement in the war. On 29 March 1879, John Dunn rode with the relief column at the head of two hundred and forty-four retainers; he was officially listed as political and military intelligence officer and carried the local rank of Commandant. Writing on his decision to fight against the Zulu, Dunn commented:

I could see that I could be of service in pointing out the means of averting another disaster, and besides, I knew that in the fighting between the boers and the English at the Bay (D'Urban) my father had suffered by remaining neutral, so I made up my mind to go with Lord Chelmsford to the relief of the Eshowe garrison. (59)

John Dunn was well suited to the duties assigned to him. Eshowe lay between the Thukela and Matikulu rivers, territory that had been under Dunn's control since 1858. Rigorous conditions on the South African frontier often required European frontiersmen and settlers to attain an expertise with horses and firearms in order to defend or impose their control over animal predators and hostile Africans. Dunn was renowned throughout Natal and Zululand for his marksmanship; and he was well acquainted with Zulu techniques of warfare. Before the annihilation of the British forces at Isandlwana Chelmsford had failed to heed seriously the advice of Paul Kruger in building a strong defensive laager from which the massed attacks of the Zulu could be more effectively repulsed. (60) Chelmsford's fitness as a military commander had been questioned by the British public since Isandlwana - hence the emphasis on laagering and efficient scouting. Chelmsford was determined that no defeat was to befall a British expedition under his command a second time and Dunn was given the important responsibility of selecting defensible laager sites. (61)

It is significant that Dunn's dramatic rise in both the pre-war and post-war Zulu political economy was due largely to his success in the military sphere. In the Zulu civil war of 1856 Dunn had won Cetshwayo's respect and admiration at the Battle of Ndongakusuka through his deadly skill with a rifle and the competence with which he commanded

(59) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.101.

(60) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.292.

(61) R.A. Brown (ed.), *The Road to Ulundi*, (Pietermaritzburg, 1969), p.35

his band of hunters.⁽⁶²⁾ Now, twenty-two years later, Dunn, aged forty-five, found himself under severe pressure from Lord Chelmsford to become a belligerent in a war in which he was extremely reluctant to become involved.

Commandant Dunn served Chelmsford well; he organized the forward reconnaissance duties assigned to his scouts by Major Percy Barrow.⁽⁶³⁾ Between 29 March and 4 April Dunn spent much of his time feeding information on the terrain and Zulu techniques of warfare to Chelmsford while seated next to the General on a wagon with Dunn's young protege, Johann William Colenbrander serving as driver.

On the 1 April the relief column encamped at Gingindhlovu, eighteen miles from Eshowe. Unaccompanied, Dunn scouted the area and located the Zulu army. Immediately Dunn advised Chelmsford to fortify the camp and prepare for an assault at dawn the next morning. Chelmsford heeded Dunn's advice and strengthened the easily defensible laager site selected earlier by Dunn. Shortly after sunrise on the morning of 2 April, twelve thousand Zulu attacked the British army as Dunn predicted.⁽⁶⁴⁾ The Zulu army was led by a senior *induna* and Usuthu supporter, Somopo of the Emangweni section.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Prince Dabulamanzi, mounted on a white horse, commanded a portion of the Zulu force. The Zulu attacked the fortified laager with their usual encircling movements comprising the center or 'chest' with the 'horns' or flanking columns.⁽⁶⁶⁾ The Zulu charged the British square but were cut down by a murderous hail of artillery, gatling and ranked volley fire. The battle was brief lasting less than an hour when the Zulu surrendered the field and retreated. Dunn positioned himself prominently in an open wagon and with cool calculating accuracy, killed an estimated thirty Zulu soldiers. Dunn gave this account of the battle:

The battle lasted for a short time, but for that short time it was very hot. At last we beat them off and followed them for some distance, my men doing good work. I know I fired over thirty shots, and missed very few. I was much disappointed at the shooting of the soldiers. Their sole

(62) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.452.

(63) *Ibid.*

(64) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.105.

(65) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p.251.

(66) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.102.

(67) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.452.

object seemed to be to get rid of ammunition or firing so many rounds per minute at anything - it didn't matter what - I calculated the loss on the side of the Zulus to be about seven hundred. Our loss was, comparatively, very small, although many oxen and mules were killed. I had three of my men wounded. The battle was over early, and the rest of the day was spent in burying the dead and preparing for a forward march.⁽⁶⁸⁾

The Zulu army, as Dunn had predicted, was severely defeated. Pearson's garrison at Eshowe was subsequently relieved on 4 April.⁽⁶⁹⁾ Dunn's advice contributed significantly to Chelmsford's first personal battlefield success of the war. The general's phlegmatic praise for Dunn and his scouts was included in his official report on the Eshowe operation:

It appears from the statements of the prisoners that the Zulus were unaware of the march of my force until thirty-six hours before we were attacked, neither were they aware of its strength. I attribute this ignorance on the enemy's part of our movements in a great measure to the excellent manner in which the scouting duties of my force were carried out under the personal arrangements of Captain Barrow, 19th Hussars, who, with his small mounted force, assisted by some one hundred and fifty Zulus belonging to Mr. John Dunn's people, completely shrouded our movements. Mr. Dunn, at my request, accompanied me and I am greatly indebted to him for the assistance he afforded me by his knowledge of the country and sound advice.⁽⁷⁰⁾

Dunn was less generous in his assessment of Chelmsford's capabilities as general. He recorded his apprehensions in his notes:

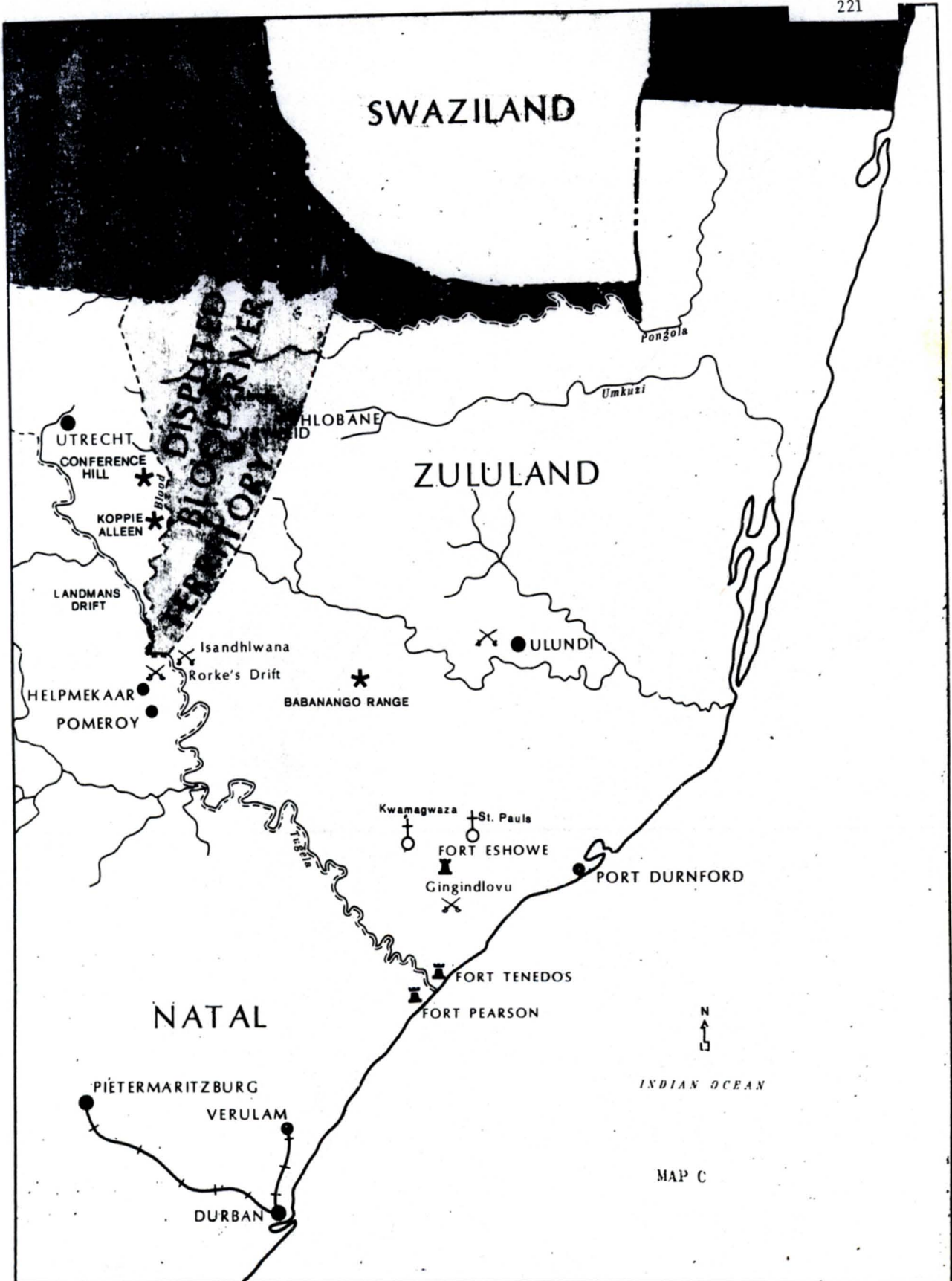
During the short time I was with Lord Chelmsford, the opinion that I formed of him was that he was a thorough gentleman and a good and brave soldier, but no general. He would select any spot for a night encampment without studying the surroundings. Another of my reasons for my opinion was that he did not keep his men sufficiently together on the line of march, so much so that if the Zulus had been properly led they would have given us much trouble and cut many a column up.⁽⁷¹⁾

(68) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.103.

(69) *Ibid*

(70) B.P.P., C.-2367 of 1879, Enclosure 1 in No. 42, p.122. Chelmsford to Secretary of State for War, 8 Apr. 1879.

(71) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.105.



MAP C

After the battle of Gingindhlovu Dunn surveyed his devastated district. The Zulu army had burned and looted the kraals of Dunn's subjects and his main residence at Mangete was reduced to ashes.⁽⁷²⁾ His accumulated wealth of twenty-two years had been drastically diminished by the war that he had desperately wanted to avoid. Dunn was firmly identified with his fellow Englishmen after his participation in the battle of Gingindhlovu and only the destruction of the Zulu monarchy would allow him to resume his activities in Zululand.

With Eshowe thus relieved Chelmsford organized a second invasion of Zululand. The bulk of his forces were split into two main divisions that were to make a two-pronged advance towards Ulundi. Chelmsford commanded the first division - which was to spearhead the invasion - while the second division, under General Crealock, was to push from the lower drift along the coast and secure the region. Crealock assumed command of the first division in late April.⁽⁷³⁾ Dunn, obviously heartened by his success with Chelmsford, volunteered to serve with the first division. Crealock employed Dunn in pacifying the local Zulu population as the division moved northward toward the Matikulu river. Dunn was highly successful in using his scouts to contact coastal chieftains and persuading them to surrender to the British military authorities. Upon relinquishing his command of the first division to Major General Sir Garnet Wolseley in June 1879, Crealock wrote a glowing account of Dunn's performance and recommended that his services be fully employed:

It is impossible for me to exaggerate the useful information obtained by this officer, not only for me, but also for Lord Chelmsford. His great knowledge of the country and its people, his long residence in it, and the perfect confidence evidently reposed in him by all classes of Zulus, have not only been most useful to me from a military point of view, but have also undoubtedly tended more than anything else to bring about the satisfactory condition of things which I have already had

(72) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.466.

(73) *Ibid.*, pp.500-502.

occasion to report to His Excellency, viz: the submission of many influential chiefs of this district, with their families and followers, and their cattle. (74)

ii. The Ulundi Settlement

The humiliating British military defeat at Isandlwana has been widely recognized by historians as a watershed event in effecting important changes in imperial policy and personnel in South Africa. (75) The Zulu victory, combined with boer opposition to the British annexation of the Transvaal, threatened Britain's South African confederation scheme with disaster. Frere had over-reached the limits of his authority as High Commissioner and was censured for mounting an invasion of Zululand despite the explicit orders of the home government. (76) By May 1879 Disraeli's much-harried Cabinet had adopted a course of action that can best be described as a face-saving disengagement from further risk, responsibility and expenditure in Zululand and the Transvaal.

Major-General, Sir Garnet Wolseley, was appointed to supersede Frere as supreme civil and military administrator for all of southern Africa with the latter's powers confined strictly to the Cape Colony. (77)

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- (74) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.103 and 100. Dunn said of his duties: 'I was ordered to go with the advance column under General Clark. I went on in front scouting with some of my men, with the object of trying to light on some Zulus and endeavouring to have communication with them, and persuade them to come in and give themselves up, and by doing so enable me to send them round again and persuade many others of the folly of holding out. I felt convinced that as soon as it was known that I was with the troops many would listen to my voice and surrender, especially if it was known that all who did so would not be molested nor have their cattle taken from them'.
- (75) De Kiewiet, *Imperial Factor*, pp.231-235.
- (76) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, p.70.
- (77) Preston, (ed.), *Journal 1879-80*, p.20.

Wolseley's instructions from the Colonial Office were to conclude a settlement that would provide security for Natal and the Transvaal without the responsibility of annexation and the burden of heavy military maintenance expenditures. Wolseley's settlement was grounded on three principles. First, Zululand was to be divided into thirteen districts and ruled by appointed chiefs responsible to a British resident; second, the colonists in Natal were to be excluded from decision-making in political and administrative affairs; third, Wolseley sought to limit settler and missionary influences in Zululand by prohibiting the chiefs from selling or granting land to whites. Wolseley's priorities were essentially security, through the 'divide and rule' principle; economy, at a time when costly wars in southern Africa were taxing the patience and pockets of British taxpayers; and a tightening of metropolitan controls over African affairs in response to growing home criticism of settler excesses. (78)

Historians have generally condemned the post-war settlement of Zululand as destructive, ill-conceived and unworkable in the light of the political circumstances that existed in a Zulu kingdom that had just suffered military defeat at the hands of the British army. The life-span of Wolseley's post-war settlement was brief - lasting barely four years, 1879 - 1883. (79) Yet, in this short period the conditions of the settlement were subjected to a withering fire of criticism from practically all quarters of official and public opinion both in Britain and in South Africa. The Bishop of Natal, John W. Colenso, and his daughters Harriette and Frances, were outraged by the exile of Cetshwayo and by Dunn's appointment. They looked upon the Ulundi settlement as a cruel mockery of 'British justice' and devoted their formidable political and literary talents to Cetshwayo's restoration and the dismantling of Wolseley's settlement. (80)

(78) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, pp.177-180.

(79) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.147.

(80) See Frances E. Colenso, *The Ruin of Zululand: British Doings In Zululand since the Invasion of 1879* (London, 1885), and Cornelius Vijn, *Cetshwayo's Dutchman* (London, 1880). This narrative was edited and prefaced by Bishop Colenso.

Zululand's white missionaries were bitterly disappointed at the lack of consideration and support that Wolseley had given missionary interests in the post-war treaty.⁽⁸¹⁾ A large section of the Natal settler community found the settlement 'perverse and ignorant' for it effectively shut out colonial political and economic activity in Zululand, while doing little to alleviate white fears of possible violence, dislocation and unrest in an unstable African territory.⁽⁸²⁾ Imperial and colonial officials of high rank, like Sir Theophilus Shepstone and Sir Bartle Frere, were extreme in their criticism of Wolseley's settlement - so irreconcilable were the differences between Shepstone and Wolseley over the post-war treaty that mutual enmity between the two men characterized their relationship after 1879.⁽⁸³⁾

Contemporary historians and journalists have generally reiterated the earlier condemnation of the post-war settlement.⁽⁸⁴⁾ No historian has ever praised the Ulundi settlement, and those writers who do not castigate it have sought to attach a Machievellian virtue to Wolseley's tactics in destroying Zulu unity without annexation.⁽⁸⁵⁾ C.W. De Kiewiet was particularly vehement in his assessment of Wolseley; 'With a light-hearted ignorance of native mentality he divided the country into thirteen parts and over each unlucky part he placed a chief drawn from

(81) *B.P.P.*, C.-2482, of 1880. Enclosure 2 in No. 175. Wolseley to Bishop Schreuder, 4 Oct. 1879.

(82) De Kiewiet, *Imperial Factor*, p.247.

(83) C.O. 879/17/224, Appendix M, Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 9 Oct. 1879, Reply to T. Shepstone's memo on the settlement of Zululand.

(84) *The Daily News*, Durban, 19 July 1978. Ian Player, Senior Ranger of Zululand, remarked that 'The aftermath of that war was catastrophic, mainly due to the stupidity and arrogance of Sir Garnet Wolseley. We are still living with his mistakes and will have to do so for another hundred years before the political errors of that era will have begun to sort themselves out'.

(85) L. Thompson, 'The Subjection of African Chiefdoms', in Wilson and Thompson (eds.), *Oxford History*, vol. II, Chapter V.

houses that ruled before the coming of Chaka'. He referred to the appointed chiefs as 'thirteen unpopular *rois fainéants*' whose political impotence was an 'encouragement to unprincipled whites who, acting as the agents of the chiefs, were an immediate source of discord and malpractice'.⁽⁸⁶⁾ Morris says much the same as De Kiewiet: 'The British were hardly out of Zululand before the inevitable consequence of Wolseley's folly began: the thirteen kingdoms he had established were at one another's throats like so many kilkenny cats. No one seemed to care a quarter of a million people were sliding towards anarchy'.⁽⁸⁷⁾ Wolseley's settlement was 'patently disastrous'⁽⁸⁸⁾ concluded Morris.

In another vein, Thompson takes a cold analytical look at the settlement. He contends that Wolseley's solution was 'a clever one' - a settlement that 'would prevent a revival of the Zulu kingdom' without heavy military occupation expenditure to burden the British Treasury. Thompson takes exception to historians who have criticised Wolseley's settlement because 'they have failed to emphasize its Machiavellian quality'. He makes his point by saying that 'no more astute device could have been found for setting Zulu against Zulu and thus consummating the military victory without further cost or responsibility. Wolseley had improved upon the classic imperial formula: "Divide and Refrain from Ruling" was a shrewd technique in an area where imperial interests were merely negative'.⁽⁸⁹⁾

The Ulundi settlement has, in most instances, been mentioned in passing in most general histories of South Africa and Zululand. However, two notable exceptions to the general rule of brevity or neglect exist in the various works of Webb and Guy. The latter has viewed the settlement from a Zulu perspective. Through a detailed study of the Zulu social system Guy has shown how the 'military system' was integrally linked to the economic, social and political framework of Zulu society

(86) De Kiewiet, *Imperial Factor*, pp.246-247.

(87) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*', p.592.

(88) *Ibid.*

(89) Wilson and Thompson (eds.), *Oxford History*, vol. II, Chapter V. Thompson, 'The Subjection of the African Chiefdoms', p.264.

and how, under the direction of the Zulu king, the coercive manpower of the age-regiments was employed to control economic activity, extend Zulu political hegemony and to determine when the men of a particular regiment could marry - thus regulating the rate of population growth. The defeat of the Zulu army by British forces in 1879 and the disbanding of the regimental system as a national institution, Guy concludes, destroyed the foundations of national unity and brought about the disintegration of the once viable economic and political structure that operated before white conquest. From his afro-centric stance Guy interprets the post-war settlement as essentially negative in character. ⁽⁹⁰⁾

Although dated, Brookes and Webb provided an adequate analysis of the post-war settlement. Brookes and Webb hold to the majority view that the Ulundi settlement was a complete failure: 'The settlement was so short-lived and so completely unsuccessful that it is natural to ask who devised it and why direct annexation was not resorted to'. ⁽⁹¹⁾ Through a close examination of Colonial Office records and the correspondence of important individuals, Webb believes that 'collective responsibility' ⁽⁹²⁾ for the conceptualization of the 1879 settlement rests primarily with three men - Wolseley, Charles Brownlee, Secretary for Native Affairs in the Cape Colony, and Theophilus Shepstone, the architect of African administration in Natal. ⁽⁹³⁾

In a later work ⁽⁹⁴⁾ Webb discusses the Ulundi settlement within the wider context of Anglo-Zulu relations during the turbulent eight-year interim between the beginning of the 1879 war up to British annexation in 1887. ⁽⁹⁵⁾ Webb contends that British party politics, Frere's maverick manoeuvres in precipitating a war with the Zulu, the sting of military disaster at Isandlwana and the resultant tide of British public opinion opposed to further expenditure or territorial aggrandizement in Zululand, all played their part in Britain's eight-year long

(90) See Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*.

(91) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.147.

(92) The inverted commas are mine.

(93) *Ibid.*, pp.147-148.

(94) Webb, 'Great Britain and the Zulu People 1879-87', in Thompson (ed.), *African Societies*, pp.302-325.

(95) *Ibid.*, pp.302-303.

policy of indecision and renegeation of 'responsibility' for Zululand's state of affairs. Thus the Ulundi settlement was formulated in a highly charged atmosphere of heated political struggles in Britain. The Anglo-Zulu war contributed to the abandonment of the confederation scheme in South Africa that had proved a moral, political and financial liability to Disraeli's Tory government.

This thesis does not seek to reinforce either those historians who have condemned the Ulundi settlement or those who have praised it for its merits. The intention is rather to focus on a long-neglected facet - the connection between Wolseley and his principal adviser, John Dunn, in the formulation and implementation of the terms of the treaty. Few historians⁽⁹⁶⁾ have investigated Wolseley's relations with those handful of traders, missionaries and Natal colonial officials upon whose advice on conditions in Zululand he sought. No one has yet fastened onto the significance of Dunn, John Shepstone or Bishop Schreuder as political advisers to the Crown's Special High Commissioner, let alone weigh and analyse the influence these men may have had on the terms of the Ulundi treaty. The terms of the post-war settlement can be better understood once the ambitions, motives and prejudices of the two principals, Wolseley and Dunn, are examined in conjunction with the more controversial clauses of the post-war settlement package. It will be shown that Wolseley and Dunn were responsible, in large measure, for the scrapping of Frere's plans for a defeated and submissive Zulu people and for the exclusion of settler and missionary interests and political influences in Zululand.

Beyond the immediate goal of restoring public confidence in the Tory Ministry's ability to retrieve and, at the same time, disentangle itself from the confederation crisis, Wolseley's express task was to bring the Zulu war to a swift conclusion and execute a settlement, and

(96) The exceptions are Donald Morris and Jeff Guy, whose works are mentioned in this thesis.

then move to the Transvaal and manoeuvre the boers into accepting annexation and federation.⁽⁹⁷⁾ Disraeli gave Wolseley almost *carte blanche* powers in dealing with the multiplicity of political and military problems attached to the South African situation.⁽⁹⁸⁾ The notable absence of instructions from the Cabinet to Wolseley on the conditions to be imposed on a defeated Zululand reveals that late-Victorian penchant for entrusting the specifics of imperial policy initiatives in South Africa to the office of the Cape Governor and High Commissioner.⁽⁹⁹⁾ The limitations imposed by time and distance between the metropolitan centre in London and the Colonial periphery in South Africa necessitated the concentration of authority in the hands of an imperial pro-consul.⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ It is worth noting that when a High Commissioner became a liability to the Home government, as in Frere's case, then that particular official was removed, or his jurisdiction curtailed, not the powers invested in the commission itself. Wolseley's sweeping powers of decree in both civil and military matters in South Africa provides an excellent example of how a special commission is created to meet an imperial emergency. Within the confines of his vague instructions from the Colonial Office not to annex Zululand Wolseley was armed with dictatorial powers and he was not loathe to use them.

Until the shock of Isandlwana descended on the Colonial Office, Lord Carnarvon and his successor, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, had transferred the initiative for political change in South Africa to Frere.⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Hicks Beach, hard pressed by the looming confrontation with Russia in Turkey and Afghanistan, found it necessary, even

(97) De Kiewiet, *Imperial Factor*, pp.234-235.

(98) Webb, 'Great Britain and the Zulu People', p.305.

(99) For a concise analysis of the powers invested in the Cape High Commission see John Benyon 'The Cape High Commission: Another neglected factor in British Imperial expansion in Southern Africa' in *South African Historical Journal*, No. 5, 1973, p.30.

(100) Robinson and Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians*, pp.72-75.

(101) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, p.152.

convenient, to repose the same confidence in Wolseley's judgement and ability to retrieve the deteriorating situation in Zululand and the Transvaal.⁽¹⁰²⁾ The Colonial Secretary's response to affairs in South Africa was negative and unimaginative. Beyond his specific instructions not to annex Zululand, Hicks Beach offered few constructive suggestions to Wolseley in drawing up the post-war treaty. The Colonial Secretary's views on British policy in Zululand were largely those of an influential Colonial Office official Edward Fairfield who found practically all of Frere's demands in the ultimatum indefensible; 'the appointment of a British Resident', wrote Fairfield, 'is the solitary measure regarding the necessity and advantage of which I have hitherto heard no difference of opinion'.⁽¹⁰³⁾ In short, Wolseley knew what he was not to do - the terms of Frere's ultimatum were to be scrapped almost in entirety. Hence, Wolseley was left much to his own devices in designing a new metropolitan policy for Zululand.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

Yet, in retrospect, Wolseley's mission to South Africa was clouded with uncertainties. He had powerful enemies in their Royal Highnesses Queen Victoria and the Commander-in-Chief of the British army, the Duke of Cambridge, both of whom opposed his appointment as High Commissioner.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Wolseley's identification with Lord Cardwell's sweeping army reforms and his ruthless posturing for choice commands in the middle and far eastern theatres of British military operations at the expense of officers his senior rank and experience, incurred the wrath of the royal establishment, particularly the Horse Guards and Indian army officers.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Furthermore, Wolseley's appointment was tenuous for it was given by a shaky Tory government buffeted by the damaging criticism of the Liberal party, humanitarian lobbyists and a disgruntled electorate over its policy towards Zululand and confederation in general. Most frustrating of all, Wolseley was yoked to a military

(102) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.2.

(103) C.O. 879/14/164, p.33, 'Fairfield's Memorandum on the Zulu Question', 20 Mar. 1879.

(104) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, p.152.

(105) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.11.

(106) Adrian Preston (ed.), *The South African Diaries of Sir Garnet Wolseley (Natal) 1875* (Cape Town, 1971), p.89. Preston remarks that 'Since Wolseley invariably moved with some shade of political connivance, his methods upset the delicate mechanism of patronage and provoked the hostility of those rival cliques whose preserves it was his intention to invade'.

strategy in Zululand that was not of his making and which was too far advanced by the date of his appointment for him to alter. Preston points to the fact that Wolseley was not a completely 'free agent' in directing Britain's imperial affairs in South Africa for he was 'still technically subordinate to Frere's over-riding seniority and civil authority at the Cape, and was bound by all the rules of common protocol to keep him informed of his plans and intentions, as these might affect the broader issues of South African unity and security'.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Wolseley's task was formidable by any diplomatic standard. The assignment given by Beaconsfield was virtually impossible when one considers that he was sent to salvage the wreck of confederation, to implement a plan for the post-war settlement of Zululand and, ultimately, to restore British paramountcy in South Africa. All of these thorny issues were to be resolved by Wolseley who did not have the authority to annex a troublesome Zululand - nor did we have the sanction of the Colonial Office to engage in further large scale acquisitive or punitive operations in a bid to bolster Britain's power and prestige throughout the sub-continent.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾

Amid these handicaps and complications Wolseley arrived in Durban on 28 June 1879. It was his second mission to South Africa in five years. In 1875 he was Lord Carnarvon's instrument for emasculating responsible government in Natal, partly as punishment for the brutal excesses committed by Lieutenant-Governor Pine and Natal settlers against the Ngwe and Hlubi tribes in the wake of the Langalibalele affair,⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ but mainly as one of a series of manoeuvres by Carnarvon to effect the confederation of South Africa.⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Wolseley's well-known 'champagne and sherry' campaign in Natal succeeded in arresting the 'responsible' movement for five years.⁽¹¹¹⁾

(107) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.21.

(108) Webb, 'Great Britain and the Zulu People', p.306.

(109) For an analysis based on hitherto unused evidence see Norman Etherington 'Why Langalibalele Ran Away', in *The Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, vol. I, 1978, pp.1-24.

(110) Guest, *Langalibalele*, pp.37-68.

(111) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.120.

What is less well known is that Wolseley's first mission to South Africa was crucial in shaping his opinions and impressions of Natal colonists, missionaries and Africans, and the first impressions he gathered in 1875 became the firmly rooted prejudices he carried back to South Africa in 1879, and which coloured, to a large extent, the post-war conditions set out for a conquered Zululand.

Of all the soldiers and imperial administrators of the mid and late-Victorian era, Wolseley must rank as one of the most prolific writers of his generation.⁽¹¹²⁾ His daily diaries and journals written during his two assignments in South Africa were neglected until Adrian Preston recently brought them to light in two volumes, accompanied by a penetrating analysis of Wolseley's controversial career.⁽¹¹³⁾ Wolseley's own private thoughts are especially valuable when compared with his official correspondence to the Colonial Office. The diaries are laced with doses of Wolseley's intemperate brand of invective towards policies and people that obstructed his own plans and visions for Natal in 1875 and Zululand in 1879; Wolseley's 'official' correspondence could not reveal his 'monstrous contempt for Frere, Hicks Beach, Colenso and Shepstone',⁽¹¹⁴⁾ as the journals did. Likewise, Wolseley's 1879 journal reveals the prejudice behind his policy of reconstruction for Zululand; his contempt for white colonists, political missionaries and the militant humanitarianism of Bishop Colenso is clearly illustrated in his private correspondence for 1875 and 1879-80. With a soldier's mentality Wolseley identified these groups as 'the enemy' and he sought to compromise or foil altogether their aspirations in Zululand.

During his brief tenure as Officer Administrator of Natal in 1875 Wolseley encountered serious opposition to his proposed changes in the constitution from most of the elected members of the Legislative Council.⁽¹¹⁵⁾ Wolseley's contempt for Natal colonists in general was aggravated still further by the truculence of the settler community's political spokesman

(112) Preston (ed.), *Diaries*, p.3.

(113) *Ibid.*, pp.1-139.

(114) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.2.

(115) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, p.62.

toward metropolitan attempts to curb their powers of self-determination. He was quick to assume that the colonists were unfit to manage their political affairs because they were socially and intellectually inferior. 'I don't like colonial govts.', he wrote, 'where there is a parliament, a Prime Minister &c., &c. Indeed a colonial government under any circumstances is hateful from the inferior style of people you must associate with ...'.⁽¹¹⁶⁾ Because the majority of white settlers desired 'responsible' government, Wolseley contended that their parochial vision and selfish ends were harmful to the best interests of Great Britain: 'From the little I have seen I think the men are about as ill-conditioned a lot as I have ever met with - pettifogging politicians, self-seeking and regardless of the true interests of the Colony and the Empire'.⁽¹¹⁷⁾

Many imperial officials, such as Frere and Shepstone, regarded Natal and Zululand missionaries as valuable informants and natural allies in the subjection of the Zulu kingdom.⁽¹¹⁸⁾ Wolseley, on the other hand, was suspicious of missionary motives; he was particularly critical of clerics who became involved in political activity whether they represented those Zululand missionaries of the 'war party' who longed for the destruction of Cetshwayo's power and the traditions of Zulu society,⁽¹¹⁹⁾ which the Zulu King defended and symbolized, or the humanitarian school of the Colenso family. Wolseley's animus toward all missionaries was the result of his initial collision with Colenso.

In the wake of the Langalibalele crisis Wolseley had unpleasant interviews with the Bishop of Natal. Natal's controversial cleric had led the protest against the colonial government's harsh treatment of the Hlubi and Ngwe tribes; and he had protested against the exile and imprisonment of Langalibalele in the Cape.⁽¹²⁰⁾ Referring to Colenso as that 'pestilent bishop' Wolseley found his

(116) Preston (ed.), *Diaries*, p.10.

(117) *Ibid.*, p.30.

(118) Etherington, 'The Rise of the Kholwa in South-east Africa, p.36.

(119) *B.P.P.*, C.-2220, of 1879. Enclosure 1 in No. 129, p.344. Oftebro to Frere, 12 Oct. 1878.

(120) Guest, *Langalibalele*, pp.52-54.

interference in African affairs dangerous and intolerable. An example of Wolseley's contempt for the Colenso family was recorded in his diary:

Rode with Butler to Bishopstowe to see Colenso. Never will go there again for I was attacked by the whole family about the native policy in very bad taste, the bishop losing his temper and in fact becoming so excited that his voice quavered so that he could scarcely utter. He has lost all position among the white people so he is now endeavouring to constitute himself the great protector of the black people, and to come between the Governor and them, a position I will never sanction as long as I am here ... (121)

Wolseley's antipathy for politically active missionaries surfaced again on his second mission. In 1879 the Colenso family was engaged in a moral crusade against the injustice of British aggression in Zululand, and they later campaigned for Cetshwayo's release and return from exile. (122) Wolseley found Colenso a convenient scapegoat for African unrest; remarking that the bishop 'is at the bottom of every native trouble here. How curious it is that wherever ministers of religion can do so, they invariably endeavour to meddle in politics and foreign diplomacy. He is a busy body and a meddler in affairs with which he has no concern'. (123)

On 4 July 1879 British forces inflicted a serious defeat on the Zulu army at the King's capital, Ulundi. (124) Cheated of battle-field glory by Chelmsford, Wolseley hastened to finalize his work in Zululand and move as quickly as possible to better military prospects in the Transvaal and eventual employment in the far and middle east. (125) He had two tasks to perform in Zululand. First, the fugitive Cetshwayo was to be captured and exiled to the Cape colony; (126) second, Zululand was to be pacified, all royal cattle and firearms confiscated, and a settlement concluded.

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- (121) Preston (ed.), *Diaries*, p.176.
 (122) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.592.
 (123) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, pp.78-79.
 (124) Frank Emery, *The Red Soldier*, (London, 1977), p.233.
 (125) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.2.
 (126) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.145.

Wolseley's knowledge of Zululand was more thorough than he has previously been given credit for.⁽¹²⁷⁾ Upon the completion of his 1875 mission Wolseley had returned to England with 'detailed notebooks of technical information concerning the topographical and strategical conditions and resources of Zululand'.⁽¹²⁸⁾ And he had been briefed in detail by Sir Theophilus Shepstone on the customs and history of the Zulu and the Natal Nguni while on tour with Shepstone through Natal in 1875,⁽¹²⁹⁾ and when the latter attended Lord Carnarvon's London Conference in 1876.⁽¹³⁰⁾ Yet, there exists a great deal of speculation as to who first originated the formula on which the Ulundi treaty was grounded. Brookes and Webb suggest that Charles Brownlee and Theophilus Shepstone were implicated in it.⁽¹³¹⁾ While there is a great deal of agreement between Wolseley, Shepstone and Brownlee, that the Zulu kingdom should be politically and militarily decentralized by dividing the country into petty chiefdoms there was, as Brookes and Webb point out, a great difference in that Shepstone 'envisaged a British Resident exercising real power over the "kinglets"'.⁽¹³²⁾ Several weeks before Wolseley consulted Shepstone on the settlement he had already decided to repose greater authority in several important chiefs and there was no mention of a British Resident or what functions Wolseley expected him to perform. As early as 8 July 1878 while encamped with General Crealock's coast column at Port Durnford, Wolseley committed this telling entry to his journal:

Saw Mr. John Dunn, who in face is very like dear Evelyn Wood. I am afraid his honesty of purpose is not like Wood's. However, he is a power in Zululand and I intend making as much use of him as possible. My idea is to increase his powers by making him paramount chief over the district of Zululand lying along the Tugela and Buffalo rivers frontiers of Natal. I shall thus secure the civilizing influence of a white man over the district of Zululand nearest to us, and he and his people will be a buffer between us and the barbarous districts of Zululand beyond.⁽¹³³⁾

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- (127) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.1.
 (128) *Ibid.*
 (129) Preston (ed.), *Diaries*, p.209.
 (130) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, p.104.
 (131) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, pp.147-148.
 (132) *Ibid.*, p.148.
 (133) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.53.

It is clear that Wolseley's view of a settlement with the Zulu was motivated by strategic and military considerations. Preston has speculated that Wolseley's Chief of Staff, Colonel Sir George Pomeroy Colley, might well have provided the initial inspiration for the settlement. If this was the case, then Wolseley's decision to rule Zululand through compliant chiefs instead of a British Resident was based on concepts of security embodied in Indian defence policy - a policy on which Colley's reputation as a brilliant strategist and military planner was largely founded.⁽¹³⁴⁾ Thus the origins of the Ulundi settlement might well be traced to the British school of Indian defence rather than to South African administrators of African affairs as Preston suggests:

The settlement in its final form uncannily resembled that which Lytton originally intended to impose upon Afghanistan; one designed to break Afghan military power permanently into several impotent principalities separately ruled by British residents and agents. Thus it was that Wolseley visualized John Dunn controlling the buffer chiefdom strategically separating the Natal frontier from Zululand proper in much the same way that Lytton envisaged Kandahar providing a bulwark against the more rebellious northern and eastern sections of Afghanistan. To this extent, therefore, the settlement would appear to be Colley's rather than Wolseley's in inspiration.⁽¹³⁵⁾

Wolseley's emphasis on the rule of 'strongmen' instead of Residents in the political reconstruction of Zululand is more compatible with the Indian model of indirect rule than the Shepstone model. The concentration of authority in forceful and influential puppet-chiefs placed along the sensitive frontiers with Natal and the Transvaal was Wolseley's strategy for ensuring British paramountcy in Zululand without annexation or costly occupation. Wolseley cast Dunn in the mould of a compliant potentate whose own self-interest would compel him to support British policy for Zululand. He wrote on 8 July that Dunn

(134) *Ibid.*, 2; and Preston (ed.), *Diaries*, p.106. Preston states that '... it was upon the Indian model of government and war, derived from Macauley's essays on Clive and Warren Hastings, that Wolseley's conception of the role of military power in imperial order had always rested'.

(135) Preston (ed.), *Diaries*, p.106.

'is at heart more a Zulu than an Englishman, but he has none of the blood-thirsty and conquering instincts of the Zulu people. It will be in his interest to keep "peace in his time" and abate as far as possible the warlike spirit of the people he will have to rule over'. (136)

Referring to Wolseley's choice of advisers, Donald Morris comments: 'What advice Wolseley did seek, on the basis of which he intended dictating a peace settlement which would affect the future of several British colonies and territories and the kingdom of Zululand, came, of all people, from John Dunn'. (137) A closer analysis of the situation will show that Morris's amazement is unfounded. Dunn's activities in Zululand did not go unnoticed by the Colonial Office. He was most remembered by Carnarvon for his trade in firearms. Carnarvon's successor, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, noted the frequency of Dunn's name in the despatches of Natal colonial officers. Fairfield told Frere in a confidential memo that Dunn's position with Cetshwayo had been tantamount to that of the proposed British Resident and that more information on Dunn's activities and his exact status were needed:

Cetywayo has had all along a British Resident of a sort at his court in John Dunn, though this man was more of an adviser and minister of the king's than a servant of the Natal government by whom he was allowed £300 a year for facilitating the migration of Tonga labourers through Zululand into Natal. John Dunn is said to live as a Zulu. His chief industry is importing guns and ammunition for the king. He has now crossed over to Natal. His position has always been anomalous. So much explanation about him is needful, as his name is constantly occurring in the correspondence. (138)

When Wolseley met Dunn on 8 July 1879 he had already decided to rely on his own resources and instincts in drawing up a post-war treaty.

(136) *Ibid.*, p.53.

(137) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.579.

(138) C.O. 879/14/164, p.33, 'Fairfield's Memorandum on the Zulu Question', 20 Mar. 1879.

He therefore cut himself adrift from the more obvious and acknowledged sources of information on conditions in the kingdom, namely Frere and Shepstone. At first glance, this deliberate circumvention appeared illogical⁽¹³⁹⁾ but one must remember that Wolseley was the most ambitious and insecure general in the British army.⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ He had an almost pathological fear of failure where duty was concerned and he went out of his way to dissociate himself from officials who were tainted with failure in their political and military assignments. Frere's policy for Zululand was bankrupt and his advice ignored by the Cabinet and the Colonial Office.⁽¹⁴¹⁾ The arrogant Wolseley not only ignored Frere's suggestions, he refused to supply even the bare minimum of information to Frere.

Sir Theophilus Shepstone's career was also in decline as his poor performance as Transvaal Administrator become more apparent to the Colonial Office.⁽¹⁴²⁾ Wolseley corresponded with Shepstone only once before the Ulundi settlement became effective in September and that was to get his opinion on how many chiefdoms should be carved out of the former kingdom. Shepstone recommended that the number be increased from Wolseley's suggested number of six to roughly a dozen so as to make them more manageable administratively. According to Wolseley, he accepted Shepstone's recommendation and constituted thirteen principalities.⁽¹⁴³⁾ Other than this one instance, Wolseley avoided any further consultation with Shepstone. Natal's Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Henry Bulwer, did not have much more influence on Wolseley's thinking. Bulwer strenuously petitioned Wolseley to avail himself of John Shepstone's knowledge and advice on Zulu affairs, but the offer was flatly refused initially, and John Shepstone would not have joined Wolseley's advisory staff if another adviser, F. Bernard Fynney, had not badly injured his wrist in a carriage wreck on 30 July. On 31 July Wolseley wrote:

Finney's wrist was too painful to allow of his coming on with us today, so I wrote to Sir Henry

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- (139) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.147.
 (140) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.19.
 (141) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, p.181.
 (142) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.135.
 (143) *Ibid.*, p.148.

Bulwer asking him to send me Mr. John Shepstone. ... Bulwer has always been in favour of his coming with me, but I have never smiled on the proposal because I believe him to be a stupid man because he is associated in the mind of the Zulus with what they believe to have been treachery and bad faith in the Nutckgana (Matyana) affair, and also since Sir Theophilus Shepstone has fallen into bad odour with the Zulus, his brother might not be regarded with favour by the chiefs of Ulundi. (144)

When charged with specific legal and administrative tasks Wolseley relied on the expertise of his staff. Colley, Broome, Brackenbury and Lanyon - all members of the 'Wolseley Ring' - served in various capacities as colonial secretaries, constitutional advisers, official historians and public relations officers. Wolseley distrusted and usually ignored local advice, especially that of colonials and their elected officials whom he usually held in the utmost contempt. (145) Only when his staff was unable to render an accurate assessment would Wolseley venture outside the 'ring' to seek advice. Wolseley's 'notoriously bookish and doctrinaire' staff might well provide him with an acceptable theoretical blueprint for the maintenance of paramountcy but they were, as Wolseley realized, almost totally ignorant of local conditions. (146) So he drafted a conglomeration of traders, colonial officials and missionaries to advise him. Prominent among these were Dunn, F. Bernard Fynney, a Natal border agent and author of a remarkably accurate pre-war assessment of Zulu military strength, (147) and Bishop Hans Schreuder, a veteran Zululand missionary of the Norwegian Missionary Society.

An intense rivalry emerged immediately between the three advisers as they jockeyed for position and influence with Wolseley. The special commissioner was fed a host of conflicting reports on the whereabouts of Cetshwayo, who was still at large. He was aware of the rivalry and played off his advisers against each other:

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- (144) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.68.
 (145) Preston (ed.), *Diaries*, p.90
 (146) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.68.
 (147) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.295.

There is the greatest rivalry and hatred between Dunn on the one side and dear Maurice and Finney⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ on the other. I work them all separately as far as possible in obtaining news for me then compare their statements ... He [Maurice] is prejudiced very strongly against John Dunn, thinks him a blackguard of the deepest dye, and is carried away so much by this dislike that he cannot see how thoroughly Dunn's interests are wrapt up in ours. I myself see no reason why I should put any trust in Dunn, but I feel that he must, for his own sake, serve us well.⁽¹⁴⁹⁾

In piecemeal fashion, Wolseley eliminated his advisers when they had served their purpose, or when their information conflicted with Dunn's. The first to fall from Sir Garnet's grace was Fynney. On 20 July he reported that Cetshwayo was amassing a large force to renew the fighting. Dunn's information was just the reverse of Fynney's, 'that the king is virtually alone' and had no hope of continuing the war. Cetshwayo had few followers after the battle of Ulundi, and Dunn's report proved correct. This incident turned Wolseley against Fynney and he remarked acidly: 'Finney is a coward at heart and a dreadful alarmist. He takes a gloomy view of affairs and declares the king has no intention of submitting'.⁽¹⁵⁰⁾

Bishop Schreuder, the Norwegian missionary, had lived in Zululand even longer than John Dunn. He, like most of his colleagues of the Anglican and Hanoverian societies, had warmly supported Frere's aggression in Zululand⁽¹⁵¹⁾ and wanted to see Cetshwayo - who had frustrated missionary efforts by removing the rights and privileges of citizenship from Zulu who were converted to Christianity⁽¹⁵²⁾ - removed from power and the kingdom annexed. Schreuder had all along depised John Dunn for his polygamy; and he was envious of the wealth and political influence that Dunn had enjoyed in the pre-war period. The bishop, however, had a grievance against Dunn. In 1877

(148) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.36. Captain J.F. Maurice was an A.D.C. on Wolseley's staff.

(149) *Ibid.*, p.56.

(150) *Ibid.*, p.60.

(151) *B.P.P.*, C.-2220 of 1879. Enclosure 1 in No. 129, p.344.

(152) Etherington, 'Christian Communities', pp.190-191.

Schreuder had abandoned his prosperous mission station at Entumeni on Shepstone's warning that Zululand was unsafe. Cetshwayo then gave Schreuder's abandoned station to Dunn because it was located in his district; and Dunn refused to give the station and its lands back to Schreuder.⁽¹⁵³⁾ The bishop received no assurance from Wolseley that he could re-occupy his station. Once Wolseley had pumped Schreuder of all useful information his anti-missionary bias surfaced:

Bishop Schreuder left this morning for Durban ... I was glad to get rid of him: he was of no use and I distrusted his judgement. He was very anxious I should give him some guarantee about his land - 15,000 acres - at Entumeni, which he says Panda [Mpande] gave him and which Cetewayo afterwards acknowledged as his. I told him I could do nothing in the matter as land could not be alienated from the Zulus. I am afraid that when the terms upon which the newly appointed chiefs are to hold their possessions become known there will be a grand howl at me from the missionary world: however, I cannot help that.⁽¹⁵⁴⁾

Dunn, and to a lesser extent, John Shepstone, emerged as Wolseley's 'native' specialists on Zululand affairs. They were the only two present at the 1 September signing of the Ulundi treaty. Moreover, it must be noted that John Shepstone⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ did not harbour the same

(153) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.98.

(154) *Ibid.*

(155) Gordon, *Shepstone and the Family*, pp.310-316.

The career of John Wesley Shepstone, like that of Dunn's has been neglected owing mainly to the emphasis given by historians to his 'distinguished brother', Sir Theophilus. He was born in Grahamstown in 1827 and followed his brother to Natal in the early 1840s. He enjoyed the patronage of Theophilus and served as Acting Secretary for Native Affairs from 1876 to 1884. Bishop Colenso exposed his treachery in the 'Matyana affair' during the Langalibalele trial in 1874. Shepstone shared a common hatred with Dunn for Colenso. The Natal settler community considered him to be of mediocre ability compared to Theophilus. However, John Shepstone had a sound knowledge of the language and customs of the Zulu. He served on the 1878 Awards Commission, and read the British ultimatum to Dunn and the Zulu representatives. He spun out his civil service career as judge of the Native High Court and then retired to his farm near Pietermaritzburg, where he died in 1916.

ill-feeling that Fynney, Schreuder, and his brother Sir Theophilus Shepstone felt toward Dunn, and the two men worked together in harmony. Dunn, of course, held distinct advantages over his rivals; his information was generally much more accurate because he had the logistical support of his numerous retainers who formed a useful cadre of scouts and spies. Dunn's men accompanied Wolseley's pursuit units as guides in the ruthless hunt for Cetshwayo. The confidence and growing trust reposed in Dunn was generously expressed in Wolseley's diary entry for 21 July: 'I cannot see what J. Dunn has to gain by deceiving me, for I believe our interests are identical, and I am sure he is more likely to know what is going on north of the Umvolusi river than any other white man in South Africa'.⁽¹⁵⁶⁾

While the man-hunt for Cetshwayo remained Wolseley's most urgent priority, he also devoted a great deal of attention to the business of pacification, particularly the confiscation of rifles and ammunition. With perverse logic, Wolseley ordered Dunn, the very same man who was responsible for arming the Zulu, to assist in the search and seizure of firearms. On 11 August Dunn's scouts found Cetshwayo's ammunition stores in a cave ten miles from Ulundi. The next day a much pleased Wolseley, accompanied by Dunn, rode to the site and recovered 1,100 pounds of powder.⁽¹⁵⁷⁾ Dunn scored another *coup* with Wolseley on 18 August when he led him to a kraal that had served as a powder magazine where BaSotho gunsmiths repaired rifles and cast bullets. The kraal was burned and a large quantity of lead pigs seized.⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ Royal cattle were also seized and Dunn pointed them out as they were surrendered to, or confiscated by, Wolseley.⁽¹⁵⁹⁾

Dunn's most important contribution to the post-war settlement was his influence over Wolseley in the selection of the other twelve chiefs. Dunn's future hinged on his being able to acquire enough political power to counter any opposition to his continued residence in Zululand that might emerge from those still loyal to Cetshwayo, particularly

(156) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.61.

(157) *Ibid.*, p.84.

(158) *Ibid.*, p.90.

(159) *Ibid.*

the Usuthu faction. To do this Dunn needed strong allies who would also benefit from the ex-king's exile. Chief among these was Zibhebhu, head of the powerful Mandlakazi faction of northern Zululand. Zibhebhu was Zululand's most distinguished warrior. He had quarreled violently with Cetshwayo concerning going to war with Britain, but he remained loyal throughout the war and fought at Isandlwana and Ulundi.⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ Dunn assured Wolseley that Zibhebhu would oppose any loyalist attempt to resurrect power in the kingdom. Largely on Dunn's recommendation Zibhebhu was offered one of the thirteen chieftainships by Wolseley.⁽¹⁶¹⁾ Hamu, a half-brother to Cetshwayo, had deserted to the British forces early in the war and he was offered a chieftainship as a reward.⁽¹⁶²⁾ Dunn and John Shepstone advised Wolseley in the selection of the remaining chiefs, some of whom were most insignificant individuals who owed their elevation to chieftainship entirely to their collaboration with the British authorities. The selection of the thirteen chiefs was one of the most crucial factors that coloured the post-war settlement.⁽¹⁶³⁾ It was clearly Wolseley's intention to divide the Zulu royal house against itself with the appointment of Zibhebhu and Hamu. In the process Dunn acquired two erstwhile, yet powerful, allies.

On 28 August 1879 Cetshwayo was captured by a British patrol. Cetshwayo arrived at Ulundi on 3 August; he was brought before Wolseley who informed him that he was officially deposed as king of Zululand for having broken his 'coronation vows'. Wolseley told Cetshwayo that the kingdom was to be partitioned and that he would be held prisoner until his fate was decided by the Queen's government. The King's last statement was a question - 'where is John Dunn?'. Wolseley replied that Dunn was unavailable; Dunn had conveniently become indisposed the previous day in apparent anticipation of Cetshwayo's arrival. Wolseley remarked on Dunn's 'diplomatic cold':

He (Cetshwayo) then asked if John Dunn were here. John Dunn said he was sick yesterday, but I have an idea that his sickness was got up as an excuse for not seeing Cetewayo: he was naturally anxious

(160) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.363.

(161) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.59.

(162) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.146.

(163) *Ibid.*, p.147.

to avoid an interview with his former benefactor and I should not on any account have asked him to see the ex-king. (164)

Cetshwayo was taken to Port Durnford and shipped off to exile in the Cape colony three days later.

The terms under which the thirteen chiefs would rule Zululand were officially proclaimed before a large gathering of Zulu chiefs and *izinduna* at Ulundi on 1 September 1879. Dunn accepted his deed of chieftainship to the largest of the thirteen districts only after he had extracted Wolseley's written promise that 'under no circumstances should Cetewayo be ever allowed to return to Zululand'. (165) John Dunn and twelve other chiefs received their deeds of chieftainship from Wolseley on an oath which read:

I recognize the victory of British arms over the Zulu nation and the full right and title of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, Queen of England and Empress of India, to deal as she may think fit with the Zulu chiefs and people and with the Zulu country, and I agree, and I hereby signify my agreement to accept from General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., as the Representative of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, the Chieftainship of a territory of Zululand to be known hereafter as

JOHN DUNN'S TERRITORY,

subject to the following terms, conditions and limitations ... (166)

In the brief time between Wolseley's first meeting with Dunn on 8 July until his departure from Ulundi on 3 September, the latter had won the trust, and even admiration, of the special commissioner. 'I wish I dared make (him?) King of Zululand' wrote Wolseley, 'for he [would] make an admirable ruler; however I am giving him the largest district in the country, an arrangement that I believe will

(164) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.100.

(165) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.125. Extract of letter from Wolseley to the Earl of Derby, 31 Jan. 1883. See Appendices.

(166) *Ibid.*, Copy of Preamble to the Deed of Chieftainship contained in the Ulundi Settlement of 1 Sept. 1879. See Appendices.

be the small end of the wedge of civilization inserted into it'.⁽¹⁶⁷⁾

Dunn owed his post-war political success to a combination of circumstances and factors.⁽¹⁶⁸⁾ Theophilus Shepstone grudgingly conceded to Wolseley that Dunn was a man of 'considerable ability', but unprincipled.⁽¹⁶⁹⁾ Dunn had the uncanny ability of ingratiating himself with the Zulu king, colonial officials, soldiers and imperial pro-consuls of the highest rank and influence at crucial moments in his career. Theophilus Shepstone wanted information on Zululand's internal affairs and the sugar planters and railway contractors in Natal needed Tsonga labour - Dunn supplied both. Chelmsford desperately needed Dunn and his scouts on the relief march to Eshowe - Dunn's services proved invaluable to the general who, in turn, recommended him for further employment. And Wolseley desired an adviser-cum puppet-chief whose interests matched his own. Dunn despised Colenso; and Bishop Schreuder's remark to Wolseley that Dunn hated missionaries was accurate.⁽¹⁷⁰⁾ He agreed unreservedly with Wolseley that their mutual interests in Zululand demanded Cetshwayo's permanent exile. Wolseley bade Dunn farewell at Ulundi on 2 September. He later that night wrote what was for him a glowing assessment of Dunn's role in the settlement: 'He is highly pleased with the position assigned to him in the country, and I expect great things from the arrangement ...⁽¹⁷¹⁾

(167) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, pp.93-94.

Wolseley was evidently impressed with Dunn and the two men appear to have taken to each other immediately. He found Dunn 'quiet, self-possessed and respectful without any servility whatever ... He is much more of the English Gentleman than any of the self-opinionated and stuck up people who profess to be 'our leading citizens' in Natal'.

(168) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.19.

(169) C.O. 879/17/209, p.1, Sir G. Wolseley's settlement of Zululand. Memoranda by Sir T. Shepstone, 23 Aug. 1879.

(170) Preston (ed.), *Diaries*, p.195.

(171) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.105, and Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.124. Dunn said of his relationship with Wolseley: 'The opinion that I formed of Sir Garnet was that he was a good general, a thorough soldier, and, in fact, a man fit for any emergency. I had got on very well with him and liked him, and in pointing out different important situations to him we had many a pleasant ride together'.

The Ulundi treaty contained eleven clauses which the thirteen chiefs pledged to respect.⁽¹⁷²⁾ The first clause stipulated that the chiefs 'observe and respect whatever boundaries' the British government assigned to their territory. This condition was a *de facto* recognition of British paramountcy. The terms of the next six conditions called upon the chiefs to disband the so-called 'Zulu Military System', to prohibit the importation of firearms and ammunition into their districts, to pass sentence on those accused of crimes only after a fair and impartial trial, to surrender promptly fugitives from a British colony when demanded by that colony's government, to refrain from making war on other chiefs unless approved by the British government.⁽¹⁷³⁾ The seventh clause appears farcical when applied to Dunn, an *umlungu* (European): the succession to a chieftainship was to be conducted 'according to the "ancient laws and customs" of my people'.⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ Clauses eight and nine were, however, to be the most controversial for they reinforced chiefly authority and gave the chiefs the legal right to bar white colonists and missionaries from acquiring or occupying land in Zululand. They read thus:

8. I will not sell or in any way alienate, or permit or countenance any sale or alienation of any part of the land in my territory.
9. I will permit all people now residing within my territory to there remain upon the condition that they recognize my authority as chief, and any person not wishing to recognize my authority as chief, and desirous to quit my territory, I will permit to quit it, and to pass unmolested elsewhere.⁽¹⁷⁵⁾

The tenth clause compelled the chiefs to abide by the decision of the British Resident in all cases where British citizens were involved. The final clause gave the appointed chiefs the power of discretion in matters that were obscure or not specifically detailed in the ten previous clauses.⁽¹⁷⁶⁾

(172) See *B.P.P.* Despatch No. 49, 1880. 'Report of the Zululand Boundary Commission'.
 (173) For the full text of the Treaty see Appendix, No. 4.
 (174) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.122.
 (175) *Ibid.*
 (176) *Ibid.*

Wolseley anticipated a great deal of opposition to the terms of the 'settlement' and especially Dunn's appointment: 'I know I shall catch it pretty heavily from the missionaries and the Colenso family on his account',⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ he ruefully remarked. When the terms of the Ulundi settlement became public a storm of protest erupted from officials, settlers and churchmen alike. Wolseley's almost total abandonment of Frere's plans for Zululand stirred that humiliated administrator to complain that the settlement only served to 'delight equally Exeter Hall and Manchester; whilst John Dunn's retention in full vigour secures the adhesion of all polygamous bohemians and imperfect Christians'.⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ Sir Theophilus Shepstone penned a lengthy memorandum to Hicks Beach condemning Dunn's appointment. Shepstone said, 'I look upon the necessity for appointing Mr. John Dunn in any capacity over any portion of Zululand as a misfortune, and as likely to produce embarrassment hereafter'.⁽¹⁷⁹⁾ Hoping to absolve himself from further blame for helping to bring on the Zulu war, Shepstone focussed on Dunn's trade in firearms concluding that 'this traffic tended more than any other circumstance to bring about the Zulu war'.⁽¹⁸⁰⁾ The majority of white settlers in Natal and the Cape shared Shepstone's and Frere's opinions of Dunn. They looked upon him as a renegade, and as a villain who had armed the Zulu. The *Natal Witness* said that 'not a single colonist in Natal has the smallest faith in John Dunn'.⁽¹⁸¹⁾

Wolseley vigorously defended Dunn against his critics' scathing abuse. Emphasizing Dunn's pre-war eminence in Zululand, Wolseley wrote to Hicks Beach in October 1879 saying, 'I refer to the fact of J. Dunn being already a chief of such great importance, of such wealth and power in Zululand that it would have been impossible to leave him out of the

(177) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.105.

(178) Martineau, *Life of Frere*, p.357.

(179) C.O. 879/17/209, p.1, Sir G. Wolseley's settlement of Zululand. Memoranda by Sir T. Shepstone, 23 Aug. 1879.

(180) *Ibid.*

(181) *Natal Witness*, 7 Sept. 1879.

list of those to be made independent chiefs'.⁽¹⁸²⁾ On Dunn's fitness to assume the responsibilities of an administrator, Wolseley explained: 'I adopted the only practical solution of this difficulty by creating him one of the thirteen independent chiefs, a position for which I believe him to be better qualified than any man, whether black or white, in South Africa'.⁽¹⁸³⁾ In the same memo Wolseley demonstrated his contempt for Shepstone and the Natal settlers: 'I have therefore no hesitation in maintaining that Sir T. Shepstone's opinion of that chief's character is based upon erroneous views derived from a very slight personal acquaintance with him, and that it is I believe strongly tinged with the prejudice felt against him by all Natal colonists, who are imminently jealous of his success in life'.⁽¹⁸⁴⁾ Hicks Beach held reservations on the propriety of Dunn's appointment in view of his past activities in the arms trade, but the Colonial Secretary suffered in silence for he had long ago transferred most of the initiative for making and implementing metropolitan policy in southern Africa to Frere, thence to Wolseley.⁽¹⁸⁵⁾

Most colonists felt 'betrayed' by the imperial government instead of rewarded for their sacrifices during the prosecution of the Anglo-Zulu war. The *Natal Witness* wrote: 'Natal colonists find that they have gone out into the field, risking their lives and neglecting their business, in order that John Dunn may succeed Cetewayo as King of Zululand'.⁽¹⁸⁶⁾ The *Natal Colonist* in Durban noted the 'perverse' irony of the settlement in Dunn's appointment:

But when we have undertaken war in the interest of civilization and to wean the Zulu nation from barbarism, we think that not the least mistake of the campaign or the pacification is the placing of Mr. Dunn in the position of the chief of one of the most important districts.⁽¹⁸⁷⁾

(182) C.O. 879/17/224, Appendix M. Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 9 Oct. 1879, Reply to T. Shepstone's memo.

(183) *Ibid.*

(184) *Ibid.*

(185) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, p.152.

(186) *Natal Witness*, 27 Sept. 1879.

(187) *Natal Colonist*, 11 Sept. 1879.

At a time when Natal's settler community was vigorously committed to stamping out polygamy among the Natal Nguni, Dunn's multiple marriages to black women were considered abhorrent. George Cato, a prominent member of the Natal Legislative Council, echoed the cultural belligerence of many settlers by condemning Dunn's appointment on moral grounds: 'we have at least a right to complain of that appointment, that whilst here we are struggling to teach the natives that polygamy is wrong, we find that the Crown through its ministers is undoing all we can do by honouring a polygamist with a post of power in a country where polygamy is practised'.⁽¹⁸⁸⁾

Preston has emphasized the 'unique importance' for historians of Wolseley's South African Journals: 'This lacuna of the crucial year between Chelmsford's destruction of Zulu military power at Ulundi and the rise - however momentary - of boer nationalism with Colley's defeat at Majuba, whether the result of cultivated neglect or otherwise, was acknowledged by contemporaries but has yet to be filled in by some modern historian'.⁽¹⁸⁹⁾ The notable absence of published material on Wolseley's 1879 foray into South African politics - indeed, the 'conspiracy of silence' by 'ring' members and associates - Maurice Brackenbury, Colley's widow, and even Wolseley himself - points to their natural disinclination to discuss a mission that failed so disastrously in its objectives.⁽¹⁹⁰⁾ The contents of Wolseley's 1879 journal sheds an entirely new light on the post-war settlement. The minimal influence of Theophilus Shepstone, Frere, Lieutenant-Governor Bulwer and his adviser John Shepstone, coupled with Colley's pervasive sway over Wolseley's thinking, suggests that the Ulundi treaty may well have been wedded to Indian, rather than South African, concepts of defence and strategic security.

In the final analysis the Ulundi settlement was the product of Wolseley's strategy to maintain British paramountcy in Zululand. The settlement, in its final form, was coloured by Wolseley's own distempered image of the situation. He interpreted his vague instructions from the Colonial

(188) *Debates of the Legislative Council for the Colony of Natal*, vol. I, 6 Nov. 1879 to 19 Feb. 1880, p.428. Extract from debate on Zululand settlement.

(189) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.21.

(190) *Ibid.* Wolseley quashed the attempts of Lady Colley to write a 'biographical account of the last controversial years of her late husband's South African administration'.

Office not to annex Zululand in such a way as to exclude from the territory those missionaries and Natal colonists whom he despised. The goals of missionary imperialists, land and labour hungry white settlers and metropolitan administrators were not always one and the same. The controversy emanating from the Ulundi settlement is an appropriate example of this incompatibility of interest between these three distinct strands of European intrusion in Zululand. Wolseley's settlement prevented white settlers from carving up Zululand into farms and plantations; and Zululand missionaries were hampered in their efforts or denied altogether the right to occupy their old stations. John Dunn was responsible for the ousting of most missionaries from his large district and he shut down nine stations. Moreover, the Ulundi settlement was a double-edged sword that invited, as well as prohibited, white intrusion and exploitation, albeit by indirect means. Wolseley had channelled economic as well as political power into the hands of the appointed chiefs. Dunn and Zibhebhu emerged as willing and effective accomplices in recruiting Zulu as well as Tsonga labour for the expanding capitalist economy in Natal. And Dunn, Zibhebhu, and a few of the other more powerful chiefs, used their political power to develop trading and labour recruitment monopolies in their respective districts. Essentially, the Ulundi settlement was the creation of Sir Garnet Wolseley with John Dunn acting as his principal adviser and agent.

CHAPTER SEVEN'A REPROACH TO CIVILISATION'JOHN DUNN AND THE MISSIONARIES1879-1884

The clash between Chief John Dunn and missionary societies in Zululand was a microcosm of a much broader confrontation between white hunter-traders and missionaries operating in South African frontier zones. The head of the London Missionary Society in southern Africa, John Philip, condemned, in 'fluent prose', the provocative activities of trekboer frontiersmen and white ruffians, like Coenraad de Buys, who joined with African chiefdoms to waste and pillage rivals in the northern and eastern Cape.⁽¹⁾ Moreover, the numerous clashes between white hunter-traders and missionaries was essentially a clash of cultural values. Hunter-traders frequently, as in the case of Dunn and Buys, adopted African social routines. This social conditioning of whites to an African environment led to their rejection, either in part or in full, of European cultural values, including organized religion. The missionaries, upon first entering an African territory, were naturally shocked and disgusted to find white men living as the 'heathen' with black wives and 'bastard' children. More alarming was the fact that some hunter-traders influenced, or, as in Dunn's case, actually ruled over African clients. The traders also resented the intrusion of missionaries whom they saw as rivals for trade and political power among the Africans, and as the sworn detractors of their African mode of life.

The cultural belligerence felt by Zululand missionaries and Natal settlers toward John Dunn, the transfrontiersman, would, on the surface, appear to be quite obvious - not worthy of any further elaboration, were it not for the fact that Dunn's expulsion of most missionaries from his chiefdom during the post-war period was of considerable political significance. Indeed, it reflected an altogether neglected facet of the Ulundi settlement.

(1) Davenport, *Modern History*, pp.34-37.

The position of missionaries in post-war Zululand (1879-1884) was unusual in so far as relations with the imperial authorities were concerned. Zululand missionaries, like the vast majority of white missionaries, are now seen as important agents of British imperial expansion in nineteenth century southern Africa. Marks and Atmore concluded that missionaries were in the 'forefront of demands for the annexation of African land, and welcomed the end of African independence in the name of "progress and civilization".'⁽²⁾ In many cases the imperial government warned missionaries that the British government would not accept responsibility for their safety or actions in African territories beyond the colonial frontier. At other times, missionaries were encouraged to play subversive roles in African states coveted by an expansionist Colonial Secretary and his colonial officials. This is especially true during Carnarvon's second term, 1874-77, when Frere and Shepstone used missionaries as spies in Zululand and enrolled their support against the continued independence of the Zulu kingdom.⁽³⁾ However, there are few, if any, known instances where missionaries have been so roughly handled by Colonial Office policy and the imperial officers and colonial agents charged with its execution as in post-war Zululand when the Ulundi settlement was operative.

Wolseley's settlement was designed to exclude missionary influence from Zululand. The appointment of Dunn as chief of the district where over half of Zululand's mission stations were⁽⁴⁾ located had disastrous consequences for missionary endeavour in the country. He had the frontier trader's suspicion and hostility toward missionaries. Furthermore, Dunn must be seen as a quasi-imperial agent bound to the conditions of the Ulundi settlement; he interpreted the treaty in such a way as to bar missionaries from his district or compel them to submit to his terms of rule. Indeed, a theme of conflict and rivalry, not

(2) See Atmore and Marks 'The Imperial Factor in South Africa in the 19th Century', p.118.

(3) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.130.

(4) B.P.P. Despatch No. 49, 1879. 'Report of the Zululand Boundary Commission'.

alliance and cooperation, characterized the relations between missionaries and the metropolitan authorities in post-war Zululand.

This conflict between the missionaries and the imperial government has important cultural dimensions which must be considered along with political and economic factors. De Kiewiet, Goodfellow and Webb have discussed, at length, the political objectives of metropolitan and colonial statesmen during the confederation and post-confederation periods of South African history.⁽⁵⁾ Recent revisionist studies have focussed on the economic imperative behind British expansion and the subversion of African societies by developing capitalism.⁽⁶⁾ Both approaches, Schreuder asserts, neglect the 'more expansive, energetic and belligerent cultural roots of British nineteenth century colonial activity'.⁽⁷⁾ A moral imperative figures prominently in the arguments used by the missionaries and their colonial supporters against the terms of the Zululand settlement. The metropolitan government was guilty of three crimes against 'civilisation' according to its colonial accusers. First, the British government had reneged on its obligation in advancing Christianity and the 'beneficence' of British rule by not annexing Zululand after it had been defeated. Second, the Colonial Office, through its appointment of Wolseley, had engineered the settlement terms so as to prevent the vanguard of 'civilisation', namely, the missionaries and Natal colonists, from entering a 'benighted and barbaric' land. Third, Dunn's appointment as chief was considered as a scandal and a 'reproach to civilisation' for he represented the very worst qualities that a white European could cultivate or possess - he was a polygamist, gunrunner, 'traitor', political renegade and social deviant.⁽⁸⁾

From 1835 to 1877 missionary activity in Natal, Pondoland and Zululand

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- (5) For the relevant works see Goodfellow, *Confederation*, pp.51-72, Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, and De Kiewiet, *Imperial Factor*, Chpts. VI-X.
- (6) For example see E. Unterhalter, 'Confronting Imperialism', and Guy, 'Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom'.
- (7) See Schreuder, 'The Cultural Factor in Victorian Imperialism', p.283.
- (8) *B.P.P.*, C.-2505 of 1880. Enclosure in No. 12, p.33.

had developed at a rapid pace. Nine different societies representing several European nationalities were in operation. The most important Zululand missions were Lutherans of the Norwegian, Hermannsburg and Berlin societies, and Anglican agents sponsored by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.⁽⁹⁾ Missionaries from countries other than Britain, primarily the Germans and Norwegians, were at first opposed to British political interference in Zululand.⁽¹⁰⁾ With the establishment of British rule in Natal in 1844 missionaries found it advantageous, even necessary, to cooperate with the colonial authorities, especially the Secretary for Native Affairs, Theophilus Shepstone.⁽¹¹⁾

Missionaries were first admitted into Zululand in 1856 by Mpande. However, both Mpande and the paramount, Cetshwayo, had no intention of letting Christianity disrupt the customs and social routines of Zulu society. The Zulu kings pursued a highly successful utilitarian policy - extracting European technological and medical expertise while at the same time effectively quarantining mission stations. Zulu who embraced mission life were deprived of the privileges as well as the responsibilities of citizenship.⁽¹²⁾ Etherington explains that they

... were not permitted to *khonza*, to give allegiance to the king. Men could not serve as soldiers and lost their regimental identification. Christians could hold property and farm only on mission stations. From festivals, civic duties and royal largesse, Zululand Christians were quite shut out. Their associates treated them as dead men or strangers.⁽¹³⁾

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- (9) Etherington, 'Social Theory and the Study of Christian Missions in Africa', pp.31-37.
 (10) *Ibid.*, pp.33 and 36. 'Bishop Schreuder initially supported Zulu sovereignty in the hope of maintaining the kingdom as a Lutheran preserve'.
 (11) *Ibid.*, p.36.
 (12) Etherington, 'The Rise of the Kholwa', p.190.
 (13) *Ibid.*, p.191. 'As a final insult, Zulus applied to mission station residents the same sneering epithet which white men gave to all blacks. They called them kaffirs'.

The legal and economic obstructions placed in the path of missionary operations continued unchanged with the crowning of Cetshwayo as king of Zululand in 1873. The new king went so far as to object formally to the missionaries' presence on the occasion of Shepstone's coronation visit.⁽¹⁴⁾ Missionary frustrations increased with the approach of the Anglo-Zulu war. After the murder of several Zulu mission residents in 1877, fears of imminent destruction at the hands of Cetshwayo prompted all Zululand missionaries to close their stations and withdraw to Natal.⁽¹⁵⁾

Once in the colony the missionaries aligned themselves with Sir Bartle Frere's drive to annex Zululand - a measure he considered vital to the successful completion of South African federation. Capitalizing on missionary discontent the High Commissioner appealed for the overthrow of Cetshwayo's regime so that the missionaries 'civilizing work' could continue unmolested. The most militant and uncompromising of the missionaries were Reverend Robertson of the Anglican Church and Reverend Oftebro of the Norwegians. With unabashed cultural imperialism these men called for the abolition of those Zulu social customs that conflicted with Christianity. Robertson wrote anonymous letters to the Natal press giving alarmist reports on the persecution of Zulu christians and gave exaggerated accounts of the indiscriminate slaughter of innocent Zulu by Cetshwayo's soldiers.⁽¹⁶⁾ Robertson was particularly vehement in his criticism of King Cetshwayo and the Zulu ruling class. He penned a number of reports to Natal officials condemning Cetshwayo for not honouring the so called 'coronation vows' laid down by Shepstone in 1873:

The Coronation, in my opinion, well illustrates the character of Cetywayo - it may be summed up in two words, cowardice and cunning ... It has always been my opinion, and of other Zulu missionaries as well, that the King and his inzinduna ought to be bound to keep the Treaty of 1873 - because it was proclaimed as I have described above - with them as with us, 'Silence gives consent' and I cannot help thinking that his having rent the treaty in pieces before Sir T. Shepstone was well out of the country ought

(14) *B.P.P.*, C.-1137 of Aug. 1873, 'Installation Report', pp.8-11.

(15) Etherington, 'The Rise of the Kholwa', p.200.

(16) *B.P.P.*, C.-2220 of 1879, No. 129, p.340. Frere to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 23 Oct. 1878.

to have been considered an insult to the English Government demanding instant satisfaction.(17)

Robertson also contributed to white fears by stating firmly that he believed the Zulu king would invade Natal if given the opportunity: 'I shall be greatly mistaken if, when war breaks out, they do not make raids, and try to take cattle wherever they can find them - if the Natal border is not well guarded, I fear a catastrophe will be the result'.(18)

Reverend Oftebro, the Norwegian missionary, cooperated with Frere to the extent of offering his solution in a formal despatch. A delighted Frere forwarded this document to Hicks Beach at the Colonial Office: 'Nothing less than the disarming of the Zulus, the breaking up of their military organisation, and the appointment of a British Resident to watch over the strict upholding of treaties will, in our humble opinion, settle the Zulu question satisfactorily'.(19)

In his capacity as High Commissioner, Frere employed his extraordinary powers of decree to destroy Zulu power in the interests of federation. On 11 December 1878 Frere instructed the Natal government to present an ultimatum to representatives of the Zulu king. Frere had not neglected his missionary allies, for incorporated into the ten demands of the ultimatum were two clauses requiring that first, 'All missionaries and converts who had fled Zululand in 1877 were to be permitted to return to their stations'; and second, 'All missionaries were to be free to teach as they pleased, and all Zulus who cared to attend were to do so without let or hindrance'.(20)

After the humiliating defeat of British troops at Isandlwana in January of 1879 Frere was censured for mounting an invasion of Zululand without the full sanction of the Tory ministry.⁽²¹⁾ This diminished Frere's role and, more important, dealt a death blow to Zululand missionaries who had counted on the sympathetic High Commissioner

(17) C.S.O. vol. 1925, No. 19, 'Special Border Agents' Reports', Robertson to Bulwer, 28 Oct. 1878.

(18) *Ibid.*

(19) B.P.P., C.-2220 of 1879, Enclosure 1 in No. 129, p.344. Oftebro to Frere, 12 Oct. 1878.

(20) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.90-91.

(21) Goodfellow, *Confederation*, p.169.

to give them largely unrestricted opportunities for mission expansion in a reconstructed Zululand.

Once the full contents of Frere's ultimatum were studied by the Colonial Office, Hicks Beach found practically all of the demands provocative and indefensible. He submitted to Disraeli and the Cabinet on 20 March 1879 a confidential report on Frere's ultimatum. In his lengthy memo he pointedly rejected Frere's arguments in favour of imperial intervention in Zululand on behalf of missionaries as a blatant contradiction of past and present Colonial Office policy towards the expansion of missionary activities in African territories:

The weak point in Sir Bartle Frere's ultimatum is that relating to the missionaries. In itself, if non-compliance with it were to be regarded as a *casus belli*, it is wholly indefensible, and the published utterances of the two Secretaries of State who have administered this Department since the present ministry came in would preclude the possibility of defending it in the aspect above indicated. (22)

Moreover, Hicks Beach was far from sympathetic toward missionaries and suspected that their motives were guided by a desire for personal emolument as much as it was by a selfless desire to make Christianity known to the 'heathen'. (23) On the other hand, Frere's championing of missionary activities is an example of the energetic and belligerent cultural chauvinism that characterized the more aggressive imperial administrator doing duty on the colonial frontiers of Britain's dominions. Juxtaposed against this expansive view of empire was Hicks Beach the 'cautious' metropolitan minister. In March 1879 he expressed his official 'reluctance' to commit Britain to defending and extending missionary activity beyond the frontier of Natal:

In a despatch which I addressed to Sir Henry Bulwer on 4 May 1878, ... I desired him to cause certain of the missionaries to be informed that 'while H.M. Government were at all times desirous to befriend the missionary bodies, they could not undertake the obligation of protecting them in Zululand'. (24)

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- (22) C.O. 879/14/164, p.41, 'Fairfield's Memorandum on the Zulu Question'. 20 Mar. 1879.
- (23) *Ibid.* This information appeared first in *B.P.P.*, C.-1961 of 1878, p.47.
- (24) C.O. 879/14/164, Appendix II, Hicks Beach to Frere, 20 Mar. 1879.

Hicks Beach concluded his earlier opinion by reaffirming his policy of non-involvement in missionary affairs:

I refer you to this statement as indicating the doubts which I continue to entertain as to the extent to which it may prove justifiable or advisable for H.M. government to concern themselves actively in the development of missionary enterprise. (25)

Wolseley's view on missionaries coincided with that expressed by Hicks Beach. His antipathy for missionaries in general, and Bishop Colenso in particular, was based on the assumption that most missionaries were potentially subversive and hurtful to the empire. He thought missionary agitation for imperial support and protection for their work amongst Africans was a needless burden on imperial finances and administration. He also wanted to exclude Natal colonists from Zululand, for he considered them to be a disruptive element who would occupy the best parts of the country and, in the process, provoke the Zulu to rebellion. Wolseley reasoned that such influences were not conducive to the security and economy of the empire. In seeking support for his plans to exclude missionaries from Zululand Wolseley asked Sir Theophilus Shepstone, in late August 1879, for an opinion on this and other terms of the Ulundi treaty. To Wolseley's surprise and anger, Shepstone, a strong supporter of Zululand missionaries, severely criticized the settlement proposals and the proposed position of missionaries:

It may be argued that missionaries have accomplished but little good in Zululand, and this may be true; but they were welcomed by Panda and tolerated by Cetywayo, and some of them, such as Bishop Schreuder, Bishop Wilkinson, Mr. Oftebro and Mr. Robertson, were especially named by Cetywayo to me as deserving of separate and special consideration, so that the Zulus will be puzzled at finding that the thought of excluding missionaries was originated with the white man. (26)

Wolseley lost little time in replying to Shepstone's criticisms. He took extreme exception to Shepstone's opinion that the war had been prosecuted to advance the 'work of civilization'. He reminded

(25) *Ibid.*

(26) C.O. 879/17/209, p.4. Sir G. Wolseley's settlement of Zululand. Memoranda by Sir T. Shepstone, 14 Oct. 1879.

Hicks Beach that Shepstone's sympathy and support for missionary endeavour in Zululand was indefensible and ran counter to the Colonial Office policy of his predecessors, Kimberley and Carnarvon, and counter to Hicks Beach's own policy as stated in his confidential memo to Disraeli of March 1879. Wolseley concluded his scathing rebuttal to Shepstone's memo with, what was for him, a most uncharacteristic outburst of 'humanitarian' sentiment: 'should it have been seriously imagined by anyone that Her Majesty or her people would under any circumstance ever attempt to enforce the precepts of Christianity at the point of a bayonet'. (27)

The fundamental differences between Wolseley, the metropolitan trouble-shooter, and Shepstone, the colonial official, over the priorities of imperial policy in Zululand are well illustrated in this exchange of memoranda. Shepstone argued against Dunn's appointment as chief on moral grounds. He maintained that British policy had always advocated the gradual elimination of polygamy among the Natal Nguni as a 'civilizing' measure. The appointment of Dunn, a polygamist, would set a bad example to the Zulu:

A great deal has been said, and is still said, about efforts being made by the government to advance the civilization of the Zulus in Natal, but what will happen if the government appoints to be chief over Zulus in Zululand, a man who, being an Englishman, has renounced, and because he has renounced civilization? Polygamy among the Natal Zulus is looked upon as being, and no doubt is, the root of much mischief. The suppression of this practice in Natal is an object which the government has always professed to desire, but it appoints an English polygamist, i.e. an Englishman who has taken several Zulu women to wife. (28)

Wolseley argued forcefully in Dunn's defence by pointing out the impracticability of Shepstone's contention that the imperial government's appointment of Dunn would 'legitimize' polygamy in the eyes of the Zulu. Wolseley countered with references to Indian civil servants who held high positions and who were not monogamists. (29) Wolseley even tried

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- (27) C.O. 879/17/209, pp.1-2. Sir G. Wolseley's settlement of Zululand. Memoranda by Sir T. Shepstone, 23 Aug. 1879.
 (28) *Ibid.*, No. 168, p.369. Shepstone to Hicks Beach, 23 Aug. 1879.
 (29) C.O. 879/17/224, Appendix M, Settlement of Zululand. Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 9 Oct. 1879.

to turn moral arguments to his advantage by promoting the view that Dunn's appointment would facilitate the advancement of 'civilization' in Zululand while providing the necessary security for Natal:

with a belt of territory under such a chief between our border and the other territories of Zululand, we secure, I consider, as it were a frontier of natural fortification of inestimable value, as well as a large area of many avenues through which the advancing civilization of the south may make its way most rapidly into the remoter parts of Zululand.⁽³⁰⁾

Shepstone's criticisms were mild in comparison to the bellicose protests of missionaries and Natal colonists when the terms of the settlement and Dunn's appointment became known. Every newspaper in the colony condemned the settlement with scathing editorials appearing almost daily from September till the end of 1879. 'White settlers, white traders, and white influences are to be studiously kept out of this new preserve of barbarism. Missionaries are to be snubbed and shunted, and Zululand is to be kept for the Zulus in general, and Mr. John Dunn in particular',⁽³¹⁾ fumed the *Natal Mercury*. Wolseley's unsympathetic attitude toward missionaries was deplored. 'Christianity is dealt with as though the representative of the most Christian Queen were ashamed of the faith of which she is the defender',⁽³²⁾ complained the *Natal Mercury*.

Dunn's polygamous practices were a favourite theme of colonial journalists. The *Natal Mercury* accused:

He is - if we are wrong, we shall gladly publish his denial - a polygamist; or rather let us say in regard to his domestic establishment - a Turk. He has chosen to adopt the connubial habits of the Zulus, amongst whom he has lived so long, in preference to those of his own race and country.⁽³³⁾

(30) *Ibid.*

(31) *Natal Mercury*, 9 Sept. 1879.

(32) *Ibid.*, 15 Sept. 1879.

(33) *Ibid.*, 2 Oct. 1879.

Most colonists believed that Natal must remain a bastion of civilisation. They had the 'lurid' example of Dunn's 'degenerate' behaviour to shake them from their lethargy: 'If Dunns land is to be the recognized realm of polygamy, let Natal be the recognized home of none but men living according to English law and Christian usage'.⁽³⁴⁾ Dunn dismissed the criticism as petty jealousy of his wealth and political power. In fact, a *Mercury* editorial expressed amazement and a hint of envy over Dunn's influence and status among the Zulu: '... a man who can succeed so singly in retaining place, property and power ... may well in their eyes possess capacities of an altogether superior and irresistible order'.⁽³⁵⁾ In a follow-up the *Mercury* wondered aloud how Dunn had been uncommonly lucky in amassing fame and fortune by defying convention; 'He has won his present position by a chain of fortuitous circumstances such as seldom leads to the elevation of a man who has apparently done everything that should destroy all hope or claim to it'.⁽³⁶⁾

Wolseley frequently employed the theme of 'settler jealousy' as the underlying reason for their trenchant criticism of Dunn's deviation from white social norms. He explained to Hicks Beach:

Whilst under Ketchwayo's protection John Dunn became rich, independent and powerful, most of them still remained poor and without influence, and it is but human nature that they should be envious of the success of such a contemporary, and that in seeking to discredit him they should lay stress upon his mormon-like mode of life and hold him up to scorn because he has the courage of his religious views to disregard the marriage laws common to Christian people.⁽³⁷⁾

Wolseley delighted in comparing Dunn's gentlemanliness and individualism with the 'inferior' colonists and 'bigoted' missionaries:

(34) *Ibid.*, 24 Oct. 1879.

(35) *Ibid.*, 27 Oct. 1879.

(36) *Ibid.*, 8 Dec. 1879.

(37) C.O. 879/17/224, Appendix M, settlement of Zululand. Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 9 Oct. 1879.

Although he had never been out of Africa, his deportment is that of an English gentleman, he is well informed and has great influence with the natives. The only persons whom I have ever heard speak badly of him were missionaries, who abused him because his views on religious subjects did not coincide with theirs, and Natal colonists who envied his success in life. (38)

Wolseley loathed journalists; he thought their profession 'dishonest'. Yet he, probably more than any of his contemporaries, understood fully the power of the press to influence public opinion. In 1875 he had bribed the editor of the *Natal Colonist* to publish anti- 'responsible' leaders written by Shepstone and 'ring' member, Colonel Brackenbury. (39) However, Wolseley was not successful in manipulating the Natal colonial press in favour of the Ulundi settlement in his 1879 mission. As a counter to the adverse press criticism of the settlement Wolseley offered uncomplimentary assessments of the colonial newspapers in his despatches to Hicks Beach. He dismissed the criticisms of the *Mercury* as the usual manifestations of settler greed:

The former paper, (*Mercury*), generally represents the strong colonial sentiment on all native questions, and has always advocated the annexation of the Zulu territory. This greed for the land owned by the native races bordering upon these colonies is generally disguised under platitudes regarding the necessity for spreading Christianity and civilization among the Aborigines. (40)

Wolseley found the Natal press guilty of petty provincialism; a peculiarity born out of Natal's geographical and cultural isolation from the more 'enlightened' and progressive metropole. '*The Natal Witness*', he wrote, 'is supposed generally to reflect Dr. Colenso's views on native subjects, but I think it may be more properly described as opposed to everything done by the government in South Africa'. (41)

(38) *Ibid.*

(39) Preston, *Diaries*, pp.61-74.

(40) B.P.P., C.-2374 of 1879, No. 189, p.386. Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 24 Sept. 1879.

(41) *Ibid.*

Unpopularity for the Ulundi settlement was no doubt inflamed by Wolseley's stand on the 'responsible' government issue. Settler opposition to Wolseley's disposal of Zululand coincided with the end of the five-year moratorium on Natal's constitutional liberties. In his 1875 mission to Natal, as officer-administrator, Wolseley had earned the hatred of many influential colonists when he diluted the power of self-government embodied in the colony's charter. He did this by raising the number of Executive Council members to the same number as that of the Legislative Council; this made it virtually impossible for the colonists to implement policies contrary to the opinions expressed by the Colonial Office and members of the Executive Council, who comprised the Lieutenant-Governor, the Secretary for Native Affairs, the Colonial Secretary, and other highly placed officials.⁽⁴²⁾ The restrictions on 'responsible' government expired on 23 September 1879, with the proviso that the question of self-government be reviewed. Frere had been popular with Natal colonists for he had advised the Colonial Office in December 1878 that Natal was 'fitted' for 'responsible' government. Wolseley's supersession of Frere in May 1879 marked a change in the Colonial Office's attitude. Wolseley expressed an opinion that was diametrically opposed to that of Frere. He used the same arguments that he had in the 'responsible' government issue in 1875 - the colonists were too few in numbers and too 'ill-conditioned' to assume responsibility for African affairs:

... it would be neither justifiable nor safe to entrust to 22 300 European colonists the rights and interests of nearly 400 000 natives who have made little progress in civilization, and still live under native laws and tribal organisations, and of a coolie population nearly equal that of European descent.⁽⁴³⁾

The *Mercury* echoed the frustrations of many settlers who condemned Wolseley's unpopular policies for Zululand and Natal: 'Sir Garnet Wolseley curtailed constitutional rights in Natal. Has he now extinguished Christianity in Zululand?'⁽⁴⁴⁾ While Wolseley came

(42) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, pp.118-120.

(43) C.O. 879/17/220, p.2, Constitution; Memorandum by Mr. Antrobus. Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 27 Aug. 1879.

(44) *Natal Mercury*, 22 Sept. 1879.

in for a good deal of criticism the main focus of initial settler outrage and resentment was John Dunn and his 'treatment' of Zululand missionaries.

Dunn was a trader - he had a deep suspicion, distrust and dislike of missionaries. This was born out of his youth on the Natal frontier. His father, Robert Dunn, had supported Fynn, Cane, Biggar and other Port Natal traders in rejecting missionary Allen Gardiner's attempts to exercise authority over the settlement. Gardiner was zealous in his condemnation of the traders' deviation from European social routines - their taking of African women as wives, their adoption of African cultural values and their trade in firearms with the Zulu kings.⁽⁴⁵⁾ The traders did not want to be shackled to impractical European convention in a distinctly African environment.

The political, economic and ideological differences between traders and missionaries was a notable phenomenon on southern African frontiers. Dunn, having been brought up among traders, and a trader himself, felt that missionaries were a threat to his freedom of political, economic and social action. But if Dunn 'renounced civilization' to escape from missionaries he failed. Missionaries figured prominently in his life. Dunn's immediate white neighbours were all missionaries - Bishop Hans Schreuder of the Norwegian Mission Society established a station at nearby Entumeni (near Eshowe) in 1851.⁽⁴⁶⁾ The Hermannsburg Mission Society from the German kingdom of Hanover sent a wave of missionaries into Zululand in the late 1850s. The Reverend Friedrich Volker built a station on the banks of the Mlalazi (Umlalazi) River surrounded by territory under the jurisdiction of Dunn.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Bishop Colenso visited King Mpande at Nodwengu in 1859 and obtained permission for Anglican missionaries of the S.P.G. to establish stations in the kingdom. In 1861 Reverend Robert Robertson constructed a station at Kwamagwaza, south of Ulundi, near the western borders of Dunn's district.

(45) C. Ballard, 'Natal 1824-1844; The Emergence of a Frontier Zone' (unpublished paper presented to a seminar at University of Natal, Durban, 6 Oct. 1977), pp.1-16.

(46) Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', p.183.

(47) H. Weise (ed.), *On a Tough Missionary Post in Zululand: The Life Experiences of the Missionary Friedrich Volker according to the notes of his wife.* p.18.

Other close missionary neighbours of Dunn were the Samuelsons. The Reverend Sivert Martin Samuelson and family were Norwegian missionaries who arrived in Natal in 1851. Reverend Samuelson assisted Bishop Schreuder at Mupumulo mission station until 1854 and then moved to Reverend Oftebro's Empangeni station in Zululand. Samuelson resigned from the service of the Norwegian mission society in 1857 and later joined Robertson at Kwamgwaza in 1861. In 1865 the Samuelsons took charge of the newly established Anglican station of St. Pauls near Eshowe.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Samuelson's children were either directly or indirectly involved with Dunn and his family. The eldest daughter, Henrietta Samuelson was a school teacher and fluent Zulu linguist; she taught Dunn's children for several years in the early 1880s.⁽⁴⁹⁾ The eldest son, R.C.A. Samuelson, was also a fluent Zulu linguist who served as official interpreter for Cetshwayo during the latter's exile in the Cape Colony in the early 1880s. R.C.A. Samuelson was extremely sympathetic to the exiled king and aided Cetshwayo's quest to persuade the British government to allow him to return as King. Samuelson did little to disguise his hostility toward John Dunn; in his autobiography he condemned Dunn for his treacherous dealings with Cetshwayo. He accused Dunn of confiscating royal cattle, on behalf of the British military authorities during the Anglo-Zulu war and then buying them cheaply at £3 per head and selling them for £15 per head. 'John Dunn alone', wrote Samuelson, 'could have been satisfied with this novel gratitude to Cetywayo'.⁽⁵⁰⁾

Dunn's earliest known involvement in issues between Cetshwayo and the missionaries occurred in 1869 when Zulu-missionary relations were troubled.⁽⁵¹⁾ The paramount had threatened to evict all missionaries from the kingdom. Bishop Colenso wrote to Dunn asking him to sound out the King's attitude on the status of missionaries, and to intervene on their behalf. Dunn told Colenso that he would 'get Cetywayo to call a meeting of chiefs and inform the missionaries that they are not to bring any more teachers into the country - that he won't advise him to

(48) Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, pp.1-22.

(49) D.D.P., (K.C.L.) Ms. 1459, p.3 Henrietta Samuelson was also the authoress of *Some Zulu Customs and Folklore* and was chosen by the Anglican Mission to be their representative of the Zulu Orthography Conference of 1904.

(50) Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, p.5.

(51) Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', 187.

turn them all out at a moment's notice because then the country will be annexed'.⁽⁵²⁾ The bishop related the substance of Dunn's letter to Shepstone, who at that time was on excellent terms with Colenso. However, the bishop received disappointing news from Dunn. It appears that Dunn had been asked by Cetshwayo to hand down a judgement on the disputed ownership of Kwamagwaza mission station.

In the 1860s Colenso had been excommunicated from the Church of England for heresy, but he maintained his bishopric in Natal. Reverend Robertson supported the church's verdict and cut his ties with the rebel cleric.⁽⁵³⁾ He stayed on at Kwamagwaza and Colenso asked Cetshwayo to evict him because he claimed the station had been given to him by Mpande. Robertson vented his rage at Bishop Colenso's claims to Kwamagwaza in *The Net Cast in Many Waters*, a British journal that publicised the work of S.P.G. missions in foreign lands: 'Bishop Colenso has written to Samuelson and me, telling us that at the proper time and in the proper way, he will assert his claim to Kwamagwaza, and the other grants of land which he C!!!) has obtained in Zululand'.⁽⁵⁴⁾ But, in 1869 Robertson was in the good graces of Cetshwayo because he had practiced amateur medicine on Mpande and Cetshwayo's sister-in-law with considerable success. Dunn, at that time, favoured Robertson's presence near his district, and he decided in Robertson's favour. The bishop informed Shepstone that Dunn 'does not consider that the land was granted to me - that he will uphold Robertson's claim to it (as he is a good fellow) for himself personally ...'.⁽⁵⁵⁾

Dunn's second encounter with Colenso occurred in 1877 when Cetshwayo became alarmed at Shepstone's presence in the Transvaal. Bishop Colenso received messengers from the Zulu king requesting assistance in drafting a statement explaining Zulu claims in the disputed territory; copies of

(52) Colenso Papers, (K.C.L.), Folio 14 N, 36. Colenso to T. Shepstone, 20 Jan. 1869.

(53) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, 284-285.

(54) MacKenzie (ed.), *The Net*, p.73. Robertson's Report, 8 Dec. 1868.

(55) Colenso Papers, (K.C.L.), Folio 14 N, No. 36. Colenso to T. Shepstone, 20 Jan. 1869.

this were to be forwarded to Lieutenant-Governor Bulwer.⁽⁵⁶⁾ The Bishop was openly sympathetic to the Zulu case, and referred the Zulu envoys to his son who shared a legal practice in Pietermaritzburg.

The law firm of Francis (Frank) Colenso and Dr. James Smith saw the messengers and conceived the plan of having themselves recognized as Cetshwayo's diplomatic agents. The four envoys representing Cetshwayo, Hamu and the prime minister, Mnyamana, affixed their marks to a notarized document on 8 December 1877:

the said king, on behalf of himself, his heirs and successors, and his people through the mouths of the appearers, as is the custom of the Zulu kings to speak, appoints James Walter Smith, Esquire, Doctor of Laws and Advocate, and Francis Ernest Colenso, Esquire, Advocate, to be the diplomatic agents of the said king to communicate on his behalf to the powers and governments afore-said.⁽⁵⁷⁾

This attempt by two private British citizens to act as diplomatic intermediaries between Cetshwayo and foreign governments was yet another example of the Colenso family's involvement in diplomatic relations between the Zulu King and the British government. Driven by a desire to see the Zulu, in fact all African peoples, treated fairly and humanely the Colenso family fought a lone battle against British aggression and exploitation in the Zulu kingdom.⁽⁵⁵⁾

Smith and Colenso promptly dispatched copies of their power of attorney as Cetshwayo's diplomatic agents to Lord Carnarvon, Lieutenant-Governor Bulwer and Theophilus Shepstone. The Administrator of the Transvaal was then fully occupied with the burdensome task of governing his colony; he viewed the document with acrimony and instructed Henrique Shepstone, who served as Secretary for Native Affairs in the Transvaal on his father's staff, to object strongly to the proposed intentions of Colenso and Smith.⁽⁵⁹⁾

(56) *B.P.P.*, C.-2000, April 1878. Enclosure No. 1 in No. 25.

(57) *Ibid.*

(58) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.112.

(59) *B.P.P.*, C.-2000, April 1878, No. 61.

Lieutenant-Governor Bulwer agreed with Shepstone, and after persistent attempts by Colenso and Smith to be recognized as diplomatic agents he instructed the Natal Colonial Secretary, Napier Broome, to send the two gentlemen a short, polite letter of rejection, which read: 'His Excellency is not aware of any authority entitling British subjects to assume in this colony the position now claimed by you of diplomatic agents of the Zulu king. His Excellency is therefore unable to recognize your claim to act in that capacity'.⁽⁶⁰⁾

Colenso and Smith drew up a reply to Bulwer's letter and shrewdly brought to his notice his error in stating that there is no known authority entitling British subjects to assume appointments on behalf of the Zulu king; and in a veiled reference to Dunn's position as adviser to Cetshwayo they said: 'In answer to this we have merely to observe that we are not wrongly claiming or assuming to act in any capacity, and that the position which we occupy towards Cetywayo is one quite open to British subjects, who are frequently employed in similar positions'.⁽⁶¹⁾

On behalf of Bulwer, John W. Shepstone, acting as Secretary for Native Affairs during his brother's absence in the Transvaal, wrote Cetshwayo requesting an explanation of the supposed appointment of Colenso and Smith as his diplomatic agents. On the heels of John Shepstone's letter messengers arrived at Cetshwayo's residence at Ulundi with a copy of the power of attorney. Not fully aware of the significance of the notarized statement or the furor it had caused, Cetshwayo sent for Dunn who, upon reading the contents of both Colenso's and John Shepstone's despatches, advised Cetshwayo to repudiate promptly the power of attorney.⁽⁶²⁾ Colenso and Smith were a direct threat to Dunn's position as adviser, and his influence prevailed. A letter composed by Dunn was transmitted to Bulwer:

Cetywayo states that he never authorized Magadini, Umfunzi, and Gisimana to sign any document or depute any white man to act for or on his behalf in Natal as regards the boundary or any other question. The message

(60) *Ibid.*, Enclosure No. 1 in No. 58.

(61) *Ibid.*

(62) *Ibid.*, Enclosure No. 12 in No. 76.

taken to Bishop Colenso was only a friendly message, in answer to a message brought by Gisimana, the bishop wishing Mnyamana and Zingwayo to let him know the particulars of what had transpired at the meeting with Sir T. Shepstone on the boundary question. He also states that he only recognizes the bishop as a friend and one that upholds the cause of the Zulu nation, but not apart from the Lieutenant-Governor and Mr. Shepstone, who he knows are at the head of all that concerns him (Cetywayo).⁽⁶³⁾

Cetshwayo's repudiation of the diplomatic agency incensed Frank Colenso and in the early part of February he travelled to Zululand to obtain an explanation and legal fees. Arriving at Ulundi Colenso saw John Dunn and requested him to assist in obtaining the sum of one hundred pounds as an honorarium for legal services rendered. Dunn refused to help the man who had threatened to usurp his position as Cetshwayo's adviser:⁽⁶⁴⁾

I, knowing the circumstances, tried to persuade him that he was wrong, and there there was small probability of his getting redress, at the same time declining to intercede for him. At a meeting between himself and Cetywayo I was present, and after going into particulars, Cetywayo spoke out very straight forwardly, saying that although he looked upon Sobantu as a friend and father, he did not wish him or his to interfere between him and the government.⁽⁶⁵⁾

In the latter part of February 1878 Dunn was instructed by Cetshwayo to survey the disputed boundary area in the Utrecht district. While there he had consultations with Commandant Rudolph, Landdrost for the district and long-time associate of Shepstone. Dunn surveyed the boundary lines and in his discussions with Rudolph he gave his version of Frank Colenso's visit. Rudolph immediately conveyed the message to a much-relieved Shepstone, who informed Bulwer:

John Dunn told Mr. Rudolph that Cetywayo would not appoint Frank Colenso, and that the latter wrote to him and complained that he had been £100 out of pocket. John Dunn told him it would be of no use asking for that for he would not get it; of course Cetywayo signed nothing; and so the diplomatic agency had not been

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- (63) B.P.P., C.-2079 of 1878, Despatch No. 58. Dunn to John Shepstone 16 Jan. 1878.
 (64) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.60-61.
 (65) *Ibid.*

ratified. It was the worst possible bit of policy for Frank Colenso to have gone to Cetywayo; he should have stuck to his notarial deed, and ridden out the storm in that, or on it.⁽⁶⁶⁾

Shepstone could well be thankful for Dunn's intervention but instead he revealed his contempt for Dunn in the same letter to Bulwer: 'John Dunn says that Cetywayo ignores the whole thing, (Colenso's visit) but then I fancy that Dunn is as thorough a Zulu, and as big a liar, as the rest of the king's advisers'.⁽⁶⁷⁾

Dunn's first hint of the Colenso's hatred for him is stated as a sequel to Frank Colenso's visit:

Not long after this the king confided to me that he had been told not to put his trust in me, as I had been offered a box full of money, and all the land along the coast, if I would kill him, at the same time saying 'I tell you because I don't believe this. It is, however, one of your own race. I think this is said against you from jealousy'. I tried hard to get him to reveal who had been trying to make this mischief between him and me, but he would not divulge the secret.⁽⁶⁸⁾

Zululand traders in general, and Dunn in particular, disliked missionaries because they were economic rivals.⁽⁶⁹⁾ There is considerable evidence to substantiate the claims that missionaries were engaged in trade with the Zulu;⁽⁷⁰⁾ Etherington explains the motives behind the trading pursuits of missionaries:

(66) Shepstone Papers, Natal Archives, T. Shepstone to Bulwer 18 Feb. 1878.

(67) *Ibid.*

(68) Wynn Rees (ed.), *Colenso Letters from Natal*, (Pietermaritzburg, 1958), p.310. The bishop's wife, Frances S. Colenso, despised Dunn with nearly as much vehemence as her husband. She wrote of him in the most disparaging terms; Dunn's name was circulated freely among Mrs. Colenso's numerous correspondents. Her letter to Mrs. Lyell reveals the sadness she felt for her husband's much-slandered name and she used Dunn as an example: 'I believe some people think that he is indifferent to the hatred of his fellow men, but I know it is not so. Perhaps he too much despises the accusations of falsehood against himself by creatures like John Dunn, who is a brute and speaks of him as "that poor dupe Bishop Colenso"'.
 (69) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.122.
 (70) Weise (ed.), *Tough Post*, p.14.

Traders disliked missionaries not so much because of their gospel but because mission stations were competing centres of trade. It was frequently charged that missionaries themselves were heavily involved in trade but in fact it was the mission residents - almost entirely immigrants from Natal - who were doing the trading. Because the mission station residents were carefully excluded from the ordinary life of the kingdom and were generally regarded with contempt, the opportunity to turn a profit was one of very few inducements that missionaries could use to attract Africans from Natal.⁽⁷¹⁾

Reverend Volker, the Hanoverian missionary at UmLalazi, admitted that trade in cattle was an integral part of his programme in attracting converts. His diary reveals the extreme difficulties entailed in converting the Zulu to Christianity:

It was particularly difficult to persuade Zulu girls to learn. There was no other way than for a Christian to take one of them as his bride and to pay for her with cattle, but even that frequently required a hard struggle. As one of the first girls, after she had become engaged to Joshua, came for instruction, her own father threatened her with death and her brothers took her away from the station again, beating and kicking her and spitting at her; however, she returned and finally her father and brothers did consent because they expected that Joshua would produce a good number of cows for payment.⁽⁷²⁾

The Reverend Karl Titlestad, a Norwegian missionary stationed at Inhlazatshe near Eshowe, believed that the Zulu should be encouraged to buy trade goods from the mission stations. This would promote the development of a 'Christian work ethic' as Titlestad explained: '... it would be better to make them pay for things received and services rendered rather than to get them for nothing, otherwise how will we ever persuade them into the idea of becoming work conscious'.⁽⁷³⁾

(71) Etherington, 'The Meaning of Shepstone's Coronation of Cetshwayo', p.17

(72) Weise (ed.), *Tough Post*, p.14.

(73) 'Extracts From the Diary of an Early Missionary to Zululand: Reverend Karl Titlestad of the Norwegian Mission Society', (K.C.L.), unpublished manuscript, p.8. Titlestad to Eckhoff, March 1867. Titlestad arrived in Zululand in 1865 where he worked for twenty-six years before returning to Norway in 1891.

Dunn considered missionaries and their teachings to be a threat to his political authority. He shared Cetshwayo's conviction that Christianity was subversive to the Zulu socio-economic system. An ideology that asked Zulu converts to recognize the higher authority of Christ over that of the kingdom's ruling elite was an explosive doctrine and met with resistance. Moreover, Dunn had a vested interest in maintaining the *status quo* for he was a powerful chief and a member of the Zulu hierarchy; he ruled his *isifunda* by Zulu law and enjoyed the material advantages which the established system provided him. If mission stations were allowed to become centres of sedition and competitive trade then the very foundations of his political power and economic prosperity would be undermined.

In 1877 Dunn addressed a letter to the Aborigines Protection Society in which he defended the Zulu social system and condemned the harmful effects of missionary evangelization:

The standard rule that is is gone against the black races in this part of South Africa is the Amaxosa, or Cape frontier kafir, who is not to be compared to the Zulu, nothing but forced Christianity or civilization will spoil the Zulus, and the class of foreign missionaries we have in the country does more injury than good to them. Let them say what they like in their reports to the societies, they make no convert to their faith, besides the pretended ones or vagabonds, who imagine that by being clothed and under the garb of Christianity they will be exempt from all king's service and laws of the country, and be allowed to roam about and do as they please.⁽⁷⁴⁾

Relations between Dunn and the missionaries deteriorated rapidly with the approach of war in the late 1870s. Dunn was opposed to any extension of British colonial rule in Zululand. However, by 1877 practically all Zululand missionaries supported Frere's plans for the conquest and annexation of Zululand to the Crown.⁽⁷⁵⁾ Only harsh methods, the missionaries reasoned, could sweep away the tyranny of the king and his chiefs. The missionaries accused Dunn of being one of their worst enemies at the king's court. Volker said that: 'All might have been well if a certain John Dunn, an Englishman, who, however, lived as a Zulu heathen, had not dominated Cetshwayo like an evil spirit'. Volker's wife claimed that Dunn took a particular

(74) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.69.

(75) Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', p.200.

dislike to her husband: 'John Dunn especially hated the Hermanssburg missionaries and amongst them our Brother F. Volker, because he lived in the vicinity of Umlalazi and it is certain that he repeatedly incited Cetshwayo against the missionaries and the christened ones'.⁽⁷⁶⁾

When the missionaries fled from Zululand in 1877 Cetshwayo considered them as having left the kingdom permanently and their abandoned stations and belongings as property of the state. Dunn coveted Volker's station at Umlalazi and that of Bishop Schreuder at Entumeni as well. He asked Cetshwayo to grant him the occupational rights to these two properties. This was a perfectly legal and proper transfer according to Zulu law; as King, Cetshwayo had it in his power to redistribute land or property that had been abandoned, confiscated or taken as spoils of war. In the early part of 1878 Dunn gave Volker notice that he had taken possession of Umlalazi:

As your house and station have been presented to me by King Cetshwayo, I would ask you to take away your effects as soon as possible, failing which I shall not be responsible for them. If you want to fence in the graves (missionary Wendland's grave and the grave of Volker's first wife), I promise to respect them. I also found three pigs which I want to buy from you, if you do not ask too high a price.⁽⁷⁷⁾

Volker rejected Dunn's claims to Umlalazi and informed him that he would return to Zululand as soon as it was 'safe' for missionaries, but Dunn refused to permit Volker to re-occupy his home of eighteen years. The station was eventually used to house members of Dunn's family, and Volker's personal effects were distributed among them.⁽⁷⁸⁾

Bishop Hans Schreuder proved a more formidable opponent to Dunn than Volker. He vigorously petitioned Wolseley, Frere and Shepstone for an imperial guarantee to his station at Entumeni.⁽⁷⁹⁾ Schreuder appears to have been one of the most materialistic of Zululand's white missionaries. He pressed Wolseley to grant him a clear title to fifteen thousand acres of land surrounding Entumeni - a claim which Wolseley would not uphold as it was contrary to the conditions of the Ulundi Settlement.⁽⁸⁰⁾ Schreuder also conducted a thriving trade

(76) Weise (ed.), *Tough Post*, p.18.

(77) *Ibid.*

(78) *Ibid.*, p.19. Volker and his family established a temporary home at Sinkwazi, on the Natal north coast.

(79) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.98.

(80) *Ibid.*

in cattle with the Zulu of the vicinity and accumulated a herd numbering several hundred head.⁽⁸¹⁾ Dunn considered Schreuder to be one of his most virulent opponents and refused to acknowledge his claim to Entumeni in September 1879. But Schreuder's unyielding persistence was rewarded when Dunn relented and allowed him to return and occupy Entumeni in October 1879.⁽⁸²⁾

The Zululand missionaries had good reason to hate and fear John Dunn. They were even more scandalized than Natal colonists at Dunn's appointment and made use of every opportunity to publicise the iniquities of the Ulundi settlement. The Hermannsburg missionary, Glockner, denounced Dunn in the crudest terms: 'There was now another difficulty by John Dunn, a white man, an Irishman, who was worse than a kafir, and lived like one, and had so many wives bought with cattle - being put by the English government over Zulus as a chief'.⁽⁸³⁾

The missionaries found ready allies among the settler community and they joined in common cause against the settlement and Dunn, the enemy of 'civilization' and Christianity in Zululand. The *Mercury* claimed that Wolseley had fallen prey to Dunn's charm by supporting efforts to sabotage missionary work: 'True he had not been under the glamour of Mr. John Dunn's influence for more than a few days, and so far that influence had only resulted in a conviction that mission work would prove as potent as "rum and cupidity" in necessitating the annexation of Zululand'.⁽⁸⁴⁾

The terms of the Ulundi settlement were designed to keep missionaries and settlers out of Zululand. Two clauses which reinforced chiefly authority and gave Dunn the legal right to bar missionaries from his district read thus:

(81) A.H. Winguist, *Scandinavians and South Africa: thier impact on the Cultural, Social and Economic development of pre 1962 South Africa*. (Cape Town and Rotterdam), p.132.

(82) *Natal Witness*, 20 Jan. 1880.

(83) *Natal Colonist*, 18 Mar. 1879.

(84) *Natal Mercury*, 23 Sept. 1879.

8. I will not sell or in any way alienate, or permit, or countenance any sale or alienation of any part of the land in my territory.
9. I will permit all people now residing within my territory to there remain upon the condition that they recognize my authority as chief, and any person not wishing to recognize my authority as chief, and desirous to quit my territory, I will permit to quit it, and to pass unmolested elsewhere. (85)

Dunn's hostility toward missionaries surfaced almost immediately after the confirmation of his appointment. Armed with clauses seven and eight of the Ulundi treaty, he despatched the following curt note on 10 September to the veteran Norwegian missionary, Omond Oftebro at his station near Eshowe:

As I hear that you are taking steps to get thatch cut for the purpose of building, I think it right to let you know that for the present I do not intend to allow any missionaries to settle in the territory of which I am chief.

(signed) J.L. Dunn.

P.S. I request you will kindly communicate this to any other missionary you may hear of returning to occupy their old stations in my territory between the Umhlatuzi and Tugela rivers. (86)

Opposition to Dunn's decree crystallized quickly as churchmen bombarded the press and the British government with memorials and protests. Frere received a letter from Oftebro complaining that 'though all the other chiefs may wish to have missionaries settled amongst them, they will be afraid to allow it, Dunn's example will make them believe that missionaries are objectionable, as he, a white man, who ought to know all about it, does not allow them to settle in his territory.' (87) Being subordinate to Wolseley in Natal and Zululand, Frere regretfully referred Oftebro's protests to him. This did not stop Frere from registering his objections to Wolseley's missionary policy in a memo to Hicks Beach:

(85) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.122.

(86) *B.P.P.*, C.-2482 of 1880, Enclosure 2 in No. 122, p.344.

(87) *Ibid.*

... since the downfall of the Zulu king, the circumstances of the case are materially changed, and it appears to me that it will be for Her Majesty's government and for no chief in Zululand to consider and decide whether, under the present state of things, missionaries should or should not be prohibited from returning to or settling in Zululand on the same terms as sugar planters or storekeepers. (88)

The Natal settler community placed the blame for Dunn's 'persecution' of missionaries squarely on the shoulders of the imperial government:

Zululand is now supposed to be settled, and released from the bloodthirsty misrule of the descendant of Chaka. And what is the first result of this? That missionaries are not to be allowed into the country, this order being issued, be it noted, by a European who, by practising polygamy wholesale, has done his best, by example, to render nugatory all the precepts upon which European civilization is built. Surely the last state of Zululand is worse than the first! ... There can be no mistake this time that the fault rests entirely and solely with the imperial government. (89)

Missionary concern over Dunn's influence with the other Zulu chiefs appeared justified. In early September 1879 Robertson paid a visit to Ugano, a newly appointed chief, and indicated a desire to rebuild his station at Kwamagwaza. According to Robertson, Ugano had no objection to missionaries entering his district. Several weeks later Samuelson, another veteran Anglican missionary, paid his respects to Ugano who abruptly told him that he would not allow missionaries to operate in his territory. In the interim after Robertson's visit Dunn had advised Ugano to prohibit missionaries from settling among his people. (90) But Dunn denied the charges that he was subverting missionary endeavour. His reply appeared in the *Mercury*:

I write and beg you will make it public that my intentions have been wrongly misconstrued, and that my object is not to prohibit mission work, but to have the work carried out on a firmer and more useful system than most mission stations have formerly done ... I may also state that my intention is not to allow anyone to take possession of any place if he does not acknowledge my authority. (91)

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- (88) C.O. 879/17/218, p.42. Sir G. Wolseley's settlement of Zululand. Frere to Hicks Beach, 1 Dec. 1879.
 (89) *Natal Witness*, 20 Sept. 1879.
 (90) *B.P.P.*, C.-2505 of 1880. Enclosure in No. 12, p.33.
 (91) *Natal Mercury*, 1 Oct. 1879.

Dunn could not ignore the relentless attacks against his ban on missions; and the fact that nine stations established before the Anglo-Zulu war were located in his district only intensified the controversy.⁽⁹²⁾ Wanting to compromise his opposition while at the same time maintain his absolute authority, Dunn released a list of conditions under which a limited number of 'missionary teachers' could gain entrance. He stipulated that all missionaries wanting to enter his district had to sign a pledge observing the following regulations:

1. He shall acknowledge my authority as chief.
2. He shall acknowledge that he has no personal claim or title to land within my territory.
3. The schools to be established on the mission stations shall be founded on the principle of an ordinary plain English school; both the Zulu and English language being taught; and no undue attention being given to accomplishments such as music, etc.
4. That any natives so inclined shall be taught some trade.
5. That no native shall be allowed to remove from any kraal to settle on a mission station without my consent.
6. That it be distinctly understood that no native becomes exempt from his duties to his chief by residing on a mission station.
7. That any native desirous of residing on any mission station shall be bound to erect a dwelling house in European style.
8. That every encouragement be given to the cultivation by such natives to produce for a market.
9. That the utmost encouragement be given to industrial pursuits so as in time to make the stations self-supporting.
10. That the stations shall not be allowed to be made trading stations for dealing in cattle for profit.⁽⁹³⁾

This ingenious document was designed to eliminate potential missionary challenges to Dunn's political and economic base. It is clear that Dunn wanted to ensure that mission stations would never get the chance

(92) *Ibid.*, 22 Sept. 1879.

(93) *B.P.P.*, C.-2482 of 1880. Enclosure 1 in No. 175, pp.466-467. Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 11 Nov. 1879.

of becoming quasi-independent enclaves capable of spreading sedition - hence the inclusion of clause five restricting his subjects' freedom of movement. Residents of Dunnsland were not even given the option of renouncing their citizenship to become Christians, as they had been able to do during the reigns of Mpande and Cetshwayo. Dunn insisted that his clients, regardless of their mission affiliations, were ultimately accountable to him and had to meet their obligations as subjects of the Chiefdom.

The ten conditions for missionaries also mirror Dunn's role as an agent for structural changes in the political economy of Zululand. Dunn's conditions required Zulu living on mission stations to shift from a pre-capitalist subsistence economic system to a European capitalist one capable of producing surpluses for the market. Hence, Dunn's emphasis on the cultivation of crops for a market by mission station residents, and - the 'encouragement' that was to be given to 'industrial pursuits' in order 'to make the stations self-supporting'.⁽⁹⁴⁾ Dunn probably reasoned that if his African subjects, whether they lived on mission stations or not, geared their agricultural and craftwork production to supply a colonial capitalist market economy then his subjects and the district as a whole would increase in wealth. Dunn, in his capacity as Chief, would also increase his revenue through the taxation of a more prosperous African peasantry.

Dunn paid more than lip-service to his proclamations and reacted firmly when challenged by missionaries who ignored his decrees. In early October 1879 Alfred Adams, who had been in charge of St. Andrews Anglican mission station, returned with his African followers who reoccupied their old kraals clustered around the station house. Adams refused to recognize Dunn's authority and, in consequence, was summarily evicted and sent back to Natal. Justifying his methods in a despatch to Wolseley's chief of staff, Dunn claimed that Adams was neither a missionary nor a teacher 'but a working man and trader'.⁽⁹⁵⁾ Indeed, the Reverend Alfred Adams was Zululand's most active missionary trader. While serving as an assistant to Robertson at Kwamagwaza, Adams operated a thriving trading store. In 1884 he returned to Zululand and set up a store near the Lower Drift and later established himself as the leading store keeper and businessman in Eshowe.⁽⁹⁶⁾

(94) *Ibid.*

(95) *Ibid.*, No. 186, p.478. Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 29 Oct. 1879.

(96) Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, p.49.

Direct appeals to Wolseley for the reversal of Dunn's ban were to no avail. The High Commissioner reflected Dunn's opinion that 'almost all the missionaries who have hitherto worked in Zululand have been traders'. Bishop Schreuder's numerous and lengthy appeals to Wolseley only stimulated the imperial autocrat to offer patronizing advice on how to approach mission work:

Such progress is not in my opinion to be secured by force, nor by bullying the Zulus, nor by government interference, it can I think be only satisfactorily arrived at by the quiet and unassuming and patient enterprise of really Godly men bent upon doing God's work, by men who are indifferent to personal emolument and to the profits of trading operations. (97)

Fearing an erosion of Dunn's authority through his entanglement with the missionaries, Wolseley defended Dunn's position at the Colonial Office. An enclosure to Hicks Beach in November 1879 expressed confidence in Dunn's judgement: 'the spirit manifested by John Dunn in regard to the admission of missionaries into his territory, and to his relations with the British authorities, is most proper and conciliatory, and is by no means such as it has been represented to be by numbers of people speaking rashly and without information'. (98)

The Colonial Secretary supported Wolseley's arguments for appointing Dunn to the large buffer chiefdom. The metropolitan priorities of security and economy in Zululand through the indirect rule of puppet-chiefs appeared compatible with Dunn's own self-interests as Hicks Beach acknowledged in a memo to Wolseley:

I cannot but think that it will be to the advantage both of Natal and Zululand that the district which is most closely in contact with the colony should be under the control of a chief who has not only gained by his late valuable services the good opinion of Lord Chelmsford and your own confidence, but who also understands the power as well as the motives and objects with which the Queen's government in South Africa has been and will be carried on, and has an intelligent appreciation of and a strong personal interest in the advantages which peace and order will confer upon the country of his selection. (99)

(97) *B.P.P.*, C.-2482 of 1880. Enclosure 2 in No. 175, p.467. Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 29 Oct. 1879.

(98) *Ibid.*

(99) C.O. 879/17/218. p.42, Sir G. Wolseley's settlement of Zululand. Hicks Beach to Wolseley, 27 Nov. 1879.

Furthermore, Wolseley was impervious to missionary and colonial criticism of the Ulundi settlement and he was determined from the outset not to yield on any point: 'It will be impossible, of course, to sanction any deviation from our undertaking in favour of missionaries. Where chiefs and their people do not wish for the presence of missionaries, we could not force missionaries upon them.'⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Moreover, Wolseley forbade the British Resident in Zululand from developing any sort of relationship with missionary bodies: '... I have, therefore, thought it expedient to include in the proposed instructions to our Resident in Zululand a prohibition against any participation in missionary enterprise'.⁽¹⁰¹⁾

Hicks Beach adopted the same deferential approach to Wolseley's 'on the spot judgement' that he had previously addressed to Frere before the disastrous consequences of Isandlwana. He gave his 'official' approval to the Zululand settlement; but in private memoranda he expressed his cautious concern over the unreasonable demands that individual chiefs might make to keep missionaries out of their respective districts:

But I should think it a subject for regret if your further suggestion that the now dispossessed missionaries might be allowed to resume the occupation of the land formerly held by them were not acted upon, where the missionaries are prepared to recognize the authority of the chiefs and undertake to comply with such fair and reasonable regulations as may be required.⁽¹⁰²⁾

After five months of scathing criticism Dunn was prodded to reassess his provocative policy toward missions. In January 1880 he allowed Schreuder, Oftebro and two other Norwegian missionaries, to re-occupy their stations. This proved to be a major concession on Dunn's part for these missionaries were not bound to Dunn's regulations respecting missionaries. In his efforts to effect a reconciliation with the Norwegian missionaries, Dunn made an annual grant of £50 to the Norwegian Missionary Society. On the other hand, Dunn extracted a pledge from the Right Reverend Douglas, Anglican bishop for Zululand, to honour the laws controlling missionary

(100) C.O. 879/17/224. Appendix M, settlement of Zululand. Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 27 Aug. 1879.

(101) *Ibid.*

(102) C.O. 879/17/218. p.8. Sir G. Wolseley's settlement of Zululand. Hicks Beach to Wolseley, 27 Nov. 1879.

activities before allowing the re-occupation of St. Andrews mission station near the lower drift of the Tugela.⁽¹⁰³⁾ The Hanoverian and Berlin societies, which had five stations in Dunn'sland, remained outside the pale of Dunn's consideration. They were not permitted, under any circumstances, to return. A mixture of compromise, intransigence and selective concession characterized Dunn's policy toward Zululand missionaries. But, these measures were unacceptable to the majority of churchmen, and failed to satisfy influential individuals or societies who skilfully employed all the political and media resources at their command to effect a change in the Ulundi settlement.

Dunn's most influential and unyielding critic was Bishop Colenso. He, like Wolseley, understood the power of the pen and the media, and used both to maximum advantage in denouncing the Ulundi settlement. He corresponded regularly with leading British philanthropists and Liberal party leaders. In letters to Frank Chesson, Secretary for the Aborigines Protection Society, Colenso vented his rage over Dunn's 'traitorous' and 'immoral' acts:

After Isandhlwana, J. Dunn sent a message to Cetshwayo saying that if he wished to be king of the whole country ... now was the time for him to strike a blow, as there was only one column now to resist him. And this double-dyed traitor has been just appointed by Sir G. Wolseley to be ruler of the largest of his thirteen provinces, where, with his native wives and concubines, to whom he may add at his pleasure, he will set a splendid example of morality.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

Colenso deplored Dunn's restrictions on missionary endeavour, but he expressed a spiteful satisfaction over the exclusion of several 'war party' missionaries:

Mr. John Dunn's first act ... has been to refuse leave to any missionaries to settle in his territory. This includes Robertson, Oftebro, and others, who have done so much to bring this great calamity on the Zulu people, and as far as they are concerned, they richly deserve exclusion.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾

(103) *B.P.P.*, C.-4037 of 1884. Enclosure 1 in No. 8., p.15.

(104) Cox, *The Life of Bishop Colenso*, p.528. Letter from Colenso to Chesson, 13 Sept. 1879.

(105) *Ibid.*, p.529, Colenso to Chesson, 20 Sept. 1879.

Upon more sober reflection, Colenso saw in Dunn's ban a necessity for Dunn to exclude missionaries from his district for they posed a major threat to his lifestyle and political authority:

But John Dunn's ukase extends to all. And indeed I do not see how he can well do otherwise, since any missionary who might think it right to deal gently with polygamy as found among the heathens or converts from heathenism, must inevitably attack the polygamous practices of a white man like J. Dunn. Surely the morality and Christianity of Englishmen will be shocked when it is found that we have spent many millions of money, and lost 2 500 lives, and killed 10 000 Zulus, in order to exclude Christianity and civilization from that part of Zululand which adjoins Natal. (106)

The *Colonist* endorsed Bishop Colenso's view and noted the irony of the Ulundi settlement and the predicament of the 'war party' missionaries whose aspirations in Zululand were being dashed by the same imperial government that they hoped would open the Zulu country to them:

Instead of the 'missionaries borne back on the wave of conquest' which they invoked, they find themselves stranded, shut out from the very spots they voluntarily relinquished in hopes of speedily reoccupying freed from such checks and trammels as has hitherto hampered them. (107)

Dunn's actions served to unite missionaries and colonists against the Zululand settlement generally, and his 'mis-rule' in particular. The home government and parent missionary organisations received appeals for a speedy reversal of the situation. The Anglican Bishop of Cape Town petitioned the Colonial Office for Dunn's removal as chief. (108) Christian Mission Societies and their sponsors in England took up the cause of their brethren in Zululand. The Free Church Presbytery of Caithness stated in a memorial to Hicks Beach that they had 'learned with deep regret of the intention of John Dunn not to allow missionaries to enter the portion of Zululand placed under his rule, except upon conditions which restrict their freedom in preaching the gospel...'. (109) The Anglican Bishop of Carlisle

(106) *Ibid.*, p.529, Colenso to Chesson, 13 Sept. 1879.

(107) *Natal Colonist*, 28 Oct. 1879.

(108) *B.P.P.*, C.-2505 of 1880. Enclosure in No. 12, p.33.

(109) *B.P.P.*, C.-2482 of 1880, No. 144, p.378. The Memorial of the Free Church Presbytery of Caithness to Sec. of State for the Colonies. 19 Nov. 1879

informed the Colonial Secretary that the 'administrators of the MacKenzie Memorial Mission to Zululand' were 'in some degree of anxiety and perplexity as to the terms of the settlement of Zululand'. (110) The MacKenzie Memorial had, in large part, financed the building of schools and chapels at the Anglican stations of St. Pauls, St. Andrews and Kwamagwaza before 1879. The Bishop of Carlisle expressed the hope that the stations would remain the property of the missionary societies and that 'nothing will be permitted to interfere with the beneficent operations of such bodies'. (111)

The Bishop of Exeter, representing the populous 'Three Towns' of Plymouth, Stonehouse and Devonport, submitted a resolution expressing the diocese's 'very strong and decided opinion respecting the arrangement which it has stated has been made for the government of Zululand, by which, it is alleged, John Dunn and possibly other chiefs, have the power to exclude missionaries'. The Bishop of Exeter emphasized that the objections of his diocese to metropolitan policy toward missionaries in Zululand were 'universally entertained by the clergy of the Church of England' and should be given due consideration by the Colonial Secretary. (112)

The Aborigines Protection Society, at Chesson's urging, appealed to Liberal Party Parliamentarians for Cetshwayo's re-installment as king of Zululand, entry rights for missionaries and the dismissal of John Dunn. In a similar vein, Bishop Colenso and Lady Florence Dixie gained parliamentary and clerical support for the dismantling of the settlement and Cetshwayo's return, through an eloquent and exhaustive publicity campaign. (113)

While churchmen and philanthropists might despise Dunn, British reactions towards Dunn were generally mixed. 'But it is difficult not to regret that the question should at once have been decided against the missionaries by one of the chiefs whose example is likely to influence his colleagues', the *London Times* wrote in October 1879. Natalians

(110) *Ibid.*, Enclosure 1 in No. 177, p.170. Bishop of Carlisle to Colonial Office, 18 Dec. 1879.

(111) *Ibid.*, No. 177, p.171. Bishop of Exeter to Colonial Office, 7 Jan. 1878.

(112) *B.P.P.*, C.-2482 of 1880, No. 109, p.302.

(113) Barber, 'Dunn and Zululand 1856-1883', pp.44-47.

were gleeful when they learned that Dunn's photograph had been 'hissed and booed' when exhibited at Inverness.⁽¹¹⁴⁾ But Dunn had received a good deal of publicity from Archibald Forbes and other London correspondents covering the Anglo-Zulu war. Dunn's career was undoubtedly extraordinary, and he captured the imagination of many Victorians who saw in him a far-off frontier figure whose polygamy shocked them and whose hunting and military career and his associations with the 'glamorous' Wolseley appealed to the Victorian sense of romance and adventure. An account of Dunn's exploits in the relief of Eshowe appeared in the *Illustrated London News*.⁽¹¹⁵⁾ 'Chief Dunn' was the 'Celebrity' of the week in *The World*, a popular British journal with a large circulation.⁽¹¹⁶⁾ Queen Victoria surprised Lord Chelmsford when she asked him to bring her a photograph of John Dunn upon his return to England.⁽¹¹⁷⁾ The erosion of Dunn's political power in post-war Zululand was not directly attributable to his anti-missionary decrees, although it must be emphasized that the adverse publicity generated by the missionaries and their allies in England contributed to a generally unfavourable impression of Dunn and the Ulundi settlement in Britain.

Dunn's decision to allow Schreuder, Oftebro and several other missionaries to re-occupy their stations appears to have appeased his colonial critics. The *Witness* told its readers in late January 1880 that:

Missionaries were discouraged by Sir G. Wolseley's official utterances, and the terms sought to be imposed by Mr. Dunn would amount to their practical exclusion from the country. To some extent these restrictions appear to have been relaxed, the Rev. Robertson and the Norwegian Missionaries appear all to have returned and to be busy restoring their wasted stations.⁽¹¹⁸⁾

By the middle of 1880 all criticism of Dunn's treatment of missionaries virtually disappeared from Natal newspapers. A tenuous peace characterized Dunn's relationship with his missionary neighbours for the

(114) *Natal Colonist*, 24 Jan. 1880.

(115) *Illustrated London News*, June 1879.

(116) *Colonist*, 4 Dec. 1879.

(117) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p. 593.

(118) *Natal Witness*, 20 Jan. 1880.

remainder of his career as one of the thirteen chiefs (1879-1883). The British Resident, Melmoth Osborn, had explicit instructions from Wolseley to offer no assistance to missionaries and he supported Dunn's right as chief to admit, evict, or exclude missionaries from his chiefdom. In August 1880 he reported to the Governor, Sir George Pomeroy Colley, on the state of 'co-existence' that had developed between the appointed chiefs and missionaries seeking entry into their districts, with the exception of Dunn's ban on the Hanoverians:

So far as I know, all the missionaries have been readily allowed by the chiefs to return to their stations, with the exception of the German missionaries (I think five in number), who formerly had their stations in that part of Zululand now forming Chief Dunn's territory. That chief refuses to allow them to return on the grounds:-

- (1). That they had voluntarily abandoned their stations about a year before the war commenced, and that therefore they cannot be looked upon as having been compelled to leave their stations on account of the war.
- (2). That in his opinion they are not a class of missionaries likely to benefit the natives by their example or ability to instruct, in which view, he says, he is supported by the results of his observations during the long time they occupied the station as missionaries.
- (3). That they refused to sign his conditions upon which he was willing to admit them into his territory on their first application for such admission. (119)

Dunn summed up his views on missionary operations in Zululand to a *Witness* reporter while in Pietermaritzburg in February 1880: 'He does not expect that any great success will attend missionary work; his evangelism promoted vagrancy, crime, and contempt of Zulu law and custom in a place where Zulu law and custom were the only protection to life and property'. (120) While Dunn felt it necessary to accept

(119) *B.P.P.*, C.-2695 of 1880. Enclosure 1 in No. 3. Colley to Kimberley, 9 Aug. 1880. Enclosure - Report of Osborn to Colley on the working of the Zulu settlement, 4 Aug. 1880.

(120) *Natal Witness*, 21 Feb. 1880.

the presence of the Norwegians and the Anglican Robertson, he was successful in ridding his chiefdom of the German missionaries, his most competitive rivals.

Dunn's influence on imperial policy in Zululand was brief, lasting four years, 1879-1883. Two major events assured Dunn's decline and fall. First, Wolseley, Dunn's mentor and supporter, relinquished his High Commissionership in April 1880; he was replaced by administrators who possessed neither the requisite power nor inclination to protect the controversial white chief. Second, the election victory of Gladstone's Liberal party in April 1880 shifted the locus of Colonial Office authority to Lord Kimberley who supported Cetshwayo's release and restoration.⁽¹²¹⁾ In January 1883 Cetshwayo was re-installed (albeit in a much diminished and restricted capacity) as King of Zululand.⁽¹²²⁾ John Dunn was stripped of his chiefly prerogatives and relegated to the position of a minor chief.⁽¹²³⁾

Dunn's historical merit rests mainly on his contributions to the Ulundi settlement. For many missionaries and Natal settlers Dunn symbolized the 'iniquitous' character of British policy in post-war Zululand. An unlikely alliance of settlers, colonial officials and humanitarians joined ranks in condemning the 'persecution' of missionaries and Christianity by Dunn; Wolseley's 'guide, philosopher and friend, his peculiarly favoured nominee chieftain', carped the *Natal Mercury*.⁽¹²⁴⁾ After all, settlers and missionaries had supported and fought for the imperial war effort in Zululand, but instead of being rewarded for their services with the annexation of Zululand and unequivocal imperial encouragement and aid to missionary work, they found themselves excluded, economically, politically and culturally, from the African kingdom they had helped British conquer.

(121) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, pp.150-155.

(122) Barber, 'John Dunn and Zululand', p.47.

(123) *Ibid.*, p.49.

(124) *Natal Mercury*, 13 Oct. 1879.

Chief Dunn was the kind of figure that culturally belligerent Victorians loved to hate. He insulted white womanhood with his decided preference for African wives. Dunn provoked apoplectic rage from Bishop Colenso and churchmen in South Africa and England with his blatant obstruction of the spreading of the gospel among the Zulu people. By committing every social sin, for having armed the Zulu with guns and by turning traitor to Cetshwayo and defecting to the British when expedient, Dunn had emerged an even more wealthy and powerful figure in Zululand. The ultimate insult to colonial sensibilities came in November 1879 when several influential admirers of Dunn petitioned the British government to have Dunn knighted for his services to Lord Chelmsford during the relief of Fort Eshowe. The thought of Chief Dunn being dubbed 'Sir John' evoked vehement protest from the Natal settler community. The Colonial Office officials charged with processing the petition for knighthood recoiled in the face of the indignant protests and politely rejected the request. (125)

The conflict and tension between Dunn and his missionary and settler critics was a reflection of the wider avenues of disagreement between the metropolitan government and the vanguard of white settlement on the colonial periphery. Security, economy and retrenchment were the priorities of both the Tory and Liberal governments in South Africa from 1879-1887. (126) The home government was unsympathetic, even hostile, to the expansive drive of settlers and missionaries into African territories. The 'advancement of civilization' was low on the list of imperial priorities. The *Witness* probably summed up the feelings of most settlers and missionaries toward Dunn and the Ulundi settlement: 'it is impossible to associate his appointment with any idea of social progress or enlightened government. This alone shows the character of the settlement. It will be a personal rule, by one who has imbibed kaffir ideas on all subjects'. (127) Dunn's imprint on missionary activity in post-war Zululand was profound. Nine stations out of fourteen in the country were located in Dunn's chiefdom. He was responsible for permanently shutting down six of these (five German and one Anglican). Dunn's influence was felt well beyond the boundaries of his own district. Ugano and Mlandela heeded Dunn's advice and allowed only

(125) Barber, 'Dunn and Zululand', p.30.

(126) See Webb, 'Great Britain and the Zulu People, 1879-1887', p.303.

(127) *Natal Witness*, 18 Nov. 1879.

a few missionaries to establish stations in their territories. The alliance struck between Dunn and Zibhebhu had adverse repercussions for missionaries in northern Zululand. Zibhebhu turned to Dunn for advice and assistance and, like his adviser, effectively discouraged missionary activities. Zibhebhu made life so untenable for the Swedish missionary, Fristedt, that he was compelled to leave his station at Ekutuleni on two occasions.⁽¹²⁸⁾ Reverend Volker, one of the German refugees from Dunn's district, re-settled in Zibhebhu's district at Ekuhlengeni. Zibhebhu's Mandlakazi twice looted and burned his new station before and during the Zulu civil war of 1883-84.⁽¹²⁹⁾

A recent assertion that the terms of the Ulundi settlement facilitated the advance of missionary imperialism in post-war Zululand is not borne out by evidence.⁽¹³⁰⁾ Between 1879 and 1886-87 there were fewer stations in operation than had been the case before the Anglo-Zulu war. From 1879 to 1887 Colonial Office policy toward missionary expansion in Zululand was decidedly unsympathetic, even hostile to missionaries. The failure to achieve confederation in Zululand and the Transvaal swept Frere and Shepstone out of power and favour with the metropolitan authorities. As a result, the missionaries lost what little political muscle and status they had at Whitehall. By coincidence, Wolseley, the administrator who was empowered to draw up a Zulu settlement, and Dunn, the imperial government's agent and one of the most powerful of the thirteen chiefs, both shared a healthy hatred and distrust for missionaries. Dunn and Wolseley must bear the largest proportion of responsibility for the legal and economic obstructions placed in the path of missionary work in post-war Zululand.

(128) J. du Plessis, *Christian Missions in South Africa*, (Cape Town, 1965), p.386.

(129) Weise (ed.), *Tough Post*, pp.29-31.

(130) For example, Unterhalter, 'Confronting Imperialism', p.19.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE DRIFT TO CIVIL WAR 1879 - 1887

Her Majesty's government fully approve the principles on which this settlement has been based; and the provisions which you have made for carrying out are generally in accordance with their wishes and policy.(1)

Memo from Hicks Beach to Wolseley on the
Settlement of Zululand, 27 Novemner 1879.

Four years after the Anglo-Zulu war the political complexion of events in Britain and South Africa had changed substantially. Sir Michael Hicks Beach and his Tory compatriots had been replaced by Gladstone's Liberal ministry in 1880.⁽²⁾ Wolseley had long since relinquished his Special High Commissionership for south-east Africa and sat in Egypt pleading impatiently for more troops and the go-ahead to advance into the Sudan.⁽³⁾ The Ulundi settlement, which Hicks Beach had found satisfactory, had been scrapped. Cetshwayo had been restored as King of a territorially smaller dominion with a rival faction and Natal officials bent on destroying him. By 1885 Zululand had been torn asunder by civil war; the Usuthu had been beaten by Zibhebhu and Cetshwayo had died shortly afterwards. The eruption of full-scale civil war in Zululand in 1883 was the climax of a pattern of political violence, rebellion, and economic distress that had developed out of the conditions of the Ulundi settlement. John Dunn played an important, if not major role in resisting the restoration of Cetshwayo as King, and trying to maintain a settlement that was in the interests of himself, his family and clients.

When Dunn took control of his chieftdom in September 1879 he was forty-five years old and at the pinnacle of his political career in post-war Zululand. Scarcely a year before he had faced political

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- (1) C.O. 879/17/218, p.4, Sir G. Wolseley's settlement of Zululand. Hicks Beach to Wolseley, 27 Nov. 1879.
 (2) Webb, 'Great Britain and the Zulu People', p.309.
 (3) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.590.

ruin and severe economic setbacks. His military and political talents, which he was able to display during the Anglo-Zulu war, won him more power, wealth and land than he had ever held under Cetshwayo: moreover, he had been officially recognized as a chief of an African territory by the British government.

Yet, Dunn knew that the continuation of his rule rested on two pre-conditions: first, that Cetshwayo should never be allowed to return to Zululand; and that Usuthu royalists should be prevented, at all costs, from fomenting discontent and rebellion against the appointed chiefs. To prevent a restoration Dunn needed the support of forces both within and outside Zululand. He accordingly entered into an alliance with Cetshwayo's most fierce opponent in Zululand, Zibhebhu, chief of the Mandlakazi. Second, Dunn was intent on maintaining the favour and continued support of the imperial government through a policy of firm and efficient rule in Dunnsland, and by appearing as a force for moderation and unity through the exercise of moral suasion or political coercion over the other twelve chiefs.

The terms of the Ulundi settlement created the volatile political conditions which fostered the growth of a restoration movement among the Zulu and their humanitarian supporters in Natal and England. The turbulent period of the Zulu civil war and its crucial prelude, the Ulundi interim, may be attributed to the interaction and confrontation of three 'main streams of historical forces' which are found in Zululand in the 1880s: 'the one with its source in Zulu history, the other in imperial Britain, and the third in the settler communities on Zululand's borders'.⁽⁴⁾ John Dunn failed to straddle these forces successfully and fell from power in 1883.

The entire system of government and administration in post-war Zululand created a political environment in which internecine strife could thrive luxuriantly. The maintenance of public order in Zululand was the ultimate responsibility of the Colonial Office.

(4) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, preface.

The Ulundi settlement had disposed of much of the traditional political order and insisted on radical changes in the structure of Zulu society. These substantive changes required the presence of a sizeable and costly administration, but the Conservative and Liberal governments were both precluded from adding Zululand to Britain's dominions after Isandlwana; the heavy expenditure of the war had rendered such a policy unacceptable to the British government.⁽⁵⁾ The election of the Liberals in April 1880 found Lord Kimberley at the Colonial Office. He reflected Gladstone's commitment not to become directly involved in the administration of Zululand, but, like the Conservatives, Kimberley reserved the right of Britain to intervene in Zululand's affairs if necessary. Webb found Britain's position a convenient one to adopt: 'by avoiding a decision on the question of sovereignty, the British government could escape responsibility for Zululand's affairs, yet reserve for itself the right to intervene if ever it deemed it in its own interests to do so'.⁽⁶⁾

The execution of Colonial Office policy in Zululand fell on a number of imperial and colonial officials. The Special Commissioner for south and east Africa and General Commanding Her Majesty's forces in South Africa assumed overall responsibility for implementing Colonial Office directives in Zululand. Wolseley filled this post from May 1879 until April 1880.⁽⁷⁾ His chief-of-staff, General Sir George Pomeroy Colley, was also Governor of Natal. Boer resistance to British rule in the Transvaal fully occupied Colley's energies up to the time of his death at Majuba on 27 February 1881.⁽⁸⁾ The Deputy Commissioner, Sir Evelyn Wood, then assumed Colley's command. He was only slightly more involved in Zulu affairs than his predecessor. In March 1882 Sir Henry Bulwer returned as Governor of Natal and Special Commissioner for Zululand. Of all the administrators and governors concerned with Zulu affairs during the Ulundi interim, Bulwer must rank as the most active. His attitude toward the Zulu was influenced by his long association with the Shepstone family. Bulwer

(5) Webb, 'Britain and the Zulu People', p.306.

(6) *Ibid.*, p.312.

(7) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.5.

(8) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.156.

leaned heavily on the advice of John Shepstone, sometime Secretary for Native Affairs, on conditions in Zululand.⁽⁹⁾

The sole official representative of British power in Zululand was the Resident. Wolseley stated specifically that he would be 'the eyes and ears' of the British government in observing 'the manner in which the chiefs appointed to rule over the several territories of the country carry out the terms to which they assented as the conditions of their chieftainship'.⁽¹⁰⁾ While Wolseley expected the Resident to use his influence over the chiefs he stipulated that 'whilst always ready to give advice to the chiefs of Zululand, you will exercise no authority over them or their people'.⁽¹¹⁾ Wolseley also made it practically impossible for the Resident to exercise any authority. The Resident had no magistrates, no police, nor any authority to draft men from the thirteen chiefdoms into his service. The Resident had a secretary, several messengers, a house, and £300 expenses, in addition to his yearly salary of £1,000. Wolseley intended the Resident to be only the symbol and not the substance of British paramountcy in Zululand. Furthermore, the Resident had to report all matters to the High Commissioner or the Governor of Natal⁽¹²⁾ before he could act or intervene in Zulu affairs.

The first Resident was W.O. Wheelright, a former Natal Magistrate.⁽¹³⁾ He soon became frustrated when he realized that he had no authority. Wheelright resigned several months later. His replacement was Melmoth Osborn, who had joined the Natal civil service in 1856. He had later served on Sir Theophilus Shepstone's staff as Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal in 1877.⁽¹⁴⁾ Osborn was considered to have had 'an intimate knowledge of the Zulu, their language, and

(9) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.68.

(10) *B.P.P.*, C.-2482 of 1879, Enclosure 2 in No. 87, p.265.

(11) *Ibid.*, p.260.

(12) *B.P.P.*, C.-2482 of 1879, Enclosure 2 in No. 87, p.265. Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 3 Sept. 1879.

(13) *Ibid.*

(14) K.A. Harrison, 'Melmoth Osborn and Events in Zululand (1879-1883)', (unpublished Honours thesis, University of Natal, 1971), pp.4-5.

their mode of thought and life...'⁽¹⁵⁾ However, Osborn's perception of Zulu society was similar to that of his revered superior, Theophilus Shepstone. Like the Shepstones, Bulwer and many Natal settlers, Osborn was opposed to Cetshwayo's return and to any royalist movement to reinstall him.⁽¹⁶⁾ The actions of the appointed chiefs were usually defended by Osborn. He strove to have his authority extended, and he attempted arbitration in many serious disputes. Osborn served as Resident from 15 March 1879 until the beginning of 1883 when he was made Resident Commissioner of the Zululand Native Reserve. He established his residence near Eshowe in Dunn's chiefdom. Wolseley wanted the Resident to be in closer communication with his immediate superiors in Natal; and Dunn'sland was considered to be the safest and most 'civilized' of the thirteen chiefdoms.⁽¹⁷⁾

Between 1879 and 1883 successive British governments and their colonial officials were hamstrung by a settlement which they had been forced to adopt. Wolseley's formula for the indirect British rule of Zululand was based on the active assumption of executive authority by the appointed chiefs. Collectively, Wolseley's appointees have been variously described as 'thirteen unpopular nobody's',⁽¹⁸⁾ as corrupt, traitorous, infirm and imbecilic. Rarely has a set of rulers in southern Africa been so scorned by historians and journalists. Some of the charges made against the chiefs were undoubtedly true, but practically all the literature written on this post-war era was tinged with sympathy for Cetshwayo and his restoration.⁽¹⁹⁾ The Usuthu and their staunch allies, the Colensos have somehow been absolved from all responsibility for contributing to the violence and bloodshed of the post-war era. Atrocities such as murder, assassination, cattle raiding, abduction and acts of pillage were committed by the royalists as well as by some of the appointed chiefs. Internal disorder was a feature of Zulu

(15) Haggard, *Cetywayo and His White Neighbours*, p.35.

(16) J.J. Guy, 'Cetswayo Ka Mpande C. 1832-84', in C. Saunders (ed.), *Black Leaders in Southern African History*, (London, 1979), p.91.

(17) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.596.

(18) De Kiewiet, *Imperial Factor*, p.247.

(19) For example see the works of the Colensos: F.E. Colenso, *The Ruin of Zululand*, 2 vols., and C. Vijn, *Cetshwayo's Dutchman*.

political life throughout the kingdom's history. Dingane, Mpande and Cetshwayo had all won their thrones by assassinations or civil war. Hamu and Zibhebhu ruled over powerful factions that displayed a nominal loyalty only to Cetshwayo as head of state.

Wolseley was aware of these fissiparous tendencies in Zulu society, and he and Dunn concocted a settlement that succeeded in dividing the royal house into hostile factions, thus destroying Zulu national unity. The appointment of two royals and Dunn as chiefs over other members of the royal family produced the discord and conflict that erupted into civil war. The Zulu civil war of 1883 can trace its origins to the factional divisions and royal rivalry that simmered beneath the surface. The interests of imperial Britain and colonial Natal triggered latent Zulu factionalism into open civil strife.⁽²⁰⁾ When the thirteen chiefs accepted their appointments from the British government, they represented a new order for radical social, political and economic change in post-war Zulu society. Their careers and aspirations deserve closer scrutiny.

Zibhebhu ka Maphitha, chief of Mandlakazi, was anything but a 'nobody'. He was a royal prince and leader of the second most powerful faction in Zululand from the time he succeeded his father, Maphitha, in 1872. He had been enrolled in the Mxapo regiment in 1861 and had soon displayed those martial qualities which were to win him the reputation as the foremost Zulu soldier and strategist since Shaka. Zibhebhu was by far the most aggressive and capable member of the Zulu royal family. Maphitha himself was reputed to have warned Cetshwayo that his son was very cunning. There are strong indications that relations between the Usuthu and the Mandlakazi were clouded by distrust and rivalry that dated back to the tense confrontation between the two factions at Cetshwayo's coronation in 1873.⁽²¹⁾

Although Zibhebhu was opposed to going to war with the British, and quarreled violently with Cetshwayo over the issue, he, nevertheless, fought loyally and bravely to maintain Zulu independence throughout

(20) Guy, 'Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom', preface.

(21) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.40-41.

the entire war. He commanded a regiment at Isandlwana and he claimed to have personally killed Melville and Coghill when they attempted to save the regimental colours at Fugitive's Drift. At the battle of Ulundi on 4 July 1879 Zibhebhu commanded the Zulu army.⁽²²⁾

After the Zulu defeat Zibhebhu retired to his district and waited to see what moves the British would make with respect to Zululand. During July and August 1879 Dunn made contact with Zibhebhu and gave him assurances that he would not be punished by the British if he submitted to the British government. Dunn saw Zibhebhu as a natural ally who would oppose any resurgence of Usuthu power in Zululand. Dunn convinced Wolseley that Zibhebhu would serve British interests if rewarded with an independent chieftainship.⁽²³⁾ Initially, Wolseley was hesitant to appoint such an aggressive firebrand who had broken the truce before the battle of Ulundi by firing on a British patrol. In late August, Zibhebhu appeared at Ulundi and accepted the terms of the settlement. He had cast his lot with the new order and was now identified by the Usuthu as a lackey of Dunn and the British government. Moreover, Wolseley made the situation more volatile by placing the most ardent royalists, the princes Ndabuko and Usiwetu, under the control of Zibhebhu.⁽²⁴⁾ Wolseley's strategy was to curb and suppress potentially troublesome members of the royal family by putting them under the most powerful of the appointed chiefs. Confidence in Zibhebhu's abilities was expressed by the Boundary Commission when they described him as 'a grasping, ambitious man' and 'more advanced than any Zulu we have yet met'.⁽²⁵⁾

Another chief of great importance was Hamu, half-brother to Cetshwayo. In the early stages of the war he had defected to the British forces

(22) Guy, 'Mandlakazi and Usutu', p.6.

(23) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.59.

(24) Guy, Mandlakazi and Usutu', p.14.

(25) Z.A., vol. 19, No. 19. Extract from final draft of Zululand Boundary Commission 1879. The Commissioners, Alleyne and Villiers, supplied reports on the character, intelligence and behaviour of the appointed chiefs whom they interviewed. With the exception of Dunn, Zibhebu and Hlubi, the report was on the whole most uncomplimentary towards the majority of the chiefs. Wolseley suppressed this information by deleting it from the final published copy contained in Despatch No. 49, 1879, to the Colonial Office.

under Evelyn Wood.⁽²⁶⁾ Like Zibhebhu he strove to maintain his independence and autonomy in his large district in north-western Zululand. Hamu appears to have been even more unreconciled to Cetshwayo's succession to the throne than Zibhebhu, and gave only sullen recognition to the new king at the 1873 coronation.⁽²⁷⁾ There is evidence that Hamu aspired to be king; Cetshwayo said that 'Uhamu is the man that has for a long time during my reign tried his best to dethrone me and get in my place, by sending men like Ungwegana and Betywana (Hamu's *izinduna*) to slander me and tell all sorts of lies about me'.⁽²⁸⁾ Wolseley was unimpressed with Hamu who was grossly obese and addicted to hard liquor, consuming on average, two bottles of gin a day. He had a reputation for inflicting arbitrary punishment on his subjects with great cruelty. However, he was a royal prince and ruler of a large faction, and Wood had committed the British government to rewarding him for defecting. Hamu, like Zibhebhu, was put in control of districts that contained large numbers of Zulu who were fiercely loyal to Cetshwayo. Prominent among these was Mnyamana, ex-prime minister to the king and head of a large faction wealthy in cattle, and the Qulusi people. Both of these factions had suffered heavy losses during the war and resented being ruled by a traitor.⁽²⁹⁾

Wolseley stated that it was his intention to resuscitate chiefdoms that had existed in pre-Shakan days. This principle seems to have been lost sight of when the boundaries were hastily drawn. The reconstitution of the Mthethwa chiefdom under Mandela was the only territory that contained a large majority of Mthethwa ruled by an Mthethwa chieftain.⁽³⁰⁾ The Boundary Commission so disregarded ethnic boundaries that all the chiefdoms contained a mixture of clans and factions with disparate loyalties. Typical of this was the attempted reconstitution of the Ndwandwe chiefdom under Mcojana; in this case artificial boundaries cut across tribal divisions with

(26) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.596.

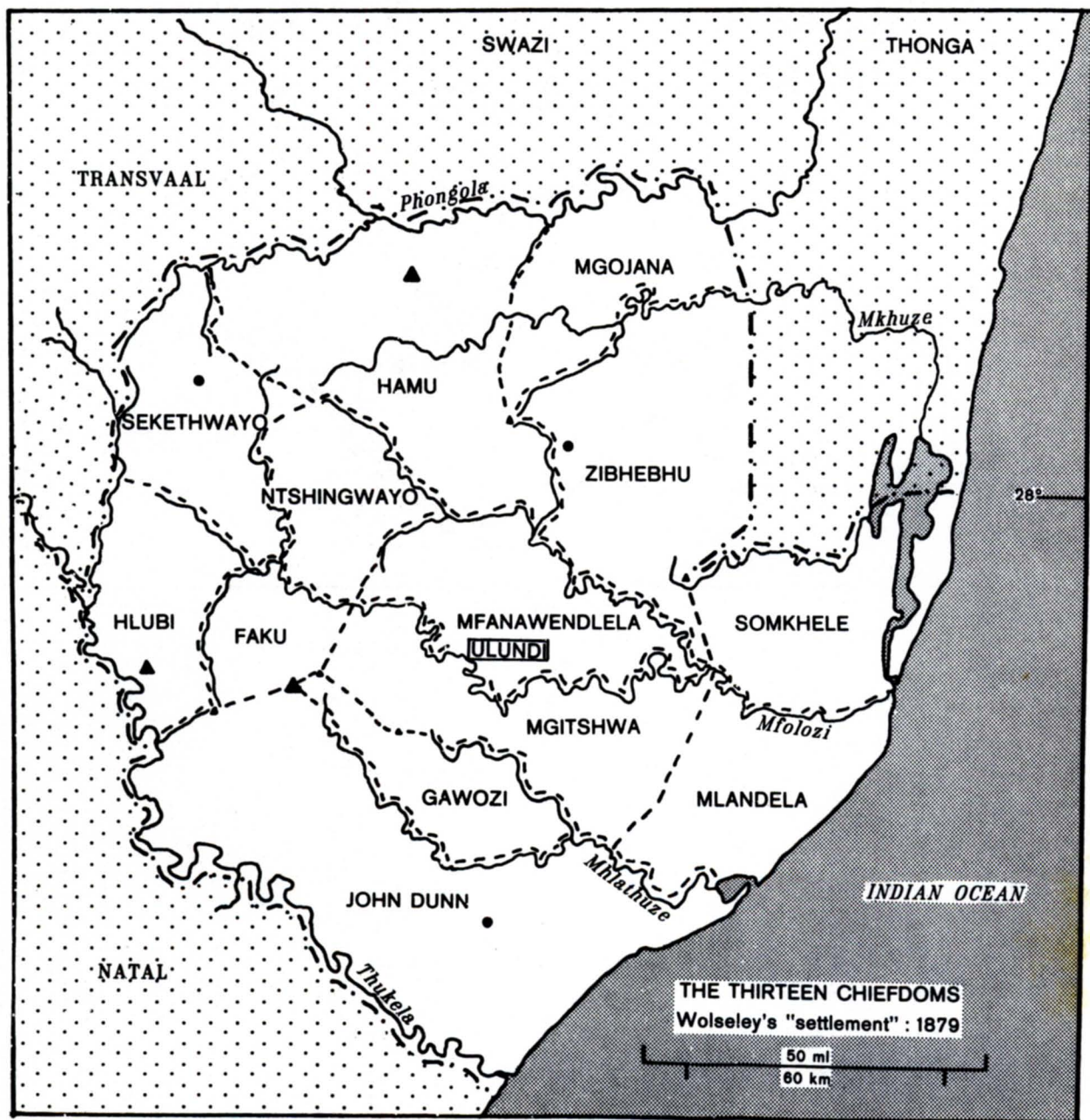
(27) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.40-41.

(28) Webb and Wright (eds.), *A Zulu King Speaks*, p.60.

This statement first appeared in *B.P.P.*, C.-2950, 1881.

(29) Guy, 'Mandlakazi and Usutu', p.13.

(30) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, pp.146-147.



MAP D

the result that neither Mcojana nor the Ndwandwe lived in the territory allocated to them.⁽³¹⁾ Hlubi, a BaSotho chieftain who had served with the British invasion army during the war, was rewarded with a district in the vicinity of Isandlwana. He ruled over the Cunu and Qulusi who were firm supporters of the former king.⁽³²⁾ The remaining chiefs could be classified as nonentities who played only minor roles; they were Ntshingwayo, Mfanawendlela, Somkhele, Sekethwayo, Mgitshwa, Gawozi and Faku.⁽³³⁾

Several months after the signing of the Ulundi treaty the conditions of the settlement began to create the internal conflict that Theophilus Shepstone had predicted.⁽³⁴⁾ The origins of the conflict between the appointed chiefs and the Usuthu can be traced to the confiscation of firearms and livestock. In their sweep through Zululand the British army was instructed to seize all guns and royal cattle. By the time Wolseley and the British troops had left Zululand the amount of guns and cattle collected was considered to be well below the estimated number of both supposedly in the country. Wolseley ordered the British Resident, first Wheelwright and later Osborn, to press the appointed chiefs to do the actual collecting; with no constabulary at the Resident's disposal, the thirteen chiefs were the only ones who could carry out the task. Guy says that 'to instruct thirteen men who had been newly placed in authority and many of whom who were hated for good reason and were known for their greed and duplicity, was to open the door to trouble'.⁽³⁵⁾ The Usuthu resented Dunn's seizure of guns for it was from him that they had bought most of their antiquated guns, and now he, who had armed the Zulu, was now disarming them without remuneration. When Wolseley left Zululand in September 1879 over 5,200 stand of arms had been collected.⁽³⁶⁾ At the end of April 1880 an additional 762 muzzle-loaders and fourteen breech-loaders had been handed over to the Resident. Osborn reported

(31) *B.P.P.*, Despatch No. 49, Report of the Zululand Boundary Commission.

(32) Unterhalter, 'Confronting Imperialism', pp.11-12.

(33) Guy, 'Mandlakazi and Usutu', p.13.

(34) Guy, 'Cetshwayo ka Mpande', p.91.

(35) Guy, 'Mandlakazi and Usutu', p.23.

(36) Preston (ed.), *Journal*, p.105.

that Hamu had handed in 497 guns, all taken from Mnyamana's people, Ntshingwayo 158, Hlubi 65, Sekethwayo 35, Faku 15, Umfanawendlela 9, and Zibhebhu 2.⁽³⁷⁾ By the middle of 1880 the majority of firearms in Zululand had been confiscated, save those of the followers of the thirteen chiefs.

The seizure of the king's cattle was a much more serious matter. The term 'royal cattle' is misleading; it did not imply that the king had rights of individual ownership or that he could dispose of them as he willed. Cetshwayo held royal cattle in trust for the benefit of his family and followers as well as himself. Royal cattle had been distributed by the king throughout the kraals of the land. Many of these cattle were *sisaiied* - that is they were loaned to his people. In exchange for tending the royal cattle, the Zulu used all the milk which formed an important part of their diet. On occasion the king would give *lobola* cattle to young men for their services to the king and state. Most of the royal cattle were kept by Cetshwayo's close family and favourite ministers, councillors and *izinduna*. The Usuthu, as might be expected, held the majority of royal cattle at their kraals. The confiscation of royal cattle not only deprived the ex-king of his main source of wealth, it also impoverished the king's Usuthu followers as well.⁽³⁸⁾

John Dunn saw an opportunity to enrich himself through this confiscation. He responded enthusiastically to the command to seize royal cattle in his district and handed over nearly one thousand head of stock to the British authorities between August 1879 and October-November 1880.⁽³⁹⁾ Much of this royal stock came from the kraals of the royal prince Dabulamanzi at Entumeni, and from other Usuthu homesteads in southern Zululand. Dabulamanzi had also hated Dunn for the influence that he commanded over his brother Cetshwayo. During the relief of Eshowe Dunn had led a British patrol to Entumeni and burned down his kraals. Dabulamanzi and Dunn are said to have

(37) Z.A. vol. 1, Enclosure 1 in No. 10, 1880. Return of firearms given up to the Zulu Resident between the period commencing 15 Mar. and ended 30 April 1880.

(38) Guy, 'Cetshwayo ka Mpande', p.90.

(39) Z.A. vol. 1, Enclosure 1 in No. 10, 1880. Statement of Amount realized by the sale of captured and surrendered cattle.

exchanged fruitless shots at each other from half a mile as Dabulamanzi looked on his burning home. Likewise, Dunn harboured ill-will toward Dabulamanzi; Dunn's own residences at Mangete and Emoyeni were believed to have been burned and looted by Dabulamanzi's men. (40)

Dabulamanzi and the Usuthu later accused Dunn of seizing their cattle and keeping many for himself and not handing them over to the Resident. While it is possible that Dunn may have kept royal cattle, there was no real need for him to run the risk when he could buy them cheaply from the Commissariat and re-sell them at double the price⁽⁴¹⁾ to Frank Beningfield's buyers from Durban. The British authorities, especially Wolseley, wanted to sell the captured cattle as soon as they could. Dunn and a Durban butcher, Woodhouse, got the first choice of the royal cattle and then quickly bought them before they were driven into Natal for sale. The Commissariat authorities were quite happy to unload as many cattle as they could instead of incurring a few casualties on the long journey to army stations at Greytown, Utrecht, Dundee and Durban. Trek-oxen and slaughter beeves were in great demand in 1879-1880 with the consumption or death of thousands of oxen during the Anglo-Zulu war. Dunn bought 210 royal cattle from the Commissariat in February and March 1880 for an average price of five pounds per head. Dunn either replenished his own war-depleted herds or disposed of them to Durban cattle buyers for ten to twenty pounds per head. When the Usuthu saw royal cattle mixed in with Dunn's own herds they quickly assumed that Dunn had openly robbed them of their cattle. Osborn vindicated Dunn's transactions and commended his 'efficiency' in seizing the cattle:

John Dunn assisted in...collecting the cattle from different parts of the country. I am not aware that he failed to account for any of them to the authorities. He, however, bought a considerable number, and paid the price agreed upon to the officers concerned...It is very probable that the Zulus seeing John Dunn, in the first place, exerting himself in the collection of the cattle, and then, that many of the cattle remained in his possession, not knowing that he acquired them by purchase, having concluded that he unlawfully had them.(42)

(40) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, pp.465-466.

(41) Vijn, *Cetshwayo's Dutchman*, p.57.

(42) Z.A. vol. 1, Enclosure 1 in No. 10, 1880. Statement of Amount realized by sale of Captured and Surrendered Zulu cattle.

Official returns revealed that stock seizures in 1879-80 had netted 6,161 cattle, 521 sheep, 74 goats and 10 donkeys. Total net sales after deductions amounted to £23,790. 17s. 2d.⁽⁴³⁾ Most of the cattle belonged to the Usuthu and the stock seizures left much of the former Zulu elite in an impoverished state. When Cetshwayo was restored to his throne in 1883 Governor Bulwer instructed Osborn to return to Cetshwayo two hundred or so royal cattle that had been recently seized. Bulwer added 'you will explain to Cetywayo that these cattle are a gift to him by Her Majesty's government'.⁽⁴⁴⁾

In the northern districts Hamu was busily dispossessing the ex-prime minister, Mnyamana, of his cattle and keeping most of them for himself. Hamu claimed that Mnyamana had refused to recognize his authority and he was therefore being fined in cattle as punishment. The intensely royalist Qulusu people were find heavily by Hamu and they protested bitterly to Osborn over the severe cattle seizures. The Resident was powerless to settle the disputes. Hethought Hamu a cruel social degenerate but the appointed chief's authority had to be upheld, and Mnyamana had been offered a chieftainship by Wolseley and had refused it, saying that he would rather live under Hamu. Mnyamana changed his mind in the middle of 1880 when he requested the British government, through Osborn, to give him a chiefdom of his own, separate and free from the oppressive rule of Hamu. The Governor of Natal, Pomeroy Colley, refused on the grounds that such a move would substantially alter the settlement and 'would at once strengthen the feeling of uncertainty and the belief in the instability of the settlement which already exists'.⁽⁴⁵⁾

The most serious conflict emerged between Zibhebhu and those Usuthu who had been placed under his rule. It would certainly appear that Cetshwayo's brother, Ndabuko, chafed at being put in a position of political and economic inferiority to Zibhebhu who was of lower status in the pre-war hierarchy. In social rank Ndabuko had been second only to Cetshwayo himself. Mnyamana felt much the same about his

(43) *Ibid.*

(44) Z.A. vol. 11, No. 51, 1882. Bulwer to Osborn 30 Dec. 1882.

(45) B.P.P., C.-2695 of 1880, No. 43, p.85.

unsatisfactory position with Hamu. He had been the king's prime minister and had exercised much greater influence over Zulu affairs than had the sullen and inebriated Hamu. Furthermore, Zibhebhu was clearly bent on subordinating his Usuthu subjects to his will. He confiscated over a thousand Usuthu cattle and is said to have humiliated the royals Ndabuko and Usiwetu by making them perform menial and degrading tasks.⁽⁴⁶⁾

The account of the Usuthu deputations of 1880 has been admirably detailed by Webb, Guy and Kemp and needs no lengthy elaboration here. Briefly, representatives of Ndabuko and Mnyamana paid an unauthorized visit to Pietermaritzburg to protest to the Governor of Natal about the harsh treatment that was being meted out to Cetshwayo's children by Hamu, Zibhebhu and Dunn. They also implored the government to let Cetshwayo return. The deputation was refused permission to see the Governor and was sent back to Zululand to request Osborn for passes. In late May Ndabuko and two hundred Zulu were granted permission to go to Natal for an interview with Natal officials but were told by the Governor that all complaints had to be presented to the British Resident in Zululand.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Osborn was decidedly hostile to the resurgence of royalist sentiment and attempts by the Usuthu to subvert the new order. He drew up proposals for the better government of Zululand and sent them to Colley in October 1880. Osborn wanted to alter the settlement by introducing white sub-residents to advise the chiefs, introduce a uniform tax system and empower the Resident to be the final arbiter in capital offences.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Harrison hints that Colley, who was deeply committed to maintaining a settlement that he had helped Wolseley design, suppressed Osborn's proposals for they did not appear for well over a year after the despatch was sent.⁽⁴⁹⁾ At the close of 1880 the British Resident was helpless to avert any disturbance or violence in Zululand; the responsibility for enforcing the Ulundi settlement was assumed by Dunn and his allies Zibhebhu and Hamu.

(46) Guy, 'Cetshwayo ka Mpande', p.91.

(47) *Ibid.*

(48) B.P.P., C.-3182 of 1880, Enclosure in No. 87, p.148.
Osborn to Colley, 4 Sept. 1880.

(49) Harrison, 'Osborn and Events in Zululand', p.18.

Chief Dunn was neither ignorant nor complacent over the resistance shown by the Usuthu to the appointed chiefs. He took steps to conclude an informal alliance with Zibhebhu, thus uniting with a chief who had as much to lose as Dunn if the Usuthu succeeded in restoring Cetshwayo. Dunn's most effective measure in combating the Usuthu movement was his enrolment of white mercenaries into the active service of Zibhebhu and himself.

The most prominent of these white traders and adventurers was Johan William Colenbrander, a colourful and controversial frontier figure.⁽⁵⁰⁾ He was born in Pinetown in 1856 and grew up in the German settlement of New Guelderland, near Stanger. During the Anglo-Zulu war he served in the Stanger Mounted Rifles. He fought at Gingindhlovu where he came to the notice of Dunn who employed him as his secretary in Dunnsland during the last months of 1879.⁽⁵¹⁾ Dunn found the resourceful Colenbrander valuable as courier for messages on Zulu affairs passing between Dunn and Zibhebhu. For his services Dunn rewarded Colenbrander with an exclusive trading concession in Dunnsland. In early 1880 Dunn recommended that Colenbrander base himself in the Mandlakazi district as Zibhebhu's adviser; this he did. Colenbrander trained a cavalry contingent of twenty or so men and used them to seize cattle and guns from the Usuthu. Zibhebhu 'liked and trusted' Colenbrander and is reputed to have allowed him to keep half the cattle confiscated for fines, and to put up a trading store in the district.⁽⁵²⁾ Colenbrander was a roving troubleshooter who travelled to Dunn's district if Zibhebhu's ally was threatened by rebellion or a confrontation with the Usuthu. When a young pretender for the Mthethwa chieftaincy appeared in 1881, Dunn called on Colenbrander's services to assist in stamping out a major revolt against the authority of an appointed chief.

(i) The Sitimela Affair

Many of the appointed chiefs encountered opposition and resentment

(50) All the information on Colenbrander's activities in Zululand is taken from Kemp, 'Johan William Colenbrander, 1879-1896', Vols. I and II. (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Natal, 1962).

(51) *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp.12-16, 23, 24 and 29.

(52) *Ibid.*, p.33.

from members of the royal family over whom they ruled because they were either from inferior lineages, or they were aliens like Hlubi and Faku who had no ethnic ties or social standing among their Zulu subjects. This, however, was not the case with Mlandela. Wolseley's attempt to resurrect pre-Shakan chiefdoms wherever possible was most fully realized in the establishment of the Mthethwa chiefdom under Mlandela. Most Mthethwa still lived in their ancestral precincts in the coastal district; Mlandela was a Mthethwa who had been a contemporary of Shaka and the early Zulu kings. He was a revered figure whose filial links to the Mthethwa would enhance his political power, and he had every chance of success Wolseley thought. But there were several factors which worked against Mlandela. He was very old and approaching ninety when he was appointed in 1879. His addiction to liquor, his age, and the accompanying senility combined to diminish his authority in the eyes of the Mthethwa. Furthermore, Mlandela annoyed some of his subjects by entering into a close relationship with Dunn, upon whose advice he leaned heavily.⁽⁵³⁾

In April 1881 Mlandela's hold over his people seemingly dissolved when Sitimela, a Natal African, won widespread support among the Mthethwa for his claim to the Mthethwa chieftaincy. The charismatic young pretender convinced hundreds of Mlandela's subjects that he was Dingiswayo's grandson and legitimate heir. The old chief could not muster enough support to oust the usurper, and he was forced to seek refuge with his friend and adviser, John Dunn. With Mlandela in flight, Sitimela's claims gained credence and he collected a considerable armed force of nearly two thousand men.⁽⁵⁴⁾

Dunn was greatly alarmed by the overthrow of Mlandela; he feared that the pretender's appeal would win followers in his own district, which had a common border of forty miles with Mlandela's territory in the north-east along the Mhlatuze river. Furthermore, it would sever the northern trade route which cut through Mlandela's chiefdom. Dunn wanted the Resident's permission to attack Sitimela and crush the rebellion. With Osborn absent in Natal in early July, Dunn went over

(53) Guy, 'Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom', p.97.

(54) *B.P.P.*, C.-3182 of 1881, Enclosure in No. 59. Wood to Kimberley, 4 Aug. 1881.

Osborn's head and sent an urgent telegram to the Deputy High Commissioner, Evelyn Wood: 'Rebellion broken out in Umlandela's territory; he has fled to me for protection. Rebellion likely to spread... Authorise me to suppress rebellion. Disturbances caused by imposter named Sitimela from Natal who represents British power as gone'.⁽⁵⁵⁾

Wood replied the same day. Dunn was ordered to exercise caution and forbearance until the Resident arrived: 'Mr. Osborn left here 25 June and must now be near Inhlazatshe. Report outbreak to him. You can afford Umlandela protection but he must not organize his followers in your territory, in which you should maintain order. Do not interfere with anyone outside your territory beyond exercising your influence in favour of good order'.⁽⁵⁶⁾ Osborn arrived in the district on 10 July. He saw Sitimela as a serious threat to the authority of all the thirteen chiefs. If allowed to usurp the Mthethwa chieftaincy, Sitimela might well want to consolidate more chiefdoms into his resurrected kingdom, thus seriously damaging the settlement. With no police or troops at his disposal Osborn was powerless to enforce his numerous demands for Sitimela to disperse his followers and leave Mlandela's territory. Sitimela's replies to Osborn amounted to arrogant refusals to quit the country. Sitimela was even more confident of success when Somkhele, a Usuthu sympathizer and chief of the coastal district north of the Mthethwa, supported the pretender and sent eight companies (four hundred men) of armed men to join Sitimela's force. Sitimela's message to Osborn was defiant: '...the house of Umlandela belongs to me, and will not leave me. Somkheli's people are also on my side and whether I go away or not, all the people will continue to be in a state of disorder'.⁽⁵⁷⁾

Dunn knew that he had the only military force in the region capable of suppressing Sitimela. He was anxious to use his army which numbered between two and three thousand. Dunn's force comprised his own veteran scouts, assegai-carrying auxiliaries, and a force of four hundred Mandlakazi under Colenbrander, sent by Zibhebhu. Throughout most of July Osborn attempted to negotiate with Sitimela, but with no success. During the same period Dunn and Mlandela quietly moved their forces

(55) *Ibid.*, Enclosure in No. 39 (telegraphic), Dunn to Wood 8 July 1881.

(56) *Ibid.*, (telegraphic), Wood to Dunn 8 July 1881.

(57) *B.P.P.*, C.-3182 of 1881, Enclosure 2 in No. 5, p.94.
Osborn to Wood 17 Aug. 1881.

across the Mhlatuze river into the latter's district. On 28 July Osborn issued a final warning to Sitimela to disperse and leave. Sitimela refused. Osborn then 'advised' Dunn, Colenbrander, and two local chiefs, Mgitshwa and Siunguza, to re-establish Mlandela's authority by armed force. The responsibility for unseating Sitimela now fell to Dunn.⁽⁵⁸⁾

At this point, Dunn was determined to provoke Sitimela to appear the aggressor, and thus justify to the British government his intervention into the affairs of another chiefdom. On 27 July Dunn moved his forces to within several miles of Mlandela's kraal at Kwayanbimu which Sitimela and his followers occupied. Osborn's messengers, Maziana and Nozitshima, delivered the Resident's final warning to Sitimela on 28 July. When Dunn heard of Sitimela's rejection of Osborn's overtures to vacate the district on 29 July he decided to take matters into his own hands. On 30 July Dunn sent a small party of Mlandela's men to observe Sitimela's doings; they were attacked by Sitimela's men and driven back to Dunn's camp with a loss of nine killed and one wounded. Dunn immediately turned out his entire force and attacked, inflicting a total defeat on Sitimela and killing between two and three hundred of his followers, including nearly forty women and children. Dunn reported to Osborn on 31 July:

I sent a small body of Umlandela's men to overlook his kraal and see if he was taking any steps to remove. On the men showing themselves, they were immediately chased by six companies of Sitimela's men, who overtook Umlandela's and killed ten of them, following them to within a mile of my camp. I then turned out my men and followed them to Sitimela's kraal, where I found his whole force collected. I at once attacked the kraal, and completely routed his force, killing mostly all the ringleaders of the rebel party but Sitimela, I am sorry to say, escaped.⁽⁵⁹⁾

Dunn was bent on setting a harsh example to the Mthethwa rebels. Not content in routing Sitimela, Dunn sent Colenbrander and a mounted

(58) *Ibid.*, C.-3182 of 1881, Enclosure in No. 53, Osborn to Wood 31 July 1881.

(59) *Ibid.*, Enclosure 1 in No. 59, Dunn to Osborn 31 July 1881.

troop of his scouts and the Mandlakazi in pursuit of the pretender's followers on 30 July when most of the casualties during the two-day battle are believed to have occurred. Sitimela's new kraal was burned and three thousand or so head of cattle were captured.⁽⁶⁰⁾ The division of the spoils in cattle was entirely in Dunn's hands. He gave 1,560 head to Mlandela; for himself he kept nearly 1,500 as his price for reinstating the aged and senile chief. Osborn's messengers said that Mlandela's loyal followers were disgruntled for they had received only sixty head, Mlandela keeping 1,500 head. 'The rest of the cattle, we heard, were taken by Dunn himself. Umlandela's people were very dissatisfied at only getting 60 head of cattle, and complained that all their cattle had been taken by chief Dunn'. As a sign of his submission and repentance for his collaboration with Sitimela, chief Somkhele sent Dunn a troop of twenty oxen.⁽⁶¹⁾ Sitimela apparently escaped and was never heard of again.

Osborn sent his messengers to see Dunn the day after the battle. The statements of Maziana and Nozitshima are revealing. Dunn gave them a verbal account of not only the routing of Sitimela, but the attempts by Dunn to implicate the Usuthu factions as the conspirators behind the rebellion against Mlandela's rule:

That a great part of Zululand was affected by it, and that tribes in other territories had supported Sitimela, even people in his own district had been in collusion with the rebels. That in Sitimela's kraal, he found the tusk of an elephant, a thing which only Cetywayo, during his reign in Zululand, ever kept. Other people were not allowed to keep elephants' teeth. That one man, on Sitimela's side, during the fight, called out to his people, 'leave me alone, I belong to Undabuko'. We know that there were men of Undabuko fighting on Sitimela's side, because we saw ourselves in Sitimela's kraal the day we took him the Resident's last warning, three men from the kraal of Umsutshwana's (Umsutshwana's own brother) who is one of Undabuko's headmen.⁽⁶²⁾

Indeed, it was Dunn's intention to discredit the Usuthu party in the eyes of the British government, and to appear as a force for preserving order and thus the Ulundi settlement. Osborn accepted Dunn's

(60) Kemp, 'Colenbrander', pp.38-43.

(61) B.P.P., C.-3182 of 1881, Enclosure 2 in No. 59, Statements made by Maziana and Nozitshima to Osborn 16 Aug. 1881.

(62) *Ibid.*

arguments as fact for he too believed the Usuthu guilty of subverting a settlement which he was bound by his instructions to uphold.

The Usuthu disclaimed any responsibility in the Sitimela affair. It is doubtful that the Usuthu had spawned Sitimela but the presence of several prominent Usuthu headmen in the pretender's camp suggests that they actively encouraged a rebellion that had challenged an appointed chief's authority, and thus the settlement itself. While Dunn's suppression of Sitimela was severely criticized by the Colenso family for the loss of life, especially the murder of women and children, Natal officials and many settlers applauded Dunn's military solution. Sir Evelyn Wood commended Dunn for his resolve in restoring Mlandela. Osborn found nothing irregular in Dunn's conduct of the campaign: it was to be regretted, though expected, that there might have been excessive brutality in the pursuit: but, that was a characteristic of the 'kafir mode of warfare' which Dunn, in the Resident's opinion, had done his utmost to curb. (63)

The Sitimela affair had thrust Dunn into the political limelight. His effective alliance with the Mandlakazi and his pervasive influence over Zibhebhu and Mlandela created the impression among Natal officials, settlers and the Colensoites that Dunn was the final arbiter in Zulu affairs. However, Dunn's aggressive policies were essentially defensive in nature. With a keen perception, Dunn saw, earlier than most observers, the stirrings of royalist sentiment as the most lethal threat to the settlement. It was imperative that Dunn bolster the settlement by making it appear effective and beneficial to British interests. He knew well that the Colonial Office was guided by economy in its contribution to the expenses of Zululand's administration. With this in mind in February 1881 Dunn submitted a plan to the Colonial Office to make Zululand self-supporting. Dunn prescribed a formula for the other chiefs to adopt what was remarkably similar, or identical in many instances, to the system operating in Dunnsland. By appearing constructive and enlightened in his own administration Dunn hoped that the Colonial Office would give firmer support to maintaining the settlement. The Colonial Secretary, Lord Kimberley, approved Dunn's proposition and referred it back to the Resident for his consideration. The document read:

(63) *Ibid.*

1. That all the Native Chiefs to whom territories have been assigned should have two white administrators of Zulu law, men that thoroughly understand the language and customs of the Zulus.
2. That all Chiefs be authorised to levy a tax of 10s. a hut on all people under them, and out of such tax to pay to the British Resident the sum of 500 L. a year; this amount to be used for the purpose of covering any charge or expense in the administration of the country, the said Administrators to be under appeal to the Chiefs in any case between Zulu and Zulu, and to the British Resident in any case between British subject and Zulu.
3. The Chiefs be advised to repair roads, and allowed to put a toll on any road kept in repair.
4. That a scheme of immigration be introduced, each immigrant to make his own terms with the Chief with the approval of the British Resident or his Agent, each immigrant to pay to the Chief the sum of 25 L. a year as rent, in advance. That such immigration be solely for the purpose of agriculture, stock farming, or pursuits of industry.
5. That they introduce no spirits for the purpose of sale, or barter, or giving away with the purpose of gaining a benefit, and to be liable to a fine of not less than 50 L. on conviction, and any Chief conniving in any such sale or giving away to any of his subjects, to be liable to a fine by the Resident, this law to be applied to both white and black residents of the Zulu country.

I write this as a Chief of the country, and feel confident that at the present time nearly the whole of the Chiefs would gladly agree to these terms, if properly explained to them, and so make the country self-supporting.

Out of the taxes the Chiefs should be advised to give a grant of at least 50 L. a year in aid of a school for the purpose of teaching both the Zulu and English languages and arts of industry, and a site of at least 25 acres of land for such purpose. (64)

Dunn was quick to point out that he was the architect of wise government: 'These propositions I make for the benefit of the whole country, having already taken upon myself, with the sanction of the British Resident, mostly all these conditions, with the exception of immigration and charging toll, and find that the working of my territory is satisfactory'. (65)

(64) *B.P.P.*, C.3182 of 1881. Enclosure in No. 56, Dunn to Osborn, 16 Feb. 1881.

(65) *Ibid.*

Dunn's proposals were only part of a growing realization on the part of Osborn and Sir Evelyn Wood that the settlement was showing signs of crumbling. The intensifying disputes between the appointed chiefs and the Usuthu were becoming ominous and there was no uniform method of taxation or administration that the appointed chiefs followed.⁽⁶⁶⁾ During the first half of 1881 Wood was preoccupied with the task of extracting Britain from Transvaal affairs following the disaster at Majuba on 27 February. It was not until 3 August that Wood signed the Pretoria Convention, and was thus free to devote his attention to affairs in Zululand.⁽⁶⁷⁾ The Sitimela affair had convinced Wood and Osborn that there must be a reassertion of British influence in Zululand, and alterations in the settlement had to be discussed with the appointed chiefs. But, Wood's and Osborn's most pressing problem was to settle the disputes between the Usuthu and Hamu and Zibhebhu, and thereby avert the threat of open warfare. Accordingly, Wood and Osborn called a meeting of the appointed chiefs and the Usuthu to be held in late August.⁽⁶⁸⁾

The meeting took place on 31 August 1881 at Inhlazatshe, Osborn's official residence near Eshowe. Present were - Wood and Osborn, six appointed chiefs - Dunn, Zibhebhu, Hlubi, Mcojana, Ntshingwayo, the regent Siyungazi who ruled for the heir of the late Gawozi - and the representatives of Hamu, Sekethwayo and Faku.⁽⁶⁹⁾ Mlandela, Umfanawendlela, Mgitshwa and Somkhele were unrepresented. The Usuthu delegation numbered one thousand and was led by Ndabuko, Ziweddu, Dabulamanzi and Cetshwayo's young son and heir, Dinizulu.⁽⁷⁰⁾

Osborn, with Wood's approval, had drawn up his own proposals for the improvement of the settlement through a more uniform and efficient method of rule. Osborn wanted to bind the chiefs to act in concert on certain issues. He obtained the chiefs' agreement on certain points; a hut tax of ten shillings, those chiefs desiring a white adviser to assist

(66) *Ibid.*

(67) Barber, 'Dunn and Zululand', pp.70-71.

(68) Guy, 'Mandhlakazi and Usutu', p.34.

(69) Barber, 'Dunn and Zululand', p.71.

(70) Guy, 'Mandhlakazi and Usutu', p.34.

them with their administration could request the Resident to appoint one. All the chiefs agreed to this proposal, except Dunn. The chiefs agreed to build and maintain roads and levy taxes on them; and a proportion of the hut tax money collected by the chiefs was to go to defray the expenses of the Resident, and the chiefs all agreed to combine and assist in suppressing any rebellion that might break out, but only after the consent of the affected chief had been given.⁽⁷¹⁾ Osborn has been given credit for originating this plan,⁽⁷²⁾ but most of the proposals were identical to Dunn's earlier scheme which Osborn had studied carefully. With the exception of Zibhebhu's nomination of Colenbrander to be his adviser, the majority of chiefs paid only lip service to Osborn's plan and made no serious attempts to work in unison. The suggestions put to the appointed chiefs were merely that - suggestions. Wood and Osborn had no authority to impose their terms on the chiefs. Osborn's powers were only diplomatic. Nearly two weeks before Wood's Inhlazatshe conference his intentions to involve Britain more directly in upholding the settlement were dashed when he received Kimberley's terse telegram of 19 August forbidding him to alter the settlement or increase Britain's responsibilities in Zululand:

We are not prepared to depart from general principles of settlement, which were to leave Zulus to manage own affairs, assisted by advice Resident. Your mention of giving Sub-Resident's magisterial authority makes me think that such appointments might be misunderstood, and you will, therefore, take no action on the subject, but confine yourself to reporting after your visit whether any chiefs desire such advisers, taking care that they are not led to express such desire by any pressure. Her Majesty's government cannot sanction the assumption of any direct authority over Zululand, and you will be careful to incur no new responsibilities without distinct instructions.⁽⁷³⁾

Wood also delivered his judgment on the disputes involving the Usuthu and the appointed chiefs. Wood and Osborn were in a difficult position. While they were obligated to uphold the authority of the

(71) Z.A. 1881, vol. I, Enclosure in No. 1 Bulwer to Osborn 15 Mar. 1882.

(72) Guy, 'Mandhlakazi and Usutu', p.34.

(73) B.P.P., C.-3182 of 1881, No. 41, p.66.

(telegraphic) Kimberley to Wood 19 Aug. 1881.

appointed chiefs, they also wanted to lessen the severity of the punishment and cattle fines meted out by Hamu and Zibhebhu. Wood compromised. Ndaduko and Ziweddu were found guilty of having resisted Zibhebhu and were ordered to leave his district and move to Dunnsland. Wood instructed Zibhebhu to return one-third of the cattle that he had confiscated. Hamu was ordered to return some seven hundred head of cattle taken from Mnyamana. The latter was advised to acknowledge Hamu as the chief of the district in which he and his people lived.⁽⁷⁴⁾ The Usuthu were dissatisfied with Wood's 'settlement' of the disputes. They were told to leave their homes and become refugees under the noted traitor John Dunn. Six weeks after the Inhlazatshe meeting, the Usuthu and the Mandlakazi had conducted raids and counter-raids against each other, and Hamu destroyed and plundered the insubordinate Qulusi in a bloody battle on 2 October. Osborn was powerless to do anything more than voice a feeble protest to the warring factions.⁽⁷⁵⁾ Dunn's district was relatively quiet during the September-October period of violence in northern Zululand. He sent a squad of his hunters under several white mercenaries to assist Zibhebhu against the Usuthu. Dunn implored Wood and Osborn to allow him to advance into northern Zululand to help Zibhebhu, who 'begs for aid'. The Resident cautioned Dunn to exercise moderation and advised him not to intervene.⁽⁷⁶⁾

Dunn's success in the Sitimela affair spurred him to seek higher political office in Zululand. He was contemptuous of Osborn's powerless position and feared that if some centralized authority did not re-establish the legitimacy of the Ulundi settlement by the application of armed force and coercion then the Usuthu would gather greater grass-roots support for Cetshwayo's restoration. Dunn thought himself the only individual capable of quelling the unrest and maintaining the settlement. He therefore proposed to Osborn that he be made Supreme Chief of Zululand:

(74) *Ibid.*, Enclosures in No. 34, pp.34-37.
Wood to Kimberley 23 June, 1881.

(75) Guy, 'Mandhlakazi and Usutu', pp.34-36.

(76) *B.P.P.*, C.-3182 of 1881, No. 62, p.97.
(telegraphic) Wood to Kimberley 9 Oct. 1881.

As I have received several messages from a portion of the Chiefs, with reference to the unsettled state of their territories, and requesting me for advice, and as the nation evidently feel themselves at a disadvantage without a head ruler, after being accustomed to the decision of a Supreme Chief, I beg you to lay before his Excellency the High Commissioner my proposition. That is, that a meeting of all the Chiefs be appointed, and that it should be proposed by you that a Supreme Chief be appointed under your supervision, and for me to propose myself to be such Supreme Chief, and leave it to the vote of the majority. I feel confident that should I be elected that a great difficulty will be done away with, and that from my long experience and the power I have over the Zulu race I could rule them with justice and satisfaction to the English government.(77)

Dunn added that he did not make the proposition 'with an aim to gain power...but for the peace of the Zulu country at large'. He reassured Osborn that if appointed Supreme Chief the position of the Resident would be 'thoroughly upheld'.⁽⁷⁸⁾ However, Dunn had misread the intentions of Kimberley and Wood, who thought Dunn to be the most competent of the thirteen chiefs, but not the man to direct the affairs of Zululand for the British government. Kimberley and Wood agreed with Osborn's assessment:

I wish to state that I entirely concur with Chief Dunn as to the necessity there is for such an appointment. To the absence hitherto of a supreme power the present disturbed state of the country is solely attributable, and, unless this want be supplied, I foresee a continuous state of unrest and rebellion against the present appointed Chiefs, with the attendant 'eating up' and bloodshed. I cannot, however, concur in Chief Dunn's proposal that he should be placed in the position of Supreme Chief, as I do not believe that his appointment will in any way improve the conditions of affairs, even if he could be elected to the position by the unanimous votes of the other 12 Chiefs. The Chiefs who were not appointed, and are now in many instances showing open and armed resistance to the appointed Chiefs, would not admit the right of the latter to appoint what would be considered to be a king over Zululand, and combined resistance would be the certain and immediate result.(79)

(77) *Ibid.*, Enclosure 2 in No. 90, p.154. Dunn to Osborne, 30 Sept. 1881.

(78) *Ibid.*

(79) *Ibid.*, Enclosure 1 in No. 90, p.153. Osborn to Wood, 8 Oct. 1881.

As the violence and raiding grew in intensity in the latter part of 1881, Lord Kimberley knew that the Ulundi settlement was becoming untenable. He gave little thought to Dunn's application to be Supreme Chief, but the Colonial Secretary gradually became aware of the need to establish order in Zululand; and he was impressed by the determined campaign to have Cetshwayo restored as King of Zululand.

(ii) The Restoration Movement

The move for Cetshwayo's reinstatement as King of Zululand developed from three quarters. First, there was Cetshwayo himself, an unhappy exile anxious to return to his former kingdom; second, there were the king's brothers - Undabuko, Dabulamanzi and Ziwedu - Mnyamana, the former prime minister, and the Usuthu faction, who saw a restoration as a means of regaining political and economic power from the appointed chiefs; last, there was the humanitarian lobby comprising the Colensos, Lady Florence Dixie and prominent members of the S.P.G., the A.P.S., and Liberal M.P.'s.⁽⁸⁰⁾ The King, the Usuthu and the humanitarians operated as a political lobby in the context of metropolitan and colonial politics. This pressure-group instituted a campaign to discredit the appointed chiefs and thus the settlement. By making the settlement appear unworkable, unjust and unpopular, the Usuthu hoped that the British government would see Cetshwayo as the only individual capable of restoring order and stability in Zululand.

The Usuthu had little difficulty in publicising their case with the Colensos feeding reams of scathing commentary on the 'iniquitous' activities of the appointed chiefs to British philanthropists and churchmen. Bishop Colenso and his daughters Frances and Harriette singled out John Dunn for particular damnation and abuse. The bishop frequently referred to Dunn as a 'double-dyed traitor' and used every opportunity in his correspondence and publications to denounce the polygamous white renegade. Without reservation or qualification the Colensos accepted every accusation made against Dunn as true. Many of

(80) Guy, 'Cetshwayo ka Mpande', p.92.

the allegations were indeed substantiated: others were blatant distortions. The bishop used the account of Cornelius Vijn's experiences in Zululand to defend Cetshwayo's defensive actions during the war and to condemn the imperial government and the 'traitor' John Dunn. Colenso deplored Dunn's transactions in obtaining royal cattle: 'After the battle of Ulundi six or seven hundred of the king's oxen were sold to Dunn and Woodhouse (butcher) privately, not by auction, for 2L a head, each well worth 5L in Natal, and splendid king's white oxen, worth 20L each in Natal, most of them inoculated, were sold to the same men for 10L each'.⁽⁸¹⁾

Bishop Colenso could be hard-hitting. In *Cetshwayo's Dutchman* he used his editorial licence to accuse various Natal officials and Dunn of ruthlessly exploiting and oppressing the Zulu people. The bishop accused Dunn of, along with several British soldiers, having rifled King Mpande's grave near Ulundi in 1879. This unsubstantiated, groundless rumour appeared as fact in a *Witness* article of 24 July 1880.⁽⁸²⁾ Dunn was incensed by the accusation and issued a reply in the *Mercury*:

I am not one that often troubles my head concerning what use is made of my name in any colonial paper, although persistently attacked without cause. But an article in the *Natal Witness* - headed 'Rifling of Panda's Grave' has much annoyed me. I challenge the author and lay a hundred pounds if he can in any way prove that I was in the slightest degree, by indication or otherwise, connected with any party concerned in the exhumation of the body of the late king Panda.⁽⁸³⁾

(81) Vijn, *Cetshwayo's Dutchman*, p.57.

Vijn was a pathetic figure; lame in one leg, he was captured by Zulu forces during the Anglo-Zulu war. He was kept prisoner at Ulundi, where Zibhebhu plundered his wagon of trade goods. Vijn, destitute and penniless, was released by Cetshwayo in June to relay peace offerings to the British forces. Wolseley offered Vijn £250 if he would lead British forces to Cetshwayo. Vijn jumped at the chance and was bitterly disappointed when another patrol captured the fugitive King. Colenso gave Vijn food and lodging in exchange for information.

(82) *Natal Witness*, 24 July 1880.

(83) *Natal Mercury*, 28 July 1880.

The charge that Dunn had participated in the desecration of the grave of a Zulu king originated with Vijn who told the Bishop that 'he had only heard that Dunn had been involved'. The one-sided evidence did not deter the bishop from including it in Vijn's autobiography. Dunn saw Colenso's malicious charges of grave-robbing as yet another example of the bishop's unwarranted meddling in Zulu affairs: 'As the "Rifling of Panda's Grave" has been taken from *Cetshwayo's Dutchman*, a book written evidently with the object of showing off the bishop's foolish notes, more than giving the history of Mr. Vijn, his Lordship's view being so clearly shown to be to try and cause a political agitation'. (84)

Dunn, like most Natal officials, objected to the Colensos' interference in Zulu politics, especially the bishop's advice and messages to the King's brothers, Ndabuko and Dabulamanzi. Dunn publicly advised Colenso that,

If his Lordship would adhere to his calling and try less to act the part of political agitator, he would be better liked and more respected, and the people in the country would settle down to peaceful ways again, which he is trying to prevent. I suppose the bishop will deny this also, the same as he did in the part he took in the appointment of his son and Dr. Smith. (85)

Dunn concluded his statement to the press with a stiff warning that Colenso's campaign against his rule and the Ulundi settlement would not be tolerated in Dunnsland: 'I intend punishing any of my subjects I find negotiating with the bishop without my knowledge, as it is not for peaceful purposes'. (86)

However, Dunn unwittingly provided the Usuthu party with a pretext to appeal to the Resident and the Governor of Natal for Cetshwayo's restoration. In 1881 Dunn found that the maintenance of his lavish administrative and domestic establishment was not being covered by

(84) *Ibid.*, 7 Sept. 1880.

(85) *Ibid.*

(86) *Ibid.*

the hut-tax, so he doubled the tax from five to ten shillings per hut. In April 1881 Ndabuko, Ziweddu and Dabulamanzi led a delegation of nearly eighty Zulu chiefs and headmen to Natal to protest to Lieutenant Governor Bulwer against the manner in which taxes were collected by Chief Dunn, and to appeal for Cetshwayo's return.⁽⁸⁷⁾

Osborn, who was also in Natal, intercepted the Zulu delegation on the outskirts of Pietermaritzburg. During the impromptu meeting Osborn admonished the Usuthu for coming into Natal without having received his prior approval. Osborn promised only to speak to Bulwer. On 24 April a formal interview between Osborn and the delegation of chiefs was held outside Pietermaritzburg - much to the resentment of the Usuthu who objected to being barred from the capital and having to meet in the veldt. The Usuthu criticised Osborn vehemently for having misrepresented their grievances. The stormy encounter ended with Osborn refusing to allow the Usuthu to see the Lieutenant Governor.⁽⁸⁸⁾ Dabulamanzi, however, asked the Resident to relay their dissatisfaction over Dunn's tax and their fear of Dunn's vengeance:

I and all of these men here are from chief Dunn's territory. We pray for our Inkosi (ex-king)... When we left our kraals we heard John Dunn had said he would call to account anyone from his territory who came to join in the prayer, as he will not allow it. We hear that John Dunn says we pay taxes to him because we like him, and do not want our Inkosi (Cetywayo) back. It is not true, we do want him back. Let John Dunn be sent for and confronted with us before the Governor. When we return we fear we shall be killed as John Dunn killed the Umtetwa under Sitimela, he spared none.⁽⁸⁹⁾

Osborn and Bulwer refused to hear the Usuthu present their grievances. Five days after Osborn's 24 April meeting, Bulwer wrote to Kimberley outlining the causes of the unsettled state of Zululand. Bulwer laid the blame for all the disturbances in Zululand on factions and pretenders who had challenged the authority of the appointed chiefs:

(87) *B.P.P.*, C.-3247 of 1882, Enclosure in No. 78, pp.67-69. Osborn to Bulwer, 6 May 1882.

(88) *Ibid.*

(89) *B.P.P.*, C.-3247 of 1882, No. 79, p.73. Bulwer to Kimberley, 29 April 1882.

The evil that most presses upon the country at the present moment is the agitation that has been set going by the party to which I have referred, encouraged by the reports introduced from Natal, and hopes held out to them; it is this state of things, these reports, this uncertainty, which have created an uneasiness, a disquiet, that are in the highest degree mischievous and to be regretted.(90)

The chiefs had been justified in using armed intervention to snuff out the rebellion formented by Sitimela. The 'intransigent' Usuthu had only themselves to blame when Hamu and Zibhebhu had plundered their districts as punishment for not recognizing their authority. Bulwer defended the appointed chiefs:

There are the cases of Uhamu's proceedings against Umyamana, and of Usibebu's proceedings against Usiwetu and Undabuko, and these proceedings were certainly severe and the punishment inflicted heavy. But, the cause which led to these proceedings must not be lost sight of, that it was the practical refusal of Umyamana to recognize Uhamu as his chief, and the rebellious conduct of Usiwetu and Undabuko towards Usibebu.(91)

Bulwer was hostile to the idea of granting an interview to hear grievances against the appointed chiefs. An official interview with the Usuthu might give them the status of an official opposition. Bulwer also felt that the Usuthu grievances were groundless, and used only as a pretext to petition for Cetshwayo's reinstatement. However, Dabulamanzi and his followers soon had a second opportunity to air their grievances. Again, it was Dunn who provided a platform for the Usuthu when in late April he requested Bulwer and Osborn to grant a hearing in which he and his Usuthu accusers could confront each other and settle the issues.

(90) *Ibid.*, No. 78, p.59. Bulwer to Kimberley, 16 May 1882.

(91) *Ibid.*, No. 79, p.76. Bulwer to Kimberley, 29 April 1882.

Bulwer agreed: 'An interview of both chief and people with me might be the means of removing for the future some real cause of grievance'.⁽⁹²⁾

The hearing was held in Pietermaritzburg on May 2 1882. Dabulamanzi alleged that Dunn and his African police had deceived the people by claiming that the hut-tax was collected for the Natal government: 'Afterwards they heard that it was not for the government and that by paying the tax they were injuring the cause of Cetshwayo, namely, that the tax was being used to keep Cetshwayo away'. Dunn hotly denied the charges. Moreover, Dabulamanzi implicated Bishop Colenso when he said that the bishop was the one 'they wanted to ascertain if Mr. Dunn did not say that they paid taxes to the government'. Bulwer dismissed Dabulamanzi's charges against Dunn as a false rumour instigated by Bishop Colenso: 'I do not think there is any ground for supposing that chief John Dunn in any way directly or indirectly gave his people to understand that the tax was for the Natal government'.⁽⁹³⁾ Bulwer told Kimberley that the Usuthu party were sabotaging the Ulundi settlement in order to strengthen Cetshwayo's case for restoration:

But, the party of the ex-king's brothers have, under unfortunate counsels, for some time past been drifting into a position of 'irreconcilables' and they are naturally opposed to any reconciliation between the people whom they have been stirring up, and the chief against whom they have been stirring them up. Their object is to make out that the present settlement is unworkable, and by doing so to make out, as they think, a case of necessity for the ex-king's restoration.⁽⁹⁴⁾

The Anglo-Zulu war had breached the long-term friendship of Dunn and Cetshwayo; the post-war settlement shattered it completely. In October 1880 Cetshwayo dictated a letter to Dunn: 'Why have you, John Dunn, forgotten me? If not, why do you not send me news of my family? I should be grateful to you if you would do so. I hope you are kind to my family and enquire after them. I trust you do this in return for many kindnesses you have received from me in

(92) *B.P.P.*, C.-3270 of 1882, No. 1. Bulwer to Kimberley, 6 May 1882.

(93) *Ibid.*

(94) *Ibid.*

years past'.⁽⁹⁵⁾ Dunn replied and sent snuff and other articles obtainable only in Zululand to Cetshwayo: 'I answered the above letters but never heard of the receipt of the answers...About this time bishop Colenso visited Cetywayo, after which, for the first time, I heard of Cetywayo's bitter tone against me'.⁽⁹⁶⁾ Bishop Colenso, and his daughter Harriette did indeed visit Cetshwayo in November 1880. They certainly gave the ex-king their own partisan views of the settlement.⁽⁹⁷⁾ It is also certain that the Colensos incited Cetshwayo's hatred for Dunn. Cetshwayo's accusations and evidence against Dunn were identical to those of the bishop.

However, Cetshwayo's 'bitter tone' toward Dunn is not hard to understand. While in exile Cetshwayo took advantage of his correspondence and public appearances to describe Dunn as a deceitful turncoat, an intriguing usurper and one who had no scruples. In March 1881 Cetshwayo sent a written appeal to Sir Hercules Robinson, High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape, in which he expressed his disappointment at not having his case for redress and reinstatement heard by the home government. He said, 'I wish now to lay my case, as clearly as possible, before this Parliamentary Assembly, but specially before the Parliament in England, and the Queen'.⁽⁹⁸⁾ Hamu and Zibhebhu were portrayed as disloyal rivals who slandered his name to the whites. Dunn was accused of double treachery to the Zulu king and to the English. Cetshwayo claimed that 'When the English were beaten at Isandhlwana, John Dunn sent to me and said "since you have beaten them there, go on and try to beat them again and again". When the troops were up at the Umtanjaneni, Dunn sent to Usibebu and said "I am now going to make you King and see how it will answer"'.⁽⁹⁹⁾ Cetshwayo complained to Sir Hercules Robinson that Dunn was the master-mind behind the appointed chiefs who persecuted his kinsmen:

I am receiving a very bad punishment. I am here a prisoner, my family is left to be badly handled.

(95) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.109. Cetshwayo to Dunn, 29 Oct. 1880.

(96) *Ibid.*

(97) Colenso, *Colenso's Commentary*, p.751.

(98) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Zulu King Speaks*, p.41.

(99) *Ibid.*, pp.59-60.

Undabuko, my brother, who is taking care of my family, I hear has been told to move away from his rightful place, and Usibebu, who has no right to it, is left alone. I feel sorry about what is being done in Zululand. I would like to go to England at once to state my case. I do not mind the cold. I thought that the English would take care of my family, and not allow it to be troubled by John Dunn's nominees.(100)

Cetshwayo believed Dunn to be at the head of a powerful conspiracy of Zulu collaborators and colonial officials opposed to his return. He expressed his disillusionment at Wood's support for Dunn: 'Once Sir. E. Wood was my friend, or said he was, but now I hear that he has taken John Dunn's side. I fear that the lies of my enemies in Natal and those of the white usurper (John Dunn) have crept into his ears...'.⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Cetshwayo was outraged when he learned of Dunn's ambition to be made Supreme Chief. There was no doubt in the king's mind that his former friend and adviser wanted to be 'king' of Zululand. Robinson received Cetshwayo's strong objections: 'I have heard that John Dunn wishes to become the greatest chief in Zululand, such as I was, but I have heard that the great White Chief in England (Lord Kimberley) is just, and will not allow this, now I hear that John Dunn wishes to divide Zululand with me, is this true? It could never be'.⁽¹⁰²⁾

The efforts of the Colensos and British humanitarians to secure Cetshwayo's release and restoration began to bear fruit. Kimberley found Cetshwayo's imprisonment an increasing embarrassment to the Liberal government. The Ulundi settlement was showing itself to be unworkable amidst ever-increasing factional strife and bloodshed. In September 1881 Kimberley granted permission for Cetshwayo to visit England and plead his case.⁽¹⁰³⁾ Cetshwayo took every opportunity in his correspondence with Kimberley to cast Dunn and the anti-Usuthu alliance as inimical to the wishes of the majority of the Zulu who

(100) *B.P.P.*, C.-3247 of 1881, Enclosure in No. 10, p.7.

(101) *Ibid.*, Enclosure in No. 23, p.16.

Cetshwayo to Lady Dixie, 3 Jan. 1882.

(102) *Ibid.*, Enclosure in No. 17, p.13. Cetshwayo to Robinson, 21 Dec. 1881.

(103) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Zulu King Speaks*, p.XXI.

wanted Cetshwayo's reinstatement: 'I have great hopes of obtaining what the English people value - justice. I will be glad to see those that misrepresent me before yourself and myself. The three chiefs that are against me are - J. Dunn, Uhamu and Usibebu; but the Zulu nation would rejoice to see me back. I hope that I am not going to England for nothing'.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

Cetshwayo gained another valuable ally in 1881 when R.C.A. Samuelson, the son of Norwegian missionaries in Zululand and Natal, joined the ex-king's party as interpreter at Oude Molen.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Samuelson was moved by Cetshwayo's plight and wrote a flood of letters for Cetshwayo in support of his cause. He had lived with his family at St. Paul's Mission Station in Dunn's district. His sister, Henrietta Samuelson, taught Dunn's children. But, Samuelson saw Dunn as a ruthless entrepreneur who had despoiled Cetshwayo and his family. Samuelson indicated this in an unofficial letter to Cetshwayo's ardent champion, Lady Florence Dixie: 'They (Zulu) will never live contentedly except they have one head, and that head their own chosen king. Cetywayo could never reign in Zululand with John Dunn. I know the latter well, he is ambitious and desirous of amassing wealth, and to accomplish this end would shrink at nothing'.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Samuelson later lost his job as interpreter when the scatter-brained Florence Dixie foolishly forwarded his private opinions against the settlement to the Colonial Office.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾

When Governor Bulwer, Natal officials and the appointed chiefs, heard of Cetshwayo's visit to England they expressed real fear of serious unrest in Zululand and concern for their own interests. Cetshwayo's voyage to England was delayed until June 1882 because Bulwer insisted to Kimberley that the ex-king's visit be postponed until he had an opportunity to visit Zululand and ascertain the 'sentiments and wishes of the Zulu chiefs and people regarding the present settlement and the future of Zululand'.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾

(104) B.P.P., C.-3247 of 1881, Enclosure in No. 14, p.12.
Cetshwayo to Kimberley, 10 Nov. 1881.

(105) Webb and Wright (eds.), *Zulu King Speaks*, p.XiX.

(106) B.P.P., C.-3247 of 1881, Enclosure in No. 23, p.16.
Samuelson to Lady Dixie, 3 Jan. 1882.

(107) *Ibid.*, No. 23, p.16. Lady Dixie to Kimberley, 2 Feb. 1882.

(108) Rees (ed.), *Colenso Letters*, p.50.

Bulwer interpreted the restoration movement as the machinations of a determined minority of Usuthu led by the royal malcontents, Ndabuko, Mnyamana and Dabulamanzi. They were prodded in their cause through the interference of the Colenso family. Bulwer scoffed at the notion of substantial grass-roots support for Cetshwayo's return: 'To the great majority of the Zulu people the idea of wishing the restoration of Cetywayo would never so much as occur. They looked upon him as dead from the moment the Zulu war was over and he was removed'.⁽¹⁰⁾ Bulwer warned Kimberley in numerous despatches that Cetshwayo's return as king would provoke a confrontation with the anti-Usuthu chiefs:

On the other hand there is, of course, not so much one party but a number of powerful interests naturally opposed to the return of Cetywayo. Foremost among them are the appointed chiefs Uhamu, John Dunn, Usibebu, and Umfanawenlela. These would I am told, most assuredly take up arms in defence of their rights, and would fight for those rights to the end. So also would the chief Hlubi, though he is, I believe, ready at all times to subordinate his action to the views of the British government. For the rest of the appointed chiefs I have been unable to learn as yet anything very decided.⁽¹¹⁰⁾

Bulwer added that Cetshwayo could never rule over the whole of Zululand. Zibhebhu and his faction were significant enough to warrant a district independent of Usuthu control. Likewise, those Zulu and appointed chiefs who did not want to be under Cetshwayo's authority would have to be accommodated by the British government. Thus, Bulwer proposed to Kimberley that Zululand to be divided into three districts. The Mandlakazi in north-eastern Zululand, Cetshwayo and the Usuthu in the central district around Ulundi, and John Dunn, Hlubi and all other chiefs located in southern Zululand. This area proposed by Bulwer was to be the Reserved territory under the protection and active control of a Resident Commissioner. By October 1882 Bulwer sent his long-delayed recommendations on Zululand to the Colonial Office. Kimberley accepted them practical *in toto* as they formed the basis on which the Ulundi settlement was to be

(109) *B.P.P.*, C.-3247 of 1882, No. 72, p.58.
Bulwer to Kimberley, 20 April 1882.

(110) *Ibid.*

dismantled. (111)

Cetshwayo arrived in England on 3 August 1882. After a series of interviews with Lord Kimberley, it was agreed that he was to be restored as King of Zululand. (112) He would be under the supervision of a British Resident and bound to much the same conditions that the thirteen chiefs observed. However, he reluctantly accepted Kimberley's insistence that a Reserved territory would be carved out of his former kingdom. (113) It was not until Cetshwayo returned to the Cape that he learned of the final details of his reinstatement. Zibhebhu was to be given a separate district. Cetshwayo was to assume control over those districts held by Hamu, Ntshingwayo, Mlandela, Somkhele, Sokethwayo and Mgitswa. Chiefdoms held by Dunn, Hlubi, Faku and a portion of Sekethwayo's were to constitute the Reserve. Cetshwayo protested at the alienation of the Reserve from his own district. He had also hoped that the British would punish John Dunn for having armed the Zulu and for dispossessing him and his family, but Dunn was to be left in Zululand with the powers of a minor local chief. Cetshwayo protested indignantly that: 'it would be like placing an assegai by my side to let John Dunn be near me'. (114)

Hercules Robinson allowed Cetshwayo to send a message to Ndabuko, Dabulamanzi, and Mnyamana urging them to refrain from violence against Dunn and the appointed chiefs. 'Don't be the aggressors', he stressed, 'the English government will listen to your cry and give you proper redress. Leave John Dunn to the English government'. (115) Tensions between Dunn and the Usuthu mounted during the period of Cetshwayo's visit to London. Bulwer stressed to Osborn the need to caution the anti-Usuthu alliance from taking punitive action against the Usuthu while the Colonial Office was reviewing the Ulundi settlement: 'You should impress upon chief John Dunn the necessity of doing nothing that will disturb the public peace in his district'. (116)

(111) Guy, 'Mandhlakazi and Usutu', pp.47-50.

(112) C.O. 879/19/247, pp.1-17, Lord Kimberley's interviews with Cetewayo, pp.7, 15 and 17 Aug. 1879.

(113) C.O. 879/19/248, pp.1-2, Restoration of Cetewayo; Terms of, 1882.

(114) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.150.

(115) Z.A. vol. I, Enclosure in No. 37, Robinson to Bulwer, 7 July 1882.

(116) *Ibid.*, No. 38. Bulwer to Osborn, 14 Aug. 1882.

By August 1882 speculation as to whether Cetshwayo would be restored had sprung up in Zululand. Dunn had good reason to be uneasy. The real possibility of a restoration prompted Dunn to remind Kimberley of the imperial government's obligation to the appointed chiefs should Cetshwayo return: 'If your government have finally decided to restore Cetywayo, your Lordship can hardly expect us to relinquish our claim to the chieftainships without some just cause'.⁽¹¹⁷⁾ Dunn pointed out to Kimberley that Zululand was his home, and that Cetshwayo's rule would nullify the 'progress' made in Dunnsland: 'For myself I can say that I look upon my territory as my home, and have taken steps for the improvement of it and my people, and should Cetywayo return matters will relapse into their former state'.⁽¹¹⁸⁾ Kimberley did not take the time to answer Dunn's letter. The hunter-trader who had been elevated to political prominence in 1879 had shrunk to insignificance in the affairs of Zululand. It was not until December 1882 that the details of Bulwer's proposed partition of Zululand were finalized. On 30 December Bulwer instructed Osborn to inform Dunn and Hlubi of the intentions of the British government to restore Cetshwayo and place them under the jurisdiction of the Resident Commissioner in the Reserve:

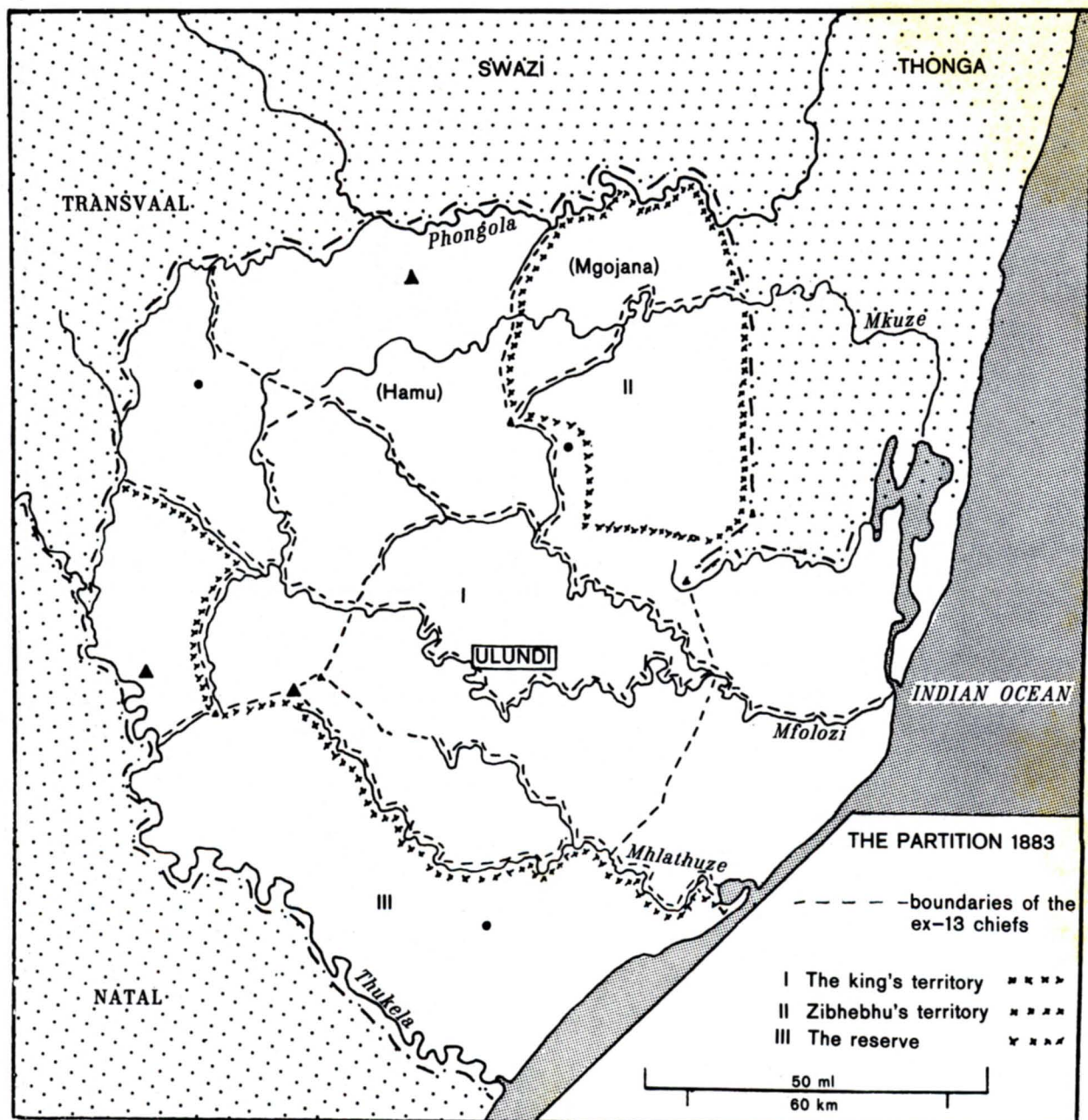
In the cases of the chiefs John Dunn and Hlubi those chiefs are already resident in the territory which will be retained as Reserved territory and no question therefore will arise as to their removal; but you should inform them that their authority as appointed chiefs over the territories now under them will terminate. They will, however, retain their authority as chiefs over their tribal or individual followers, and the government will be prepared to recognize them as such and suitable locations will be assigned to them for the occupation of their people.⁽¹¹⁹⁾

Dunn was indignant over the restoration and the resulting loss of territory, power and status, that he incurred. He felt that the Liberal government had sacrificed him to the Colensos and the humanitarians who had deliberately misrepresented him as an aspiring usurper to Cetshwayo's throne. Dunn's bitterness was

(117) *Ibid.*, Enclosure in No. 41, Dunn to Kimberley, 26 Aug. 1882.

(118) *Ibid.*

(119) *Ibid.*, No. 51, Bulwer to Osborn, 30 Dec. 1882.



MAP E

obvious on this point:

Let self-considered wiser heads than mine say what they like, I am confident that if my services had been more utilized, even after the restoration of Cetywayo, I could greatly have assisted in bringing about a more peaceful settlement of affairs in this country, from my actual knowledge of the feelings of the people. But no, I was set up by a certain faction, to suit their end, as a rival to Cetywayo, hence the consequences.(120)

Osborn, the British Resident, was the object of sour criticism. Dunn found him a weak, vacillating and presumptuous official:

The settlement as made by Sir Garnet Wolseley, having no alternative, would have worked well for some years, if the Resident had been vested with greater authority, and a small force had been at his command to carry out his orders. But seeing that he had not been vested with that authority, he should have been content with his nominal position, and merely advised the chiefs.(121)

In desperation Dunn appealed to his patron, Wolseley, to inform the Colonial Office that he had accepted his chieftainship on the strength of Britain's promise to never permit Cetshwayo to return. Although Wolseley's influence over Colonial Office policy in Zululand was nil at this point, he nevertheless pleaded Dunn's case:

I feel bound to state that Mr. Dunn would not have accepted the position of chief had I not, as Her Majesty's High Commissioner, given him a promise in the name of the Government of England that under no circumstances should Cetywayo be ever allowed to return to Zululand - a promise approved of by the government of the day.(122)

Guy Dawney, a Tory M.P., and hunting companion of Dunn, introduced an unsuccessful motion into Parliament condemning Cetshwayo's restoration as a 'breach of faith to the appointed chiefs'.(123)

(120) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.124.

(121) *Ibid.*, p.125.

(122) *Ibid.*, p.125. Wolseley to Earl of Derby, 31 Jan. 1883.

(123) Barber, 'Dunn and Zululand', p.38.

When all attempts to convince the Colonial Office to reconsider Cetshwayo's reinstatement had failed Dunn devoted his energies to the collection of compensation for the loss of his chiefdom. Osborn, the newly appointed Resident Commissioner for the Zululand Reserve territory, received the following statement from Dunn:

I claim the sum of 20,000L., as compensation for having been deprived of my position as chief of my territory, and for having been deprived of my territory granted to me in 1879 by Sir Garnet Wolseley, acting on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, and for loss of the rank and emoluments appertaining to the position and territory, both of which I have been deprived. I make this claim in addition to my existing right to a location within the Reserve for myself, and for the people who form my tribe, and who live under my authority as their chief.(124)

Dunn stated further that he had 'expended over £1,000 on road making', distributed fifty ploughs to his people free of charge, and paid the salaries of his staff of magistrates, clerks and police that amounted to £1,500 per annum. Dunn recounted his 'good deeds' - a yearly grant of fifty pounds to the Norwegian Mission Station at Eshowe and the supplying of free food to destitute Africans during the drought and famine of 1881. Dunn concluded his claims by stating that:

'all revenue received by me was expended, and no balance remained for my personal enrichment. As regards personal property, I am now not as well off as I was when I accepted my appointment as chief in 1879'.⁽¹²⁵⁾ Dunn's claims were referred to the Colonial Secretary who declared the extravagant claims as inadmissible. Derby would consider only the remuneration of Dunn's white magistrates. However, Derby's rejection of Dunn's claims appear to have been guided by the limited amount of funds available in the Colonial Office chest. Derby told Bulwer that there were no funds to meet John Dunn's claims even if they were admissible. For two years Dunn persisted in his claims until August 1886 when he received the sum of £216. 13. 4d.⁽¹²⁶⁾

(124) *B.P.P.*, C.-3616 of 1883, Enclosure 4 in No. 69, p.145.
Dunn to Osborn, 21 April 1883.

(125) *Ibid.*

(126) Shields, 'Life of John Dunn', p.83.

Upon Cetshwayo's restoration as King of Zululand on 10 January 1883, John Dunn ceased to be a major figure in Zulu political affairs. Dunn was merely a peripheral figure in the Zulu civil war of 1883-84 when Zibhebhu severely defeated Cetshwayo in the Msebe valley on 30 March 1883, and decimated the numbers of the Usuthu elite at Ulundi on 21 July 1883. Cetshwayo accepted refuge from Osborn in the Reserve. He died on 8 February 1884, a bitterly disappointed man.⁽¹²⁷⁾ Thus passed away the last king to rule an independent Zululand - and by far the most important individual in John Dunn's life. When he heard of the king's passing Dunn entered only a short cryptic note in his diary: 'Cetywayo died today'.⁽¹²⁸⁾ Dunn, in his autobiography, concluded that the Zulu and their king had been grossly mistreated by the British government:

The war against the Zulus was an unjust one, but the restoration of Cetywayo to power, after having taken him away from his people and dividing them into sections, has proved itself a much greater act of injustice, as witness the great loss of life that has taken place in the short time that has passed since his return.⁽¹²⁹⁾

Zululand was eventually annexed by Great Britain on 14 May 1887. For John Dunn the Zululand frontier was officially closed. He was no longer chief of an independent African territory, and Dunn, his family and clients were now under permanent white rule. When Cetshwayo's heir, Dinizulu, defeated the Mandlakazi at Etshaneni in 1884 a new royalist movement formed around him. In 1888 Dinizulu resisted the British government and revolted against white authority:⁽¹³⁰⁾ Dunn and two thousand of his men served British arms by assisting in the suppression of the rebellious chief Somkhele, who had joined with Dinizulu.⁽¹³¹⁾ This was Dunn's last active role in Zulu affairs.

(127) Guy, 'Cetshwayo ka Mpande', pp.97-98.

(128) D.D.P., K.C.L., Ms. 1467, p.6.

(129) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.119.

(130) Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, pp.154-155.

(131) Shields, 'Life of John Dunn', p.98.

CHAPTER NINE

DUNNSLAND 1857 - 1895

John Dunn was a highly ambitious and capable individual. He achieved high office and amassed a considerable fortune in cattle, property and hard cash. The foundations of his political and material power had rested on his success in carving out a large chiefdom in southern Zululand, and in his ruthless determination to exploit the economic, strategic and political potential of the region and its people. Dunn's acquisitive zeal is illustrated in the expansion of his rule and in the territorial extensions added to his African domain. In 1857 Cetshwayo had given Dunn a tract of land in the Ungoye forest. He gave Dunn a second tract in the 1860s as a reward for obtaining firearms. Sir Garnet Wolseley extended the boundaries of Dunn's chiefdom when he gave him the largest of the thirteen 'kinglets'. Dunn was vain enough to name his post-war chiefdom after himself. 'Dunnsland' was not a static entity; its boundaries were altered radically several times in response to profound changes taking place in Zululand. The fluctuating frontiers of Dunnsland tended, over the years, to incorporate a larger Nguni population with diverse loyalties. The conflict between Dunn and the intransigent Zulu factions placed under his control after the Anglo-Zulu war can be traced to Wolseley's insistence on the creation of a buffer state between Natal and the Zulu hinterland under John Dunn's rule.

The chiefdom assigned to John Dunn in 1879 was the largest and one of the most populous in Zululand. In September and October of 1879 Lieutenant-Colonel George Villiers and Captain James Alleyne marked off the thirteen districts according to the rough guide given to the Zululand Boundary Commission by Wolseley.⁽¹⁾ Dunn was appointed to rule over an extensive area lying between the Mhlatuze and Thukela rivers, bounded by the Indian ocean in the east and the Nkandhla forest in the west; it covered approximately one-fifth of the total land area

(1) B.P.P., C.-2482 of 1879, No. 93, Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 9 Sept. 1879.

of Zululand.⁽²⁾ The Commission described Dunn's district:⁽³⁾

Principal abode, "Qwayi Induku", on the Umlatoozi river,
 Boundaries of Location: The "Umlatoozi river from its mouth to its course near Beacon XVII on the "Ibabanango"; from Beacon XIX on the "Igogo" hill; thence to the source of the "Mangeni" river; thence down that river to its junction with the "Buffalo" river; thence down that river to its junction with the "Tugela" river; thence down that river to its mouth, the sea forming the remainder of the boundary.⁽⁴⁾

The Commissioners also submitted a very brief description of Dunn's district, emphasizing its strategic value:

This is by far the largest and finest location of the whole 13, and forms a broad buffer between the rest of Zululand and the colony of Natal. It includes many different small tribes, and the coast men are of quite a different type to those living inland.⁽⁵⁾

Dunn's post-war chiefdom was twice as large as that originally given by Cetshwayo before the Anglo-Zulu war.⁽⁶⁾ It contained a population of between twenty-five and thirty thousand. However, the people over which Dunn ruled were a mixture of Zulu, Tsonga, Coloureds and Natal Nguni. The Chube, Magwaza, Sithole, Ntuli and Mchunu people were well represented in Dunn's district as well as sections of the Biyela and Mpungose.⁽⁷⁾ Cetshwayo's brother, Dabulamanzi, and his followers were also placed under the jurisdiction and 'watchful eye' of Dunn. Moreover, Dunn's numerous offspring were emerging as a distinct Coloured community. And Tsonga migrants settled in the district and became clients of Dunn.⁽⁸⁾

(2) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu kingdom*, pp.72-73.

(3) See the map 'Post-War Zululand 1879-1883' delineating the boundaries of the thirteen chieftainships and naming their respective chiefs in Chapter Eight.

(4) *B.P.P.*, vol. 96, Despatch No. 49.

'Report of the Zululand Boundary Commission'.

(5) *Ibid.*

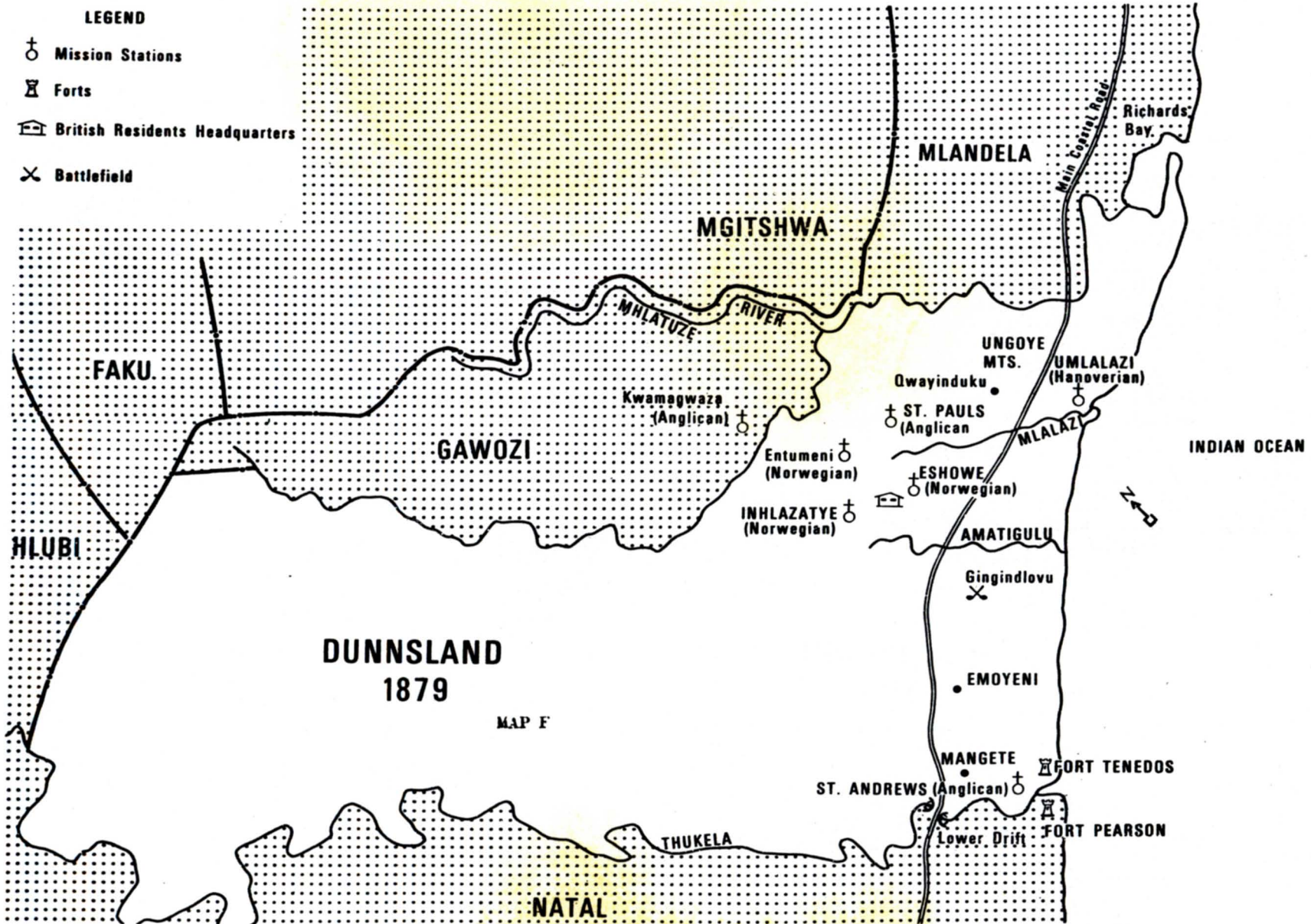
(6) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.596.

(7) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p.73.

(8) *D.D.P.*, (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459, p.8.

LEGEND

- ⊕ Mission Stations
- ⌘ Forts
- 🏠 British Residents Headquarters
- ✕ Battlefield



MAP F

This diverse population was divided by ethnic, cultural, political and economic conditions; nor were they all loyal to Chief Dunn. Dabulamanzi and many Zulu remained unreconciled to Dunn's rule: they laboured vigorously for Cetshwayo's restoration as king.⁽⁹⁾ This heterogeneous conglomeration of people with conflicting loyalties and divergent aspirations was a reflection of changing patterns of migration and settlement that had developed in southern Zululand from the time of Dunn's arrival in 1858.

The 1856 civil war between Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi had not only caused severe political upheaval in the kingdom, it was also responsible for the dislocation and temporary depopulation of the coastal districts of southern Zululand. As Mbuyazi's *Gqoza* fled south to the Natal frontier in November 1856, they expropriated grain stocks and cattle from kraals friendly to them, and plundered and sacked the kraals of Cetshwayo's supporters. Thousands of coastal Zulu left the region to settle in other districts. A majority of Zulu in the south were sympathizers and followers of Mbuyazi and joined him in his flight to Natal with the approach of Cetshwayo's forces. The defeat and annihilation of many of Mbuyazi's followers at Ndongakusuka on 2 December 1856 saw the destruction of thousands of southern and coastal Zulu. Those *Gqoza* who managed to escape the slaughter crossed over into Natal.⁽¹⁰⁾ Thus, the southern region of the Zulu kingdom saw a drastic reduction in its population, from roughly twenty thousand to less than six thousand in the years 1856 - 57.⁽¹¹⁾

The new paramount wanted to establish his authority over southern Zululand by redistributing the spoils of war, namely land and cattle, to his Usuthu supporters and favourite councillors. Dabulamanzi had demonstrated his loyalty to Cetshwayo during the civil war and was rewarded with cattle and a trace of land at Entumeni in the southern district.⁽¹²⁾ When Cetshwayo offered land to Dunn as an inducement

(9) The opposition to Dunn's rule and the 'restoration' of Cetshwayo as King is discussed in detail in Chapter Eight.

(10) Mael, 'Problem of Political Integration in the Zulu Kingdom', Chapters 1 and 2.

(11) *Ibid.*

(12) Guy, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, pp.49-50.

for him to settle in the kingdom, it was the wild and sparsely inhabited Ungoye forest area in the south that Dunn was given to rule. (13)

In exchange for advice, political support and material assistance, Dunn was recognized by Cetshwayo as Chief of the Ungoye. However, Dunn was ambitious and stated openly that it was his intention to establish a larger independent chiefdom with African clients acknowledging his sole authority. (14) After Dunn had succeeded in delivering consignments of firearms to Cetshwayo in the 1860s he requested and received permission to add a 'belt of country lying between the Tugela and Matikulu rivers', (15) to his chiefdom. Before the 1879 war Dunn established his authority and his homesteads in two separate districts:

The first of these tracts extended from the Tugela to the Amatikulu river, and bounded on the north-west by the wagon road to a bend north-west of a station known as "St. Andrews", and down a spruit running into the Tugela, and south-east by the Indian Ocean. The second was a tract known as the Ungoye mountain or forest, running from the Umlalazi river to about eight miles, and bounded on the north-west by a stream running into the same river, in extent about four miles wide. (16)

Dunn's influence with Cetshwayo was undoubtedly great for he received an extraordinary concession that was granted to no other prince or chief in the Zulu kingdom; he was allowed to re-populate his district with clients who were exempt from the service and regimental call-up of the Zulu king. Dunn's African subjects were allowed to marry without being referred to Cetshwayo: (17)

Any natives leaving their headmen or chiefs in Zululand and coming to reside in the district over which I was chief, were looked upon as having left the Zulu country, and the king's service, and they were not subject to the king's call to arms, unless under me, and they were as

(13) Moodie, (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.14.

(14) *B.P.P.*, C.-3616, of 1883, Enclosure 4 in No. 69, p.147. Dunn to Osborn, 28 Aug, 1880.

(15) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.29.

(16) *B.P.P.*, C.-3616, of 1883, Enclosure 4 in No. 69, p.147. Dunn to Osborn, 28 Aug, 1880.

(17) *Ibid.*

free from allegiance to their former masters as Zulus who had crossed into Natal, but, they were not allowed to remove their cattle, which were considered to be forfeited to the king. Thus those inclined to me did not mind, as long as they were permitted to come under my protection, although many a squabble I had to prevent my people being taken away and killed.(18)

Dunn's African clients came from many different regions, and they settled in his district for various reasons. When Dunn entered the Ungoye in 1857 he brought several hundred Natal Nguni with him. Many were hunters and some former border police who had served Dunn when he was in the employ of the Border Agent, Walmsley. These Natal Nguni brought their dependents with them. Dunn's private army of hunters were drawn from these Natal Nguni: they comprised the most loyal and obedient element of Dunn's subjects.(19)

Zulu from districts throughout the kingdom also settled in Dunn's chiefdom. Many were fugitives who had fallen from the favour of a district chief or who were being pursued by members of a rival clan or faction. Dunn gave asylum freely to these refugees and Cetshwayo recognized Dunn's territory as a sanctuary for displaced Zulu. The Zulu king thought it better for refugees to be under the control of his ally Dunn than harboured by rival chiefs. The majority of Zulu who sought a haven in Dunn's districts were individuals who had been accused of being *umthakathi*, (pl. *abathakathi*) (one who uses magic for evil purposes) i.e. responsible for causing the death of important members of Zulu society who had died of an ailment or through disease. A *sangoma*, (pl. *izangoma*) or witchdoctor "smells out" the *umthakathi* at a public gathering and the accused was executed by impalement.(20) Dunn showed a particular sympathy for those Zulu who had been 'smelled out' as *abathakathi* and granted them asylum. Dunn was extremely scornful of superstition and taboos whether rooted in Christianity or Zulu religious beliefs. Cetshwayo did not object to Dunn's convictions and decreed that Dunn's territory and his wagon were places of sanctuary. Domenic Dunn said of this interesting

(18) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.29.

(19) *Ibid.*

(20) H.C. Lugg, *Life under a Zulu Shield*, (Pietermaritzburg, 1975), p.26.

development:

...a good many of them being men who had been smelled out as Batakatis by Cetewayo's wizards, for Cetewayo's rule was that if any condemned man ran away into John Dunn's protection, they were to be left alone, and they escaped death, and were known as people who were saved by an ox wagon wheel. For whether they ran to John Dunn's home or where he was camping they ran under his wagon, and Cetewayo's men would not touch them.(21)

A third significant group were the Tsonga.⁽²²⁾ Dunn's interaction with the Tsonga chiefdoms of the Delagoa bay hinterland was extensive.⁽²³⁾ During the 1870s and early 1880s an estimated three to four hundred Tsonga received permission from Dunn to settle in his territory. The Zulu and Natal Nguni held Dunn's Tsonga subjects in contempt; they called them beggars (*amarubu*) because many Tsonga arrived in southern Zululand in a starving and destitute condition. Dunn gave them refuge and plots of land to cultivate. In exchange, Dunn's Tsonga clients were required to give their labour either in service on Dunn's homesteads or as migrant labourers.⁽²⁴⁾

Between 1858 and 1879 nearly ten thousand Africans became clients of John Dunn and re-populated the southern coastal district of Zululand

(21) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), 1459, p.8.

(22) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.26.

(23) Ballard, 'Migrant Labour in Natal', pp.39-40. In the 1860s Dunn frequently travelled and hunted in the petty Tsonga chiefdoms around Lake St. Lucia. With the strong support of Cetshwayo, Dunn recruited thousands of Tsonga migrants for work in Natal. The coastal route passed through Dunn's district and practically all Tsonga migrants were housed and fed at Dunn's rest stations along the two hundred and fifty mile route. Famine, endemic warfare, cattle disease and forty years of systematic exploitation by the Zulu Kings of the resources and labour-power of the hinterland forced many Tsonga to abandon their impoverished country and seek work in Natal.

(24) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459, p.8.

from the Mhlatuze river in the north to the lower Thukela in the south. Essentially, Dunn must be seen as a transfrontier agent of African colonization. Dunn aspired to being a white chief, ruling over black subjects. He used his land, cattle and political connections with Cetshwayo to induce Zulu, Tsonga and Natal Nguni to reside in his district. In the same manner as the early Port Natal traders, Dunn offered sanctuary, occupational rights and the loan of his numerous cattle to Zulu refugees and destitute Tsonga. These clients served Dunn as herders, cultivators, labourers, hunters, policemen and household retainers.

Through his marriages to one Coloured and forty-eight African wives, Dunn was directly responsible for propagating an entire Coloured clan with a unique identity and racial consciousness of their own. Dunn is credited with having sired at least one hundred and seventeen children.⁽²⁵⁾ The Dunn Coloured community comprised a fourth and very important element of Chief Dunn's district. Tensions soon developed between Dunn's Coloured descendants and Dunn's African clients over racial and class issues.

Catherine Pierce, a Coloured, was Dunn's first wife. Her parents were Dick Pierce, an Englishman who took an African wife from the Cape Cele chiefdom. Catherine and her parents were employed as servants in Robert Dunn's household in Port Elizabeth and moved to Port Natal with the Dunn family in 1836 or 1837. In 1853 Catherine Pierce, aged sixteen, became John Dunn's common-law wife and accompanied her husband to Zululand in 1857.⁽²⁶⁾

In 1861 Dunn took a second wife, Macebose Mhlongo, who lived in Dunn's Ungoye district. Catherine Pierce was very much opposed to Dunn's marriages to African women. She aspired to being as 'European' as possible and condemned Dunn for his 'degenerate' social behaviour. Catherine also feared a loss of status and privilege for each additional African wife taken by Dunn was seen as a potential rival

(25) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.611.

(26) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459, p.1.

for his favour. However, the threat to Catherine's position never materialized, for Dunn tried to soothe her feelings by elevating her to the status of a Great-Wife - a routine common in polygamous Zulu households. Catherine lived in a comfortable European style dwelling at Mangete with numerous African servants in attendance. She and her children - eight daughters and two sons - lived as Europeans, and they were better cared for materially than any other of Dunn's wives and children. (27)

Catherine's violent prejudice against Dunn's African wives was no doubt motivated out of fear and jealousy. But she justified her dislike for black wives on racial grounds - they were inferior because they were 'natives' and she was Coloured. Domenic Dunn revealed Catherine's attitude to Macebose:

Catherine's bitterness went on for a long time. When she knew that Macebose was due to deliver her first child, she was asked to prepare clothes for the coming baby, she was also expecting, she would not bother to make clothes for the other woman's child, she bought salampore cloth as she said it would be good enough for a native child. When both children were born, she sent for the other child, wanting to see it. But when she saw that the child was almost like hers in colour she got her sister, Mrs. Hamilton, to hurriedly make dresses for the baby before it would be found out what she had done. (28)

Catherine had little sympathy or understanding for Dunn's position as a Zulu chief, or for the status and political importance attached to the accumulation of wives. Domenic Dunn perceived his father's dilemma - the further alienation of Catherine weighed against Dunn's social obligations as chief to add more wives to his household:

...many others were given by fathers who were needing cattle; others giving their daughters for the sake of uplifting themselves in position, and others paying tribute; time after time he was compelled by the custom of the land to continue adding more wives to justify his position. (29).

(27) *Ibid.*, p.2.

(28) *Ibid.*

(29) *Ibid.*

Friction between Dunn and Catherine increased as more wives were introduced to Mangete. To relieve domestic tensions Dunn established three other homesteads in which he accommodated his African wives. They were Qwayinduku in the Ungoye, Emoyeni near the Inyezane river and Mtunzini along the Mlalazi river. Many of them did not remain in Dunn's household for the entirety of their lives; some of them were sent away after bearing their first child and some were banished for 'misbehaviour' and adultery.⁽³⁰⁾

Dunn encountered situations related to social and racial matters that were non-existent in the average Zulu household. Dunn's deep involvement in the political economy of Natal and Zululand made it impossible for him to avoid European visitors. Government officials, British army officers, members of the British aristocracy and a host of sportsmen paid frequent visits to Dunn's various residences. Neither Dunn's wives nor his children were permitted to mix socially with the Europeans. Furthermore, Dunn's coloured children were discouraged from entering into anything more than superficial relationships with Africans. Domenic Dunn recounted his impression of this social behaviour:

In our home at Emoyeni, when I think back, there was a kind of segregation practised. But it did not have that name. My father kept to his whiteness in social matters, and his friends whom he entertained were usually white people of high position - we, the children, as coloureds, lived separately from the natives. There were no other white people nearby in those days for us to know whether we might have mixed socially with them. But, without any instruction we knew that they were birds of another feather to us, and as there were social gulfs between us and the natives, so there was one between white people and ourselves.⁽³¹⁾

(30) *Ibid.*

(31) *Ibid.*, Ms. 1.092, p.2.

While Dunn ruled his district and his African subjects by northern Nguni Laws he realized that the majority of his own children were Coloured and regarded themselves as racially distinct and culturally superior to Africans. Dunn made a serious effort to educate and train his children to live as Europeans. For a short time Dunn ironically sent his children to the Anglican mission school at St. Andrews where they were taught by Henrietta Samuelson, eldest daughter of the veteran Zululand missionary, S.M. Samuelson. The Dunn children were among the first taught in Henrietta Samuelson's forty-four year career in black education, (1873-1917). A fluent Zulu linguist and authoress of *Some Zulu Customs and Folklore*, she was chosen by the Anglican mission as a representative to the Zulu-Orthography Conference of 1904.⁽³²⁾ Unfortunately, Dunn found this arrangement unsatisfactory because his children complained of having to mix with 'native' children at St. Andrews school, which had been established specifically for the education of African converts and their children. Dunn then built a private one room school at Mangete and employed the same Miss Samuelson as teacher. The Mangete school was closed in 1886 when Miss Samuelson left. In 1891 Dunn built a second school at Emoyeni, 'a nice wood and iron building'. Sigurd Sivertson taught at Emoyeni for two years;⁽³³⁾ followed by a Mr. Warner and a Mr. Burnett. This school was closed in 1895 when Dunn died and the education of his children became the responsibility of the Catholic missionaries at Emoyeni. Dunn also insisted on his daughters being trained in European domestic and household routines. This duty fell to Catherine Pierce who had been trained as a domestic in Robert Dunn's household. She taught them sewing, cooking and general housekeeping.⁽³⁴⁾

(32) Samuelson, *Long Long Ago*, p.49.

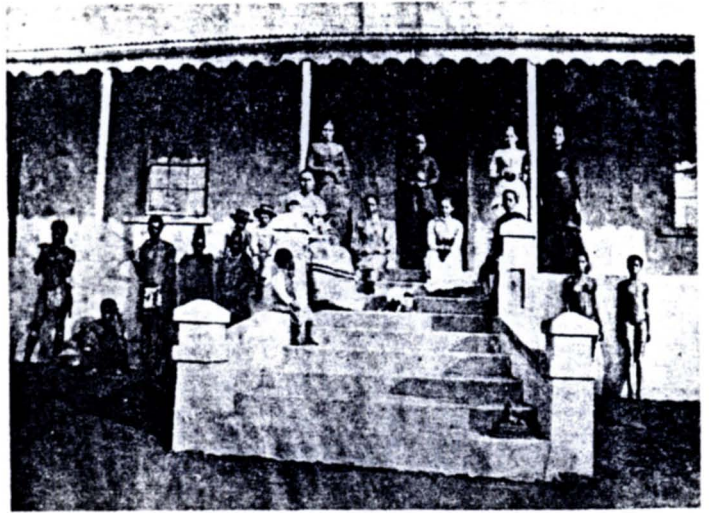
(33) Sigurd Sivertson, 'A Chat about Zululand and the Zulus', (unpublished memoir, K.C.L., 1934).

(34) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459, p.3.



One of John Dunn's wives.
Name Unknown.

(Courtesy of The Bourquin Collection)



Catherine Pierce (seated left), her daughters
and members of the household, mangete.

(Courtesy Local History Museum, Durban)



Chief John Dunn and six of his izinduna on
their way from Zululand to Durban, 1882.

(Courtesy of Killie Campbell Africana Library,
Durban)



A Group of Dunn's Hunters.

(Courtesy of the Bourquin Collection)

Dunn's several homesteads served important functions other than providing accommodation for his numerous wives and children. They were materially self-sufficient villages that served as centres for the administration of Dunn's district. Located at these homesteads were Dunn's white magistrates, his hunters and armed police, trading stores, court facilities, cattle kraals and grain pits. Dunn's homesteads were modelled along the lines of the Zulu *amakhandas*, military kraals and performed similar political, economic and administrative functions. Chief Dunn commanded the men of his district to reside at his homesteads where they planted and reaped his fields, built or repaired the huts that housed his family and clients, and mustered for police or military duties. Domenic Dunn said:

Many ring top men used to leave their kraals to stay at his place for months at a time, and many men who should have ranked as men but with no ring tops were ordered by him to do so, while all these men were there, their women folks used to bring them beer and special food...they were wonderfully fed, as he had always plenty mealies, corn and meat.(35)

During the Anglo-Zulu war all of Dunn's homesteads were sacked and burnt by Zulu troops.⁽³⁶⁾ Upon returning to his district Dunn rebuilt Mangete, Emoyeni and Qwayinduku on a much larger scale than before. Domenic Dunn described the Mangete complex:

Taking Mangete home for instance, his house had a dining room, sitting room, four bedrooms, in case of European visitors, kitchen, pantry and bath room, a different house for his first wife Catherine of twelve rooms, a school room, an office-courthouse, European mens quarters three rooms, a stable and carriage house, and about a quarter of a mile away from his house, he had a house of a few rooms of wood and iron for his native wives, and nearby a large native kraal of about thirty or forty huts for his induna police, visitors and servants.(37)

(35) *Ibid.*, p.7.

(36) *B.P.P.*, C.-3616 of 1883, Enclosure 4 in No. 69, p.146. Dunn to Osborn, 24 April 1883.

(37) *D.D.P.*, (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459, p.4.

Dunn's Emoyeni residence was even more imposing. A spacious dwelling of nineteen rooms housed Dunn's own separate quarters of five rooms, European workmen lived in a three-room cottage. There were also 'very big sheds for grain, an office for court sittings, a wagon shed, stables and carriage room, a working shop for blacksmithing and carpentry, a cottage for big sons of two rooms, a huge native kraal of fifty to sixty native huts'. Domenic Dunn said that 'building was continually going on by a special European builder' until Dunn's death in 1895. (38)

Dunn's summer residence was Qwayinduku hidden in the forests of the Ungoye. Mitford, the English journalist, described Qwayinduku in his 1880 tour of Zululand: 'A single stored house, verandah on two sides, dining and sitting rooms, plenty of bedrooms, a more comfortable dwelling than the general frontier house...at the back are stables, offices and other outbuildings, while a fruit garden goes down to the stream'. (39)

When John Dunn took up his appointment as one of the thirteen chiefs in 1879 he was confronted with the formidable task of internal administration, particularly that related to the enforcement of law and order and the collection of hut-taxes, trade licences and toll fees. The terms, conditions, and limitations laid down by Wolseley at Ulundi bound the appointed chiefs to observe several basic legal principles. They were prohibited from passing summary judgement and execution on those accused of crime until a 'fair and impartial' trial had been conducted, and not until witnesses had been called and a council of the chief men of the district had been consulted. The appointed chiefs were also prohibited from employing *izangoma* or witchdoctors for 'smelling out' supposed offenders. (40) Beyond these specific instructions the district chiefs were to govern their subjects by the established laws and routines common to northern Nguni society.

Dunn was aware that his territory contained a population roughly three times as large as that which he ruled before the 1879 war. The success

(38) *Ibid.*

(39) Mitford, *Through the Zulu Country*, p.199.

(40) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.123.

of his rule, he quite correctly perceived, would rest largely on his ability to impose an efficient and firm legal system over the district. Dunn's subjects were practically all of northern Nguni extraction and they subscribed to a system whereby civil disputes and petty crimes were tried by the *abanumzana*, or headmen, of the local district. Cases of a more serious nature were referred to Dunn and his council of *izinduna*.⁽⁴¹⁾ Dunn did not tamper with or attempt to alter the basic principles of northern Nguni customary law. He had appointed several of his most trusted and influential *izinduna* as *abanumzana*. Dunn, however, reserved his right as paramount chief to give final judgment in cases referred by his *abanumzana*.

During the post-war period, Dunn divided his chiefdom into five administrative districts. He appointed the local headmen to be his *abanumzana*. The district *abanumzana* were Zimena Mzimela for the Ungoye, Ngogwana Mkwanzazi for Dhlangozwa, Sisimena Ntuli for Mtunzini, Ngqondo Dube for Emoyeni and Lokotwayo Mcambi for Mangete. The *abanumzana* tried petty civil and domestic cases among the African inhabitants of their district. Dunn's Coloured family, his wives and Europeans were immune to their jurisdiction.⁽⁴²⁾

The enforcement of Dunn's rule was complicated by fractious elements among the Zulu population living in the district. Members of the royal family, notably Dabulamanzi and his followers, resented being placed under Dunn. Dabulamanzi was a royal prince whose pre-war status, though not his power, was higher than that of Dunn, who was a district chief.⁽⁴³⁾ Dunn's *abanumzana* were local headmen whose authority was scorned by Dabulamanzi and his people. Dunn was well aware of the attitudes of the royalist faction clustered about Dabulamanzi, and he instituted measures that he hoped would awe and, if necessary, effectively re-enforce his authority among his Zulu subjects.

(41) Krige, *Social System of the Zulus*, Chapter Four.

(42) D.P.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459, p.11.

(43) Practically all members of the royal family were of a higher status due to their birth, whereas commoners such as Dunn could obtain as much or more power, wealth and official political rank through merit and service; but his social status was considerably less than that of blood royals.

To strengthen the legal system Dunn appointed three European administrators of Zulu law.⁽⁴⁴⁾ White magistrates, Dunn believed, would command more respect and obedience than any of his black *abanunzana*. While Dunn incorporated many Zulu social routines into his lifestyle, he still subscribed to the belief prevalent among Natal colonists that the Africans' awe and supposed fear of whites should be used by whites to hold blacks in check. Dunn's appointment of whites thoroughly conversant in the language and customs of the Zulu, was designed to impress on his African subjects the infallibility, and superiority of Europeans. The 'white mystique' figured prominently in Dunn's strategy for ruling Africans; he wrote, 'The faith among the Zulus in the power of the white man in those days was beyond conception'.⁽⁴⁵⁾

In 1880 Dunn appointed R. Galloway, N. Oftebro and E.A. Brunner as his white magistrates. All three men had experience and long associations with the Zulu and Natal Nguni. Oftebro was the son of the veteran Norwegian missionary, O.C. Oftebro of Eshowe: he had grown up among the Zulu and he did not harbour the same ill-feeling toward Dunn that his father had displayed. Dunn was anxious to impress the British authorities with his intentions to rule his district with fairness and efficiency. Osborn, the British Resident, received reports from Dunn on the appointment and duties of the three white magistrates. Osborn wrote to Pomeroy Colley, Wolseley's successor as Governor and Special Commissioner, on the magisterial appointments:

The Chief John Dunn informed me lately that he had appointed three European magistrates in his territory. These officers, I understand from the chief, are to exercise civil and criminal jurisdiction, to collect a tax of 5s. on all native huts within their respective districts, and to receive moneys paid by all traders for licences & c.⁽⁴⁶⁾

Dunn paid his European staff well. The three magistrates received a salary of £200 per annum, a yearly allowance of £20 for expenses

(44) *B.P.P.*, C.-2695 of 1880, Enclosure in No. 32, p.86. Osborn to Colley, 4 Aug. 1880.

(45) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.6.

(46) *B.P.P.*, C.-2695 of 1880, Enclosure in No. 43, p.86. Osborn to Colley, 4 Aug. 1880.

incurred in collection of hut-tax and a housing allowance of £50. In addition to the magistrates, Dunn employed a European clerk and an overseer for public works projects; together they received yearly salaries amounting to £270.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Dunn's legal system was pyramidal, with three categories in which offences were classified and tried. First, Dunn's *abanumzana* tried cases of a minor nature, usually petty disputes between local Africans over *lobola* cattle and occupational rights to certain lands; second, the white magistrates delivered judgments on the more serious civil cases and tried defendants accused of minor crimes such as petty thievery, faction fighting and aggravated assault. There was a degree of overlap between cases tried by the *abanumzana* and the magistrates. On occasion, complainants would appeal to the white magistrate to review a judgment handed down by an *umnumzana*. Frequently, this involved complicated disputes over *lobola* cattle which extended back to several generations. The more serious crimes of murder, rape, and robbery were automatically referred to Dunn the supreme chief and final arbiter in cases of appeal. Domenic Dunn gave a picturesque account of his father's court sittings:

When his courts were held in trying cases, he used to sit on a chair under a verandah, in front of where there was a square of trees...Before the chief came to court, a long procession of ring top men with black overcoats and with red bands over on one shoulder used to file up to the court, followed by many men, spectators and those concerned in cases to be tried. In the shade of these trees on a warm day used to be black and shining ring tops, as soon as the chief arrived there used to be a roar of 'Bayede', all men standing up. When the case commenced the complainant or accused had to sit in the centre of the square, in the sun, until the case finished, the same with anyone who had to give evidence.⁽⁴⁸⁾

Dunn, his magistrates and his *abanumzana* punished offenders along lines employed by the Zulu. Dunn said, 'The Zulu is only to be ruled

(47) B.P.P., C.-3616 of 1883, Enclosure 3 in No. 69, p.145. Osborn to Bulwer, 19 Mar. 1883.

(48) D.P.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459, p.7.

by fear of death, or the confiscation of his entire property'.⁽⁴⁹⁾ And he put his convictions into practice - misdemeanours brought a fine in cattle; petty thieves and thugs were flogged. As Domenic Dunn recounted: 'Punishments were given for naughty cases, they used to be given several cuts with a carriage whip, the culprit being held up by his arms and some holding on the legs, this was very much dreaded'.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Capital crimes were punishable by hanging only. Dunn avoided using the more gruesome methods of execution common to Zulu society such as impalement, slow strangulation and clubbing.

The maintenance of Dunn's administration and his four households must have been considerable. His expenses included the salaries and allowances of his European staff and artisans. He provided arms, food and shelter for his African hunters and police which mustered three hundred men. Dunn claims to have expended over £1,000 on road-making between 1874 and 1883. His large family and their retainers were housed, clothed, schooled and fed at Dunn's expense.⁽⁵¹⁾ The cost of Dunn's administrative and domestic establishment was born by the hut-tax. Dunn's magistrates collected five shillings on each hut during November and December 1879 and ten shillings from 1880 to 1882. Dunn kept few records and the exact revenue collected from the hut-tax annually is not known. Ryder Haggard, author and member of Sir Theophilus Shepstone's staff in the Transvaal, estimated Dunn's revenue at £15,000,⁽⁵²⁾ while Bishop Colenso claimed that it was in the region of £12,000.⁽⁵³⁾ Natal settlers and government officials claimed that Dunn had made a large fortune from the hut-tax. Yet on his death in 1895 he left several thousand cattle to his heirs but very little hard cash.⁽⁵⁴⁾ The upkeep of Dunn's territory was heavy and he most probably expended much of his tax revenue on the maintenance of his rule as chief. Dunn also had expensive tastes and spent freely on himself and his family. Domenic Dunn noted the grand scale of his

(49) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.54

(50) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459, p.7.

(51) *B.P.P.*, C.-3616 of 1883, Enclosures in No. 69, Bulwer to Earl of Derby, 8 Oct, 1883.

(52) Haggard, *Cetewayo's White Neighbours*, p.56.

(53) Colenso papers, (K.C.L.), Folio 14 No. p.44. Colenso to Chesson, 4 Apr. 1881.

(54) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1471, Copy of the 'Will of the late Chief John Dunn'.

father's purchases:

Three and four wagons used to be sent to Durban for the required goods, when they came back they looked like carrying loads for a merchant store. Children and everybody used to be in their glees, as they knew there would be something for everyone of them; sugar, rice, beans, flour, bales of clothes, readymade suits for boys, boots, hats for mothers and daughters.(55)

Morris's claim that Dunn 'aped the life of the English landed gentry' is accurate.⁽⁵⁶⁾ He drove expensive carriages, entertained his European guests with imported wines and delicacies, and furnished his houses with fine furniture and crockery. He provided liquor and slaughter beeves for important chiefs and headmen who paid him official visits.⁽⁵⁷⁾

An additional source of revenue was fees collected for trading licences. Dunn's chiefdom was in an excellent geographical position as far as drifts and trade routes were concerned. The Zululand Boundary Commission reported: 'He commands all the main roads into Natal, and all the drifts except that by 'Rourkes' farm, the road, however, from which place subsequently passes through his country near the 'Ibabanango' Mountain.'⁽⁵⁸⁾

Dunn's lucrative trade in firearms had ended in 1877 and he was too busily engaged in running his chiefdom by 1879 to be an active trader. But he jumped at the opportunity to skim off a trader's profits by imposing licence fees. Predictably, Dunn aroused the anger of the colonists further with the extortionate trade policies which he enforced in his chiefdom. He used his political authority to exercise control over trade and traders. First, Dunn levied an exorbitant twenty-five pound licence levy on every trader's wagon that entered Dunnsland;⁽⁵⁹⁾

(55) *Ibid.*, Ms. 1459, p.4.

(56) Morris, *Washing of the Spears*, p.199.

(57) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1459, p.7.

(58) *B.P.P.*, vol. 96. Despatch No. 49, Report of the Zululand Boundary Commission.

(59) Barber, 'John Dunn and Zululand', p.56.

second, in January 1880 he managed, probably with the connivance of John Shepstone, to obtain the lease of the lower Thukela ferry from the Natal government for the nominal fee of eighteen pounds per annum, and placed one of his sons-in-law in charge of the pont.⁽⁶⁰⁾

When Dunn assumed responsibility for the lower Thukela pont, he found it in need of repair and alteration. The Lower Drift was the most travelled route between Natal and Zululand and the Anglo-Zulu war had placed considerable burdens on the pont with the movement of troops and equipment in 1879. Dunn explained the difficulties with the pont and his recommendations for improvements to Mitchell, the Natal Colonial Secretary:

I am informed by the man, I have engaged to work the pont, that owing to the shifting nature of the sandbanks, that the pont in its present state is too heavy and I beg you will respectfully solicit his Excellency's permission for me to have the pont altered and lightened so as to make it fit for a less depth of water.⁽⁶¹⁾

The Natal government agreed to Dunn's proposals and £27.14s.9d. was spent for alterations.⁽⁶²⁾ The Colonial Engineer recommended that "Chief John Dunn should have his rent remitted this year in consideration of the amount expended by him in repairs and alterations to the pont".⁽⁶³⁾ It was in Dunn's own economic interests to make the point at the Lower Drift as efficient as possible. The maintenance, as well as the control of vital lines of trade and communication between Natal and Zululand were responsibilities that Dunn accepted as unavoidable and necessary.

(60) *Natal Mercury*, 4 Fe. 1880.

(61) C.S.O., vol. 741, no. 647/1880. Dunn to C.S.O. 7 Feb. 1880.

(62) *Ibid.*, vol. 777, no. 4291/1880. Dunn to C.S.O. 30 Sept. 1880.

(63) *Ibid.*, Colonial Engineer to C.S.O. 5 Nov. 1880.

Dunn very conveniently collected passage fees and the wagon-tax from the traders before they were allowed in his district; Dunn then controlled the most travelled route between Natal and Zululand. The indefatigable *Mercury* calculated the approximate revenue Dunn's wagon tax would realize: 'Trade is not forbidden, but Chief Dunn exacts an annual licence of £25 for every wagon, and there are now 70 wagons understood to be in the country, equal to an annual revenue of £1,750'.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Irate Legislative Council members protested against Dunn's extortionate tax;⁽⁶⁵⁾ and they hinted at the duplicity of the Executive Council, (mainly John Shepstone), in allowing Dunn to lease the lower Thukela ferry. The 'responsibles', led by Natal's future prime minister, John Robinson, claimed that it was a 'political job'.⁽⁶⁶⁾ Cornelius Vijn, a Zululand trader who had been held captive by Cetshwayo, complained: '...under the present system it is impossible to trade in Zululand. How can a man trade there, when he has to make arrangements with each chief, and John Dunn alone demands 25 L. from everyone who wishes to trade in his territory'.⁽⁶⁷⁾

Dunn was not alone in claiming licence fees. Almost all of the thirteen chiefs levied fees and tolls. Osborn remarked on this development and the greed of some chiefs: '...licences varying from 10 L. to 25 L. per wagon are claimed by some of the chiefs from traders within their territories. The chief Hlubi claimed 5 L. also for every wagon passing through, but not within, his territory. This demand he has now abandoned on my advice'.⁽⁶⁸⁾

Settler opposition towards Dunn was aggravated more by the stoppage of Tsonga labour coming into Natal as a result of the Anglo-Zulu War.

(64) *Ibid.*, 20 Jan. 1880.

(65) *Ibid.*, 5 Feb. 1880.

(66) *Ibid.*, 6 Feb. 1880.

(67) Vijn, *Cetshwayo's Dutchman*, p.79.

(68) *B.P.P.*, C.-2695 of 1880, Enclosure in No. 43, p.86.
Osborn to Colley, 4 Aug. 1880.

Dunn could hardly be blamed for the short labour supply for he was fully engaged in the service of Chelmsford, Crealock and Wolseley from March through September 1879. Furthermore, he was relieved of his duties and his £300 salary as Protector of Immigrants during the early stages of the war - partly for his conduct in the trans-shipment of arms into Zululand, but mainly because the Tsonga were prevented from coming through Zululand to Natal by Cetshwayo's order. The colonists conveniently forgot these difficulties and found Dunn 'guilty' of yet another foul deed against the colony. The *Mercury* wrote:

It is a pity that the glorious conditions of the season will be seriously neutralized by the want of labour. Employers on all sides are crying out for hands, and much disappointment is expressed at the non-appearance of Tongas through Zululand. Have John Dunn's functions as immigrant agent been superseded by his superior powers as chief? If so, steps should at once be taken to make other arrangements, and let the Amatongas know that the war is over, and the road is safe.(69)

The labour shortage was felt keenly in Durban. The Town Council convened a special meeting on 10 November 1879 to discuss ways of alleviating the situation. Councillor Pickering complained of the lack of 'Amatonga' labour and accused Dunn of holding back migrants in order to levy a higher capitation fee on colonial recruiters.⁽⁷⁰⁾ However, one lone voice expressed sympathy for Dunn's 'overheads' in the recruitment of African workers: 'Poor John Dunn, how he is abused. Even the paltry five shillings per head that is allowed on Amatongas is grudged. I wonder would ——— like to feed hungry kafirs a week for five shillings per head'.⁽⁷¹⁾

Dunn had not washed his hands in the recruitment of Tsonga labourers. In fact, he was quite prepared to renew his recruitment activities but he was not inclined to rush to the aid of colonists who despised him and opposed his every move. He would let the colonists or the

(69) *Natal Mercury*, 20 Oct. 1879.

(70) *Natal Colonist*, 11 Nov. 1879.

(71) *Natal Witness*, 31 Jan. 1879.

Natal government approach him and negotiate labour contracts on terms favourable to himself. Dunn's opportunity came in early December 1879 when on an official visit to Pietermaritzburg to confer with Wolseley on affairs in Zululand, John Shepstone approached him on 'the vexed labour question'.⁽⁷²⁾ Out of their discussions it was agreed that Dunn would be re-appointed Protector of Immigrants without salary or expenses. However, Dunn would be free to negotiate his own terms with Natal recruiters and labour agents. Dunn also enjoyed the official approval of the colonial authorities; and Natal immigration officials were to co-operate closely with Dunn in securing a large flow of Tsonga migrants for the colony. Dunn's influence was soon felt, as the labour supply increased dramatically. 1880 was characterized as an exceptionally good year for crops and the abundant supply of Tsonga labour to harvest the cane sent sugar production soaring upward.⁽⁷³⁾ Dunn alone recruited 2,539 Tsonga labourers and received £634.15s. in fees.⁽⁷⁴⁾

During the mid 1880s Dunn's position as labour recruiter among the Tsonga became less significant to the Natal labour market with the sharp increase in Zulu and Tsonga being recruited by the numerous white agents operating in Zululand.⁽⁷⁵⁾ The late 1880s saw Dunn recruiting heavily among his own African clients and in neighbouring districts in southern Zululand. Labourers were needed for the Natal Government Railways and the newly opened coalfields around Dundee and Newcastle in northern Natal. In 1889 he supplied 741 men; in 1890 Dunn sent 764 migrants. The numbers dwindled in 1891 and 1892 when 404 and 135 were recruited respectively.⁽⁷⁶⁾

(72) *Ibid.*, 6 Dec. 1879.

(73) N.B.B., 1880, p.251.

(74) S.N.A. 439/1888. Secretary for Native Affairs to Lt. Governor, 8 July 1888.

(75) The increase in the number of Zulu coming out to work after 1879 is recorded in Blue Book statistics submitted in the 'Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs'. See N.B.B. 1882, No. 31; N.B.B. 1881, No. 32; N.B.B. 1882, No. 33; N.B.B. 1883, No. 34; and N.B.B. 1884, No. 35.

(76) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1467, p.6. The figures for migrants recruited were recorded in Dunn's Diary, copies of which were included in the Domenic Dunn Papers.

Dunn's role as a transfrontier colonizer brought about fundamental economic and ecological changes in those districts over which he ruled. While Dunn subscribed to northern Nguni political, economic and social customs and restricted the intrusion of European influence into his chiefdom, he valued European technological expertise. He introduced weapons, implements and crops to his African clients. By borrowing western technology Dunn augmented his wealth and status as a 'traditional' African chief.

When Dunn first moved to the Ungoye forest in 1857, large game animals - lion, buffalo, elephant, hyena and crocodile - abounded to such an extent that Africans armed with only spears and clubs were hesitant to travel or settle in this wild region.⁽⁷⁷⁾ Dunn said that southern Zululand was 'the finest spot in South Africa for game'.⁽⁷⁸⁾ Cetshwayo ridiculed Dunn for settling in the Ungoye and predicted that Dunn's cattle would be destroyed by the predators, and Dunn would eventually be driven away by the wild animals. However, Dunn brought Natal Nguni armed with muzzle-loaders into the Ungoye and many of the local Zulu and Zulu refugees were supplied with guns and came to form a corps of hunters.⁽⁷⁹⁾ Dunn and his hunters had killed off most of the game in southern Zululand by the mid 1880s. The crossing of the numerous river drifts was made much safer by the wholesale slaughter of the crocodile population.⁽⁸⁰⁾ The largesse in meat created by these efficiently organized hunts was certainly a strong inducement for hungry African refugees to *konza* Dunn, and settle under him.

Dunn also introduced new methods and new crops into established agricultural methods practised by the dominant African culture. The use of the plough was actively encouraged. In 1881 Dunn bought fifty ploughs and distributed them to various homesteads free of charge. Lokotwayo Mcambi, the *umnumzana* for Mangete, made extensive use of ploughs.⁽⁸¹⁾ Like many early Natal colonists who settled along the

(77) *Ibid.*, Ms. 1459, p.2.

(78) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.18.

(79) *Ibid.*, p.14.

(80) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. 1467, p.6.

(81) *Ibid.*

humid sub-tropical coast, Dunn experimented with a wide range of cash crops. He planted cotton and ten acres of coffee trees, both of which failed. Red sugar cane was introduced in the 1880s at Emoyeni but Dunn experienced indifferent success with the crop due largely to the disease rife in red cane at that time. However, sugar cane eventually became the most important cash crop of the Dunn Reserve and all of southern Zululand lying in the humid sub-tropical coastal belt. Dunn grew maize and sorghum (kaffir corn) on a large scale and stored the crops in large grain pits. Dunn pushed his clients to produce surplus maize in order to build up reserves in case of drought or crop failure. This was not always possible and Dunn was forced to import quantities of maize and rice from Natal when drought threatened his clients. A severe drought ravaged parts of Natal and much of Zululand in 1882 and hunger threatened the African population. Dunn's obligations as chief demanded that he provide relief for his people. He said of his efforts to secure foodstuffs: 'during the great scarcity of food last year I relieved those of the people who were in want by supplying them largely with mealies and rice at cost price in Natal; to the poor Natives, I gave mealies gratis'.⁽⁸²⁾

Cattle, however, remained the most valuable commodity kept by Dunn. He had nearly three thousand head when he crossed the Thukela into Natal on the eve of the Anglo-Zulu war.⁽⁸³⁾ The British army sold hundreds of confiscated royal cattle to Dunn at ridiculously low prices; his herds probably numbered around five to seven thousand in the 1880s. He naturally took an avid interest in stock-raising; cattle had lured clients and allowed his lineage to grow very fast, for he had plenty of cattle to offer as *lobola*. But Dunn fought a losing battle against stock diseases. The scourge of cattle populations throughout much of south-eastern Africa in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was lung sickness (bovine pleuroneumonia). The disease was carried into Zululand in the

(82) B.P.P., C.-3616, of 1883, Enclosure 3 in No. 69, p.145.
Osborn to Bulwer, 19 Mar. 1883.

(83) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.94-95.

1850s by infected trek oxen belonging to Natal traders.⁽⁸⁴⁾ Dunn managed to keep his herds from becoming infected by quarantining healthy beasts from diseased cattle and infected grazing areas. According to Dunn, the lungsickness epidemic of 1873-74 was a consequence of Cetshwayo's vanity. A month after his 1873 coronation Cetshwayo ordered a grand muster of all the cattle in the kingdom. Dunn estimated that one hundred thousand head passed in royal review. However, the mixing of healthy with diseased cattle spread lungsickness throughout the entire kingdom. Between thirty and fifty thousand cattle were estimated to have died - 'it was the death-blow to cattle breeding in Zululand' wrote Dunn:

Lungsickness had been, and was very busy with many of the herds collected, and mixing them up spread the disease all over the country, and judging from the number of hides that the traders carried from the country during the two following years, the number of cattle must have been reduced by half. So that Zululand, from being one of the richest, is now one of the poorest cattle countries in this part of South Africa.⁽⁸⁵⁾

Dunn's herds were little affected by the 'coronation epidemic' of 1873, mainly because Dunn's cattle were not present since they were owned by Dunn and exempt from the king's call-up. Yet lungsickness crept into his herds and by the 1890s it was a serious problem. In 1896, one year after Dunn's death, rinderpest swept through Zululand killing over two thousand head. The herds never recovered and it impoverished Dunn's descendants, for their inheritance was tied up solely in cattle.⁽⁸⁶⁾

Dunn's wealth and material power rested on his ability to exploit the natural and human resources of southern Zululand. His vigorous

(84) Colenbrander, 'Cetshwayo's Kingdom Under Stress', pp.11-15.

(85) Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.57-58.

(86) C. Ballard, 'The Dunn Reserve, 1895-1948': A Case Study of Segregation and Underdevelopment in a Reserved Land Category', *Journal of Southern African Affairs*, Vol. III, No. 4, Oct. 1978, pp.527-528.

recruitment of labour made migrant workers out of thousands of Tsonga and Zulu. As Protector of Immigrants Dunn was a pathfinder in establishing one of the earliest known migrant labour systems in South Africa. Eventually this system seriously disrupted the social and economic life of pre-capitalist northern Nguni societies. Dunn's relentless and highly organized slaughter of much of the wild animal population of southern Zululand impoverished the ecology and deprived the next generation of an invaluable commodity. Essentially, Dunn was an empire-builder. He had heady visions of developing a commercial network between his chiefdom and the Transvaal, where the gold mining industry was just beginning. In 1881 Dunn sought permission from the British authorities to build a harbour and railway line. The British Resident received the following appeal:

I beg you will intercede with His Excellency, the High Commissioner, to grant me permission to try and establish a landing-place or harbour on the sea-coast of my territory for vessels, for the purpose of establishing a trade, and eventually opening up a line of railway with the Transvaal. Also to sanction my making terms with other chiefs for railway transit through their respective territories.(87)

In 1881 the looming crisis with the boers in the Transvaal, and the generally unsettled political conditions in Zululand rendered Dunn's proposal inappropriate and untimely. Osborn advised Sir Evelyn Wood, the deputy High Commissioner, that Dunn's 'application should be for the present postponed, involving, as it does, a question of very serious importance which, if conceded now, might create complications which would have to be met in any arrangements which Her Majesty's government may find necessary to make respecting Zululand.'⁽⁸⁸⁾ The Colonial Office and the High Commissioner agreed with Osborn and Dunn's plan was rejected.

Dunn's attention to economic development and administrative detail begs an obvious question. What kind of ruler was John Dunn? The

(87) *B.P.P.*, C.-3616 of 1881, Enclosure 3 in No. 59, p.96.
Osborn to Wood, 8 Aug. 1881.

(88) *Ibid.*

Colensos, Ryder Haggard and the missionaries painted a negative picture. Dunn was caricatured as a ruthless opportunist who used his political power to despoil his African subjects and rule Dunnsland as a huge private estate. Unfortunately, the observations of Dunn's detractors have permeated the historical literature. Moreover, Dunn's critics have grossly distorted his administration; and it was the opinions of Frances Colenso and Ryder Haggard which have entered most historical works as fact.⁽⁸⁹⁾ With the exception of a significant Usuthu minority, Dunn commanded the loyalty and obedience of the majority of blacks in his post-war chiefdom. If Dunn's rule was oppressive then it appears most illogical that thousands of Africans chose voluntarily to settle in Dunn's chiefdom and accept his terms of submission. Dunn gained adherents who found life too harsh or oppressive in other parts of Natal, Zululand and the Delagoa bay hinterland. Africans who were either pursued, destitute or dissatisfied found refuge, food and new opportunities in Dunnsland. Moreover, Dunn did not have a reputation for cruelty or taking human life callously. Executions in Dunnsland were infrequent and Dunn's white administrators were never accused of abusing Africans.

The ten shilling hut-tax levy imposed by Dunn after 1879 was not excessive when compared to Hlubi, who charged fourteen shillings, or Hamu and Zibhebhu who demanded a cow from every male household head.⁽⁹⁰⁾ Dunn also prohibited the sale of liquor and spirits in his chiefdom, and fined transgressors fifty pounds if caught. A sympathetic Mitford praised Dunn for his philanthropic edict:

I emphatically assert that on the grounds of his proscription of the liquor traffic alone, John Dunn is entitled to the thanks of all true philanthropists, and whatever may be his shortcomings in other respects, this would go far towards whitewashing them... Therefore, in prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquor in his territory, John Dunn is acting as a wise and far-seeing ruler, and really doing more for the welfare of his people than by building a legion of schools and churches.⁽⁹¹⁾

(89) Haggard was of course greatly influenced in his thinking by Sir Theophilus Shepstone while serving on his staff in the Transvaal in 1877-78.

(90) *B.P.P.*, C.-2695 of 1880, Enclosure in No. 43, p.86. Osborn to Colley, 4 Aug. 1880.

(91) Mitford, *Through the Zulu Country*, pp.198-199.

There is no more appropriate testimony to the African character of Dunn's rule and the deep imprint he made on the historical development of Dunnsland and the Zulu kingdom than in the *izibongo* or Zulu praise poems recording the deeds and events of Dunn's life. Cope writes that 'Praises play an important part in Zulu social life...These praises are the expression of public opinion and provide an effective means of social control, for on occasion they are shouted out for all to hear'.⁽⁹²⁾ The king, royal princes and every important chief usually had a long collection of *izibongo* and one or more official praisers known as *imbongi*, (*izimbongi*, pl.). The *izimbongi* were professional praisers whose function it was to shout out the *izibongo* of the king or chief at large assemblies, such as feasts, weddings, court gatherings and military exercises.⁽⁹³⁾ Dunn's career, like that of other chiefs of high rank and influence, entered Zulu oral literature through the *izibongo*. Dunn had a number of praises composed about his life by the *izimbongi* located at his various homesteads. Domenic Dunn recalled that 'many old people of his time have died, and many of his praises are forgotten. Each area, Mangete, Emoyeni, Qwayinduku and Mtunzini had its own Bard'.⁽⁹⁴⁾ The fourteen lines of Dunn's *izibongo* preserved by Domenic Dunn are all that remain. Here they appear in Zulu with English translation:

1. *Ukhozi olunamaphiko*
Ukhozi oluhuba lungadli
Uphaphe oluphezu kwendlu ka Ngqumbazi
Usaba abantu njengezinkomo
5. *Umhlane obethi Zigqoza*
Umhlophe wakithi oshay' izinkomo zakwa Qwayinduku
Isilevi bathi sibomvu sinjengezinkomo zakwa Qwayinduku
Umbasa matsheni ngoba aphahle Luthuze Mlalazi
Umhlane wakoNtshingeni
10. *Unkomo zawela uThukela ziluphindelela*
Umhlane osunduza uSuthu noMandlakazi
Inkosi yakithi kwa Qwayinduku ondlebe zikhany' ilanga
Umabhala ngozihpo
Luhlanga olweq' amadoda eNdondakusuka

(92) Cope, *Izibongo*, p.21.

(93) *Ibid.*, pp.22 and 28.

(94) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. Dunn 2.09, Ms. 1467a, p.32.

1. The hawk with wings
The hawk that swoops but does not eat
The feather on top of Ngqumbazi's hut
Distributor of people like cattle
5. The back that bears/carries the Zigqoza
Our white one that drives the Qwayinduku cattle
The beard, they say it is red like the Qwayinduku cattle
He who lights fires amongst the stones, for they encircle
the Luthuze and Mlalazi rivers
10. The cattle that repeatedly crossed the Tugela river
The back that pushed the Usutu and the Mandlakazi
Our chief of Qwayinduku whose ears shine in the sun
He who writes with fingernails
The reed-buck that jumped over the heads of men
at Ndongakusuka.(95).

Dunn's *izimbongi* are a mixture of references to Dunn's relationships with the Usuthu and the Mandlakazi, and metaphoric descriptions of Dunn's activities and physical appearance. 'The back that pushed the Usuthu and the Mandlakazi' is a most historically significant line which credits Dunn for having figured prominently in advancing the political aspirations of first Cetshwayo's Usuthu and later the Mandlakazi. Dunn's association with Cetshwayo is apparent with Dunn described as 'the feather on top of Ngqumbazi's hut'. The feather in this instance symbolizes the influence that Dunn exercised over Cetshwayo, the son of Mpande's first wife, Ngqumbazi. The *izimbongi* also noted Dunn's colonization of the region with African clients by calling him 'Distributor of people like cattle'.⁽⁹⁶⁾ Dunn shared a common praise with all white men who had *izibongo*-like *Mbuyazi* (Henry Francis Fynn) and *Somtsewu* (Theophilus Shepstone),⁽⁹⁷⁾ Dunn had 'ears that shine in the sun'.⁽⁹⁸⁾

The historical development of Dunsland can trace its origins to two main sources, one rooted in the wider history of events in Zululand and the other in the ambitions of John Dunn. Southern Zululand was

(95) *Ibid.*

(96) *Ibid.*

(97) Cope, *Izibongo*, pp.192 and 198. Cope says that 'To an African, one of the characteristics of a white man is the way in which his ears seem to shine in the sun'.

(98) D.D.P., (K.C.L.), Ms. Dunn 2.09, Ms. 1467a, p.32.

not immune from the political upheaval and economic disruption of the 1856 civil war and the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879. However, Dunnsland also bore the stamp of its creator's personal rule. This is attested to in the pattern of African colonization which Dunn invited and attempted to control and exploit to his benefit. Post-war Dunnsland emerged twice as large territorially as its pre-war predecessor; but the artificial boundaries incorporated a mixture of mutually incompatible peoples. This contributed to the political tension and conflict that characterized Zululand after 1879.

CONCLUSION

An interpretation of John Dunn's career in Natal and Zululand hinges on an analysis of the frontier environment in which he lived. For the purposes of this thesis Legassick's definition of a 'frontier zone' is adequate for explaining the historical development of pre-colonial Natal from the beginnings of white settlement in 1824. The 'mutual acculturation' of both European and African took place rapidly. Economic necessity and security prompted the English traders to accept the political authority of the Zulu Kings, Shaka and Dingane. The traders took African wives and ruled their black clients at Port Natal by northern Nguni routines. These black clients quickly learned to use firearms, ploughs, horses and other items or methods attributable to western European technology. Few in number and living beyond the boundaries of British authority and European culture, the Port Natal traders were particularly susceptible to the process of acculturation. Between 1824 and 1837 a majority of the white traders had been greatly influenced or partially absorbed by the dominant African culture. John Dunn was spawned on the Natal frontier. His attitudes and perceptions of society were rooted in the environment characteristic of a 'frontier zone'.

MacCrone's 'liberal' interpretation of a frontier has little or no validity for Natal. His definition lacks a universality for it was constructed to apply only to the trek-boers operating in the northern Cape. From 1824 to 1837 Natal was almost exclusively an English hunter-traders' frontier. This is a distinct point of departure from the works of MacCrone and Legassick who have dealt primarily with trekker communities. The white traders behaved and developed in a manner that was diametrically opposite to MacCrone's contention that black-white conflict, exaggerated group consciousness and race prejudice characterized white societies on the frontier.

The history of the Port Natal trading settlement for the first twelve years of its existence could be described as a period of political co-operation, social integration and mutual acculturation between whites and Africans. The traders expediently shed impractical metropolitan conventions and adopted routines common to the northern Nguni societies of the region. The entire political and social structure of pre-colonial Port Natal was distinctly African rather than metropolitan in character. Neither does the Port trading community of the pre-colonial period provide an appropriate frontier model to explain twentieth century racial attitudes among either the English or Afrikaner elements of South Africa's white population.

Legassick's frontier thesis has a flexibility that makes it more universally applicable to frontier communities composed of English and Dutch-speaking whites. Natal was a complex frontier zone due to penetration from English traders followed thirteen years later by boer pastoralists. The trekker contribution to frontier Natal was vastly different from that of the English traders. A theme of conflict instead of co-operation prevailed in boer-African relations. The trekboers demand for large tracts of grazing lands brought them into a violent confrontation with the Zulu kingdom - also a nation of pastoralists and cultivators. The bloody contest between Dingane and the boers for control of Natal was soon followed by further violence, raiding and the displacement of nearly one hundred thousand Africans from the Natal midlands southward to the unstable frontiers of the eastern Cape. The trekboer interlude generated the political instability in Natal which threatened the perceived interests of the British imperial power in the Cape Colony. Thus, Britain annexed Natal, restored political stability and the frontier officially closed.

The concept of a 'frontier zone' is a useful analytical tool in explaining how white communities can be culturally 'conditioned' by a frontier environment. A logical accompaniment to the idea of a frontier zone is that of the 'transfrontiersman'. This allows for a more precise analysis of the behavioral responses of individuals

living in a frontier situation where alien, in this case African, cultural influences predominate. A study of Dunn's career yields more than a biography of yet another neglected figure in South African historical literature. Dunn is unique in the sense that his lifestyle can be identified with the cultural stereotype of a 'transfrontiersman'.⁽¹⁾ Dunn's life provides the historian with an excellent case-study of a white frontiersman who voluntarily substituted African cultural practices in place of those found in white colonial or metropolitan societies. His perceptions were fashioned by a frontier environment. By adolescence Dunn was so thoroughly attuned to northern Nguni values that he became alienated from the emergent colonial society - a society that increasingly inhibited and restrained the social mobility and attendant black-white interaction that had existed in Natal's frontier phase.

Dunn resolved this dilemma by moving beyond the boundaries of imperial control to the Zulu kingdom; there he found surroundings and circumstances that were similar to his earlier frontier life. And Dunn was virtually absorbed into the Zulu social system. His domestic, political and economic routines were essentially African in character and practice. The rich documentation available on Dunn's life in Zululand also provides a substantial case-study of the manner in which a Zulu chief ruled his district and its inhabitants in the period before and immediately after the Zulu lost their independence in 1879. Although a white man, Dunn was a member of the Zulu ruling class and a powerful figure in the Zulu political economy. A microscopic examination of Dunn as an African chief adds a revealing aspect to the macrocosm of the entire Zulu political structure in the nineteenth century.

The contrast between frontier mobility and the rigid conventions of an expanding colonial polity was an inherent feature of Dunn's life. While Dunn may have subscribed to Zulu customs, particularly marriage

(1) A. and B. Isaacman, 'Prazeros as Transfrontiersmen', p.2.

and chiefly rule, he still maintained a veneer of European culture. He dressed as a European and took great pains to portray himself to whites as a colonial squire who ruled over Africans. Dunn had all the material trappings associated with a semi-feudal lord; carriages, liverymen, hounds and a mounted escort. Yet, these superficial symbols of the colonial upper-middle class tend to blur Dunn's true cultural predilections which were fundamentally African.

However, John Dunn was a remarkably agile opportunist who used his influence in Zululand to extract economic concessions from the Natal colonial community. At Dunn's instigation, King Cetshwayo bullied Theophilus Shepstone into granting Dunn the Tsonga Labour agency in 1873. This concession and the additional capitation and transport fees garnered from colonial entrepreneurs yielded Dunn thousands of pounds from 1873 to 1878 and 1880 to 1883. Dunn made a larger fortune in the firearms trade through collusion with Durban merchants who re-exported guns to Zululand through Dunn's agents at Lourenco Marques. Dunn's connections with colonial Natal were primarily political and economic; they were characterized by expedience and calculated to enhance his wealth and to further entrench his position in Zululand.

The frontier environment also coloured Dunn's response to the agents of white intrusion into Zululand. The expansive designs of imperial officials, Natal colonists and missionaries threatened to erode Dunn's privileged position in the Zulu political economy. The pressures that emanated from white society forced Dunn to either co-operate, compromise or attack these agencies of white expansion in order to check their advance into his spheres of influence. Britain's confederation policy in South Africa was patently harmful to Dunn's interests in Zululand for it would extend imperial control and colonial rule into his district thus denying him much of the social freedom, political power and economic advantages that he enjoyed by virtue of his position as ruler of a semi-autonomous African chiefdom. Shepstone and Frere were the architects of British aggression in Zululand; they

certainly saw Dunn as an obstacle to confederation, and his strong affiliations with the Zulu social system grated their Victorian sensibilities to the point of contempt and revulsion.

The Anglo-Zulu war was the supreme crisis in Dunn's life. He desperately desired to remain neutral; this alone reflects the dilemma of the transfrontiersman who is caught up in conflict between the two distinct cultures from which he developed. Dunn saw British aggression wholly in terms of Shepstone's designs to win Transvaal support for annexation at the expense of Zulu independence. While Dunn's sympathies lay with the Zulu he realized that Britain's material resources and superior military technology would be the deciding factors in any armed contest with the Zulu kingdom. Dunn forsook his neutrality and joined the British invasion when Chelmsford threatened to confiscate his property in Zululand and bar him from returning to his chiefdom. Although Dunn regained the favour of the British authorities through his services in the British army during the Zululand campaign, imperial pressure on his position was re-applied by Wolseley. Dunn was literally drafted into Wolseley's scheme for the indirect British rule of post-war Zululand. Dunn managed to not only retain but to enhance his position as a Zulu chief in the post-war political economy through collaboration with the British imperial government.

Zululand, from the time of the Ulundi settlement in 1878 until British annexation in 1887 can be described as a zone of severe political instability within a sphere of nominal imperial influence. The initial military setbacks in Zululand coupled with the loss of the Transvaal to confederation and the boer victory over imperial troops at Majuba in 1881, forced both the Tory and Liberal governments in Britain to refrain from any scheme for annexing Zululand and bringing it under a colonial administration. Thus the Ulundi settlement, in which Dunn and Wolseley played major roles, was seen as the only solution to maintaining British paramountcy without the

added financial and military responsibilities that direct rule of Zululand would entail. The Ulundi settlement must bear the major responsibility for creating the political climate that led to a bloody civil war.

Through the Ulundi settlement Wolseley and Dunn attempted to purge Cetshwayo and his Usuthu party from the ruling class, thereby minimizing the influence of the 'traditional' pre-war order over the Zulu people. The thirteen chiefs appointed by Wolseley represented a new political elite that would find its collective interests best served by co-operating with the British government and in suppressing any Usuthu movement for a restoration of Cetshwayo.

However, the placing of members of the Zulu royal family and the Usuthu under the authority of the appointed chiefs was a sure formula for factional tension and civil strife among the Zulu. The fiercest opposition to the Usuthu-inspired restoration campaign came from an alliance of Dunn, Zibhebhu and Hamu, the three appointed chiefs who had the most to lose from Cetshwayo's restoration. External forces outside Zululand completed the general scenario of political turbulence. British humanitarians, ably led by the Colensos, championed Cetshwayo's restoration; Natal officials and settlers opposed the ex-King's return and placed political obstructions in the path of the Usuthu party; white filibusters and mercenaries found ready employment with Dunn and Zibhebhu. The demise of Zulu national unity in the Zulu civil war and the suffering and economic distress endured by the Zulu people owed much to the nature and intensions of the Ulundi settlement.

Ironically, the post-war settlement produced the opposite results that Wolseley and Dunn had intended; first, the settlement had no firm basis or consensus of support in Zululand. The Usuthu and other royal sympathizers were unreconciled to accepting the appointed chiefs as

their political superiors; second, Natal colonial officials, settlers and missionaries loudly condemned the settlement for it did not further their interests in Zululand; last, the Ulundi settlement became so untenable for a British government to maintain that it was terminated in January 1883 with Cetshwayo's reinstatement as King. But, the damage done to the Zulu political economy by the Ulundi Treaty was irretrievable and led to civil war in 1883-84 and eventually the British annexation of Zululand in 1887. In a sense John Dunn was a 'victim' of his own creation. The Ulundi settlement proved to be the final undoing of Dunn's pre-eminent position in Zulu affairs.

Perhaps there is no more substantial reflection of Dunn's transfrontier ethos than his desire to move from the Zululand Reserve and establish a new chiefdom among the Tsonga peoples around St. Lucia Bay. When Dunnsland became incorporated into the Reserve territory in January of 1883 Dunn was stripped of his authority and was allowed to retain only limited control over the immediate vicinity surrounding his Mangete, Emoyeni and Qwayinduku homesteads. Dunn also lost the privilege of collecting hut-taxes from his clients; the Resident Commissioner, Osborn, received all the hut-tax money from the Reserve and the proceeds were used to defray the costs of the Resident Commissioner and his administration. Dunn chafed at the restrictions placed on his political and economic privileges by the British government after 1883.⁽²⁾ The constraints of the emerging colonial order in Zululand had destroyed much of the mobility and political flexibility that Dunn had enjoyed in pre-colonial Natal and Zululand. His response to encroaching colonial rule was always to move beyond the bounds of white colonial authority into African territories.

Dunn saw an opportunity to leave the Zululand reserve in 1885 when a Tsonga chief, Umgongobali, died. Dunn had recruited migrant labourers from Umgongobali's subjects for which the chief received gifts of trade goods

(2) Shields, 'Life of John Dunn', pp.93-94.

and cattle from Dunn. Before his death Umgongobali had promised Dunn the chieftainship of his territory in preference to his son Sibonda. This was confirmed by Sibonda. Dunn, alive to the political significance of this development, requested the Resident Commissioner in July 1886 to have Umgongobali's chiefdom annexed, and himself to be appointed chief with the same powers and privileges that he had held under the terms of the Ulundi settlement. The Governor of Natal, Sir Arthur Havelock, rejected the suggestion on the grounds that Dunn was a British subject and therefore not entitled to assume what amounted to sovereign authority over the St. Lucia Bay region. In 1888 the territories under chiefs Sibonda and Mcamana were annexed to Britain and became known as the Lebomba district of Zululand.⁽³⁾

After this abortive attempt to carve out a new chiefdom Dunn washed his hands of all involvement with the British government. He retired to Mangete in 1888 and spun out his last years as a farmer and cattleman. His eyesight had begun to fail in 1894. After a brief three-month illness John Dunn died, aged sixty-five, of dropsy and heart disease at Mangete on 5 August 1895.⁽⁴⁾

(3) *Ibid.*, pp.95-98.

(4) *Natal Mercury*, 7 Aug. 1895.

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- (i) Records of the Colony of Natal. In the Pietermaritzburg Depot of the South African Archives

Colonial Secretary's Office. This collection of correspondence and reports between the Colonial Secretary of Natal and a host of lower-echelon officials sheds much light on Dunn's activities in Zululand. Particularly useful were Special Border Agents Reports for the Anglo-Zulu War period of 1879-80 contained in C.S.O. 1925, 1926 and 1927.

Executive Council, Minutes of Meetings with Annexures. Contains only a few references to Dunn and Dunn's parents.

Government House Papers. This collection is rather barren of material on Dunn or, otherwise, contains abbreviated versions of correspondence regarding Dunn that were passed on from other official departments, notably the Secretary for Native Affairs.

Secretary for Native Affairs Papers. This is one of the richest mines of information concerning Dunn's career. It is this collection of correspondence that reveals Dunn's connection with Theophilus Shepstone regarding labour recruitment, Dunn's trading activities and his relations with Cetshwayo.

Surveyor General's Office. Contains only a few references pertaining to the extent and disposition of Robert Dunn's estate of 'Sea View' in the late 1840s.

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The Zululand Archives provide much documentation on the role played by highly placed Natal Colonial Officials and the British Resident for Zululand for the period 1879-1884.

(b) Unofficial

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Colenso Papers. The bulk of material in this collection is primarily concerned with the activities of Bishop Colenso's daughters, Harriette and Frances; there is little new information that concerns Dunn.

Natal Land and Colonisation Company Papers and Records. Contains a few references to Dunn's role as mediator when the Company attempted to obtain a large tract of land from Cetshwayo in 1860-61.

Theophilus Shepstone Collection. This collection of correspondence has several important letters between Dunn and Shepstone concerning the recruitment of migrant labour in the 1860s and 1870s.

II PRINTED PRIMARY SOURCES

(a) Official

- (i) Colonial Office Confidential Prints. C.O. 879 series. In the Public Record Office. This series of official Colonial Office documents and correspondence is the most valuable single body of information concerning Dunn's career. Between 1873 and 1883 Dunn's involvement in a number of activities in Natal and Zululand were elaborated upon by highly placed Colonial Office officials. Dunn's pre-eminent role in the firearms trade to Zululand in the 1870s sparked an investigation by Lord Carnarvon and his successor Hicks Beach. The lengthy probe netted detailed reports on the entire arms trade operation from British consular officials in Portuguese Mozambique and from the Lieutenant Governor, the Secretary for Native Affairs, and the Attorney General of Natal.

The C.O. 879 series also reveals the confidence that Sir Garnet Wolseley reposed in Dunn and the controversy surrounding Dunn's appointment as one of the thirteen chieftains to rule post-war Zululand. The unpopularity of the Ulundi settlement in general, and Dunn in particular, among Natal officials, colonists and missionaries is also richly documented for the period 1879-1883. The volumes consulted in this series are as follows:

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| C.O. 879/14/158 | Transvaal-Zulu Boundary; Papers and Report of Committee. |
| 879/14/161 | Trade in arms, South and East Africa, and proposed commercial arrangements with Portugal. |
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- 879/19/247 Lord Kimberley's interviews with Cetewayo.
- 879/19/248 Restoration of Cetewayo; Terms of.

(ii) British Parliamentary Papers

This collection contains valuable information regarding official metropolitan and Natal government policy toward Zululand. Dunn's name is prominent in these records from 1873 until 1883. His activities as Protector of Immigrants, as advisor to King Cetshwayo, as purveyor of firearms and as Chief in post-war Zululand were discussed in some detail by various Colonial and Metropolitan officials. The volumes consulted include:

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- 1880, LIII, C.-2505 Further correspondence respecting the affairs of South Africa.
- 1880, LIII, C.-2695 Further correspondence respecting the affairs of South Africa.
- 1880, Despatch No. 49 Report of the Zululand Boundary Commission.
- 1882, LV, C.-3182 Correspondence relating to the affairs of Natal and Zululand.
- 1882, LV, C.-3247 Correspondence respecting the affair of Zululand.
- 1882, LV, C.-3270 Further correspondence respecting the affairs of Zululand.
- 1883, LV, C.-3616 Further correspondence respecting the affairs of Zululand and Cetywayo.
- 1884, LVI, C.-4037 Further correspondence respecting the affairs of Zululand and adjacent territories.

(ii) Records and Reports of the Colony of Natal.
In the Pietermaritzburg Depot of the South African Archives.

This collection of official publications provided that essential statistical data related to facts of the political economy of Natal and Zululand in which Dunn was either directly or indirectly implicated. The findings of the several Natal Colonial Government Commissions concerning the problems surrounding the exploitation of Indian and African migratory labourers serve to explain Dunn's role as labour recruiter in the Delagoa Bay hinterland. Sessional Papers, and Government Notices provide the precise period and time when official policies and laws were introduced. Statistics of specific export commodities from Natal from 1850 until the early 1880s are most useful for determining the trading patterns and economic conditions that affected Dunn's fortunes in Natal and Zululand. Each of the following official publications contributed vital information:

Blue Book of the Colony of Natal, Statistical Year Book and Departmental Reports.

Debates of the Legislative Council.

Laws of the Colony of Natal.

Natal Government Gazette.

Government Notices and Proclamations.

Sessional Papers of the Legislative Council.

Selected Documents presented to the Legislative Council.

Proceedings and Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Past and Present State of the Kafirs in the District of Natal, and to Report upon their Future Government, and to Suggest such Arrangements as will tend to Secure the Peace and Welfare of the District, 1852-53.

Report of Commission on the condition of Indian Immigrants in Natal, 1872.

Report of the Natal Native Commission, 1881-2.

Zululand Blue Book.

(b) Unofficial

(i) Newspapers

The most important newspapers dealing with Dunn's career were those located in Durban and Pietermaritzburg, particularly the *Natal Witness* and the *Natal Mercury*. The Natal Colonial Press was almost totally unanimous in its criticism and condemnation of Dunn especially during the period immediately following the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879. Most of the newspapers consulted were invaluable in gauging colonial settler and missionary opinions and attitudes towards Dunn:

Commercial Advertiser, Durban.

Daily News, Durban.

Grahamstown Journal, Grahamstown.

Illustrated London News, London.

Natal Colonist, Durban.

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Times, London.

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Bishop Colenso used this publication to condemn Sir Bartle Frere and the British Government for instigating an 'unjust' war with the Zulu kingdom. Dunn comes in for a good deal of scathing criticism from the Bishop over his 'defection' from Cetshwayo and his polygamous unions with African women. Bishop Colenso makes no attempt to hide his contempt and revulsion for Dunn.

Colenso, J.W., *The Course of Political Events in Zululand from October 1881 to June 1882*, (Bishopstowe: Magera, 1883).

The Bishop used this publication to illustrate the failure of the Ulundi Settlement and to put forward a case for the restoration of Cetshwayo as King.

Moodie, D.C.F., (ed.), *John Dunn, Cetshwayo and the Three Generals*, (Pietermaritzburg: Natal Printing and Publishing Co., 1886)

John Dunn's autobiography is lacking in the detail required by an historian or biographer. Dunn was vague about dates and chronology on notable points in which he was involved. He offers no comment on his domestic establishment. Although opposed to Cetshwayo's restoration Dunn, nevertheless, expressed sympathy for his benefactor and blames the Imperial Government and Theophilus Shepstone in particular for destroying the Zulu kingdom in a war that he felt to be unjust and unnecessary. Dunn's efforts to portray the pre-war Zulu kingdom as a nation that was not wholly unified behind the King but ruled by a number of powerful chiefs mutually suspicious and antagonistic toward each other must be treated with some circumspection. Dunn wrote his autobiography in 1886, several years after the Anglo-Zulu war and the Zulu Civil War of 1883-84; it was conceivably in his own interests to portray the Zulu kingdom as divided by factionalism in order to justify his previous position as chief of a politically fragmented kingdom during the period when the Ulundi Settlement was in operation. However, this autobiography, despite its limitations, is valuable for it reflects Dunn's bias and opinion on a number of important events in the history of the Zulu kingdom.

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Dr. Bleek's diary offers a thoughtful commentary on the lifestyle of early Natal settlers and descriptions of the physical environment.

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APPENDIX 1

John Dunn's letter to the Aborigines Protection Society, 1877.

Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.68-70.

To the Aborigines Protection Society:

I beg to write, for the information of your Honourable Society, and state that I am an Englishman by birth, and have been a resident of the Zulu country, and living amongst the Zulus, for the last twenty years, and I can confidently say that there is no whiteman in this part of Africa so fitted to judge of their feelings towards the English race as I am.

I would not now address your honourable Society if it were not that I have noticed a very strong, wrong, and arbitrary feeling gaining ground against the Zulu nation on the side of the white population in this part of South Africa. A strong feeling of colour and jealousy I cannot understand, unless it is on account of the independency of the Zulu race, a feeling taken up without any just cause, and that feeling is now on the verge of breaking out on the pretext of a false claim of land boundary, a claim pretended to being upheld for the Dutch Boers, who are no friends of the English race, and are well known in this part of South Africa for their encroaching propensities, on any land belonging to the natives of this country, to evade English laws, on the pretext of getting permission to graze cattle, on the grass becoming scarce upon their own farms, and afterwards claiming the land. A claim in which the Natal Government have always upheld the Zulus, and now, since the annexation of the Transvaal (in 1877), the head of the Government there, who professed to side with the Zulus whilst he was in Natal, has now turned round and claimed for the Dutch a country thickly inhabited by the Zulus.

I write this for the information of your honourable Society, in the hope that you will try and put a stop to proceedings which will, if carried out, be the cause of bloodshed in an unjust case, as I can assure you that nothing but the grossest acts of encroachment and oppression will cause the Zulus to take up arms against the English race, who wish to live at peace with them, not being ripe enough for civilisation or civilised laws.

The standard rule that is gone by against the black race in this part of South Africa is the Amaxosa, or Cape Frontier Kafir, who is not to be compared to the Zulu, nothing but forced Christianity or civilisation will spoil the Zulus, and the class of foreign Missionaries we have in the country does more injury than good to them. Let them say what they like in their reports to the Societies, they make no convert to their faith, besides the pretended ones or vagabonds, who imagine that by being clothed and under the garb of Christianity they will be exempt from all King's service and laws of the country, and be allowed to roam about and do as they please.

The Zulu nation, judiciously dealt with, would remain a firm ally and friend to the English, and it would be a shame for any false notions of power on the English side to take advantage of such power, and destroy the Zulu race, which would undoubtedly be the case if they were overthrown, they would then become a lot of bold rogues, and eventually give much trouble.

One of the most unfair features in the case is this, that the head of the Transvaal Government (Sir T. Shepstone) has always advised Cetywayo to remain quiet, and not to go to war with the Boers in disputing the boundary, promising to see him righted, when, if it had been left to the Zulus and Boers themselves, I am sure the Boers would have got the worst of it. He now turns round, and is prepared to fight himself, when he knows he is only too well backed up by England for the Dutch, England not knowing the real facts.

The Zulu acknowledge no individual title to land, permission only being given to squat, the land being looked on as belonging to the squatter only so long as he occupies it.

APPENDIX 2

A true copy of the Deed of Chieftainship, signed by John Dunn, as stipulated in the Ulundi Settlement, 1 September 1879.

Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.120-123.

I recognise the victory of British arms over the Zulu nation and the full right and title of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, Queen of England and Empress of India, to deal as she may think fit with the Zulu Chiefs and people, and with the Zulu country, and I agree, and I hereby signify my agreement to accept from Gernal Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., as the Representative of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, the Chieftainship of a territory of Zululand to be known hereafter as

JOHN DUNN'S TERRITORY,

subject to the following terms, conditions, and limitations:-

Terms, conditions, and limitations laid down by General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., and assented to by me, JOHN DUNN, Chief, as the terms, conditions, and limitations, subject to which I agree to accept the Chieftainship of the aforesaid territory:-

1. I will observe and respect whatever boundaries shall be assigned to my territory by the British Government, through the Resident of the Division in which my territory is situated.
2. I will not permit the existence of the Zulu Military System, or the existence of any military system or organisation whatever within my territory, and I will proclaim and make it a rule that all men shall be allowed to marry when they choose, and as they choose, according to the good and ancient customs of my people, known and followed in the days preceding the establishment by Tshaka of the

system known as the military system, and I will allow and encourage all men living within my territory to go and come

- dispute with any Chief or people, I will appeal to the arbitration of the British Government through the Resident of the Division in which my territory is situated.
7. The succession to the Chieftainship of my territory shall be according to the ancient laws and customs of my people, and the nomination of each successor shall be subject to the approval of the British Government.
 8. I will not sell or in any way alienate, or permit, or countenance any sale or alienation of any part of the land in my territory.
 9. I will permit all people now residing within my territory to there remain upon the condition that they recognise my authority as Chief, and any person not wishing to recognise my authority as Chief, and desirous to quit my territory, I will permit to quit it, and to pass unmolested elsewhere.
 10. In all cases of dispute in which British subjects are involved I will appeal to and abide by the decision of the British Resident of the Division in which my territory is situated, and in all cases where accusations of offences or crimes committed in my territory, are brought against British subjects or against my people in relation to British subjects, I will hold no trial, and pass no sentence, but with the approval of such British Resident.
 11. In all matters not included within these terms, conditions, and limitations, and for all cases unprovided for herein, and in all cases where there may be doubt and uncertainty as to the laws, rules, or stipulations, applicable to matters to be dealt with, I will govern, order and decide in accordance with the ancient laws of usage of my people.

These terms, conditions and limitations, I engage, and solemnly pledge my faith to abide by and respect in letter and in spirit, without qualification or reserve.

Signed at Ulundi on this 1st day of September, 1879.

(Signed) J.R. DUNN

(Signed) G.J. Wolseley

General Commanding Forces in South Africa,
and H.M. High Commissioner for South Africa.

APPENDIX 3

Letter from the exiled king, Cetshwayo ka Mpande, to John Dunn
29 October 1880.

Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, pp.107-108.

The Castle, Cape Town, 29th October, 1880.

From Cetywayo to John Dunn, Zululand.

I send you greetings, and wish to tell you that I am in good health, and am well cared for, and that those who are looking after my wants are friendly and kind to me. They are the General (Clifford) the Colonel Commandant (Hussars) the Major (Poole) and Longcast. (The latter was the interpreter attached to Cetywayo's Staff. - Ed.). I have suffered from rheumatism two or three times, but am quite well now. The doctors have been very kind and attentive to me, especially Drs. Cross and Bushe.

All my people who are with me are well. They are Umkosana, Umtshingwayo, Umtigeza, Nozixobo, Xenisele, Puwase, Umpansi, and Uncebeza.

Umsinda was sent away a week or two ago for misconduct. He was insolent to me, and the Major punished him and got him sent away.

Why have you, John Dunn, forgotten me? If not, why do you not send me news of my family? I should be grateful if you would so so. I hope you are kind to my family, and enquire after them. I trust you do this in return for many kindnesses you have received from me in years past.

I do not name the people I wish you to ask and report to me about, as you know all my family well, and know who I would like to hear of.

Please send a message to Mahwanqna to say his daughter Umpansi has been ill, but is now getting better - her chest was wrong - an old complaint.

I was very grieved to hear of the death of Gausi and Umfusi. Pray send messages to their tribes to say I condole with them.

The General has given me photographs of Maduna and Uziwetu, and the people who went with them to Natal. I recognise all the faces. You must remember me to them, and also to Dabulamanzi and Shingana.

I send you three photographs of myself. They were taken since my arrival in Cape Town.

I send this by Captain Baynton, who goes to Natal from here today.

CETYWAYO.

(This letter was signed by Cetywayo's own hand, in capitals that the Major had taught him to print. - Ed.)

APPENDIX 4

Letter from John Dunn to the Colonial Office offering suggestions for better rule, 21 February 1881.

B.P.P., C.-3182 of 1881, Enclosure No. 13, pp.22-25.

Proposition from Chief John Dunn to make the Zulu Country Self-Supporting.

February 21, 1881.

1. That all the Native Chiefs to whom territories have been assigned should have two white administrators of Zulu law, men that thoroughly understand the language and customs of the Zulus.
2. That all Chiefs be authorised to levy a tax of 10s. a hut on all people under them, and out of such tax to pay to the British Resident the sum of 500L. a year; this amount to be used for the purpose of covering any charge or expense in the administration of the country, the said Administrators to be under appeal to the Chiefs in any case between Zulu and Zulu, and to the British Resident in any case between British subject and Zulu.
3. The Chiefs be advised to repair roads, and allowed to put a toll on any road kept in repair.
4. That a scheme of immigration be introduced, each immigrant to make his own terms with the Chief with the approval of the British Resident or his Agent, each immigrant to pay to the Chief the sum of 25L. a year as rent, in advance.
That such immigration be solely for the purpose of agriculture, stock farming, or pursuits of industry.
5. That they introduce no spirits for the purpose of sale, or barter, or giving away with the purpose of gaining a benefit, and to be liable to a fine of not less than 50L. on conviction

and any Chief conniving in any such sale or giving away to any of his subjects, to be liable to a fine by the Resident, this law to be applied to both white and black residents of the Zulu country.

I write this as a Chief of the country, and feel confident that at the present time nearly the whole of the Chiefs would gladly agree to these terms, if properly explained to them, and so make the country self-supporting.

Out of the taxes the Chiefs should be advised to give a grant of at least 50L. a year in aid of a school for the purpose of teaching both the Zulu and English languages and arts of industry, and a site of at least 25 acres of land for such purpose.

These propositions I make for the benefit of the whole of the country, having already taken upon myself, with the sanction of the British Resident, mostly all these conditions, with the exception of immigration and charging toll, and find that the working of my territory is satisfactory. I have three white administrators of native law, my territory being the largest.

(Signed)

J. Dunn
Chief.

APPENDIX 5

Letter from Major General, Sir Garnet Wolseley, to the Colonial Secretary, the Earl of Derby, 31 January 1883.

Moodie (ed.), *Three Generals*, p.125.

Horse Guards War Office,
31st January, 1883.

The Right Hon. The Earl of Derby,
&c., &c.,
Colonial Office.

My Lord, - I have the honour to forward you the enclosed letter and paper from Mr. John Dunn, whom I understand has lately been deprived of his position as Chief in Zululand by order of Her Majesty's Government.

From the terms of his letter I presume he wishes me to lay it before you.

I feel bound to state that Mr. Dunn would not have accepted the position of Chief had I not, as Her Majesty's High Commissioner, given him a promise in the name of the Government of England that under no circumstances should Cetywayo be ever allowed to return to Zululand - a promise approved of by the Government of the day, as your Lordship will learn from a perusal of the correspondence that took place between me and the Colonial Office in 1879-80, on the subject of the Settlement of Zululand.

Mr. Dunn did not ask to be made a Chief - he was made so because it was believed that his acceptance of that position would further the South African policy of Her Majesty's Government at the time, and would

conduce to the benefit of Natal, as well as those over whom he was placed as ruler.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient Servant

(Signed) WOLSELEY.

VITA

NAME: Charles Cameron Ballard

PLACE AND YEAR OF BIRTH: Luray, Virginia, U.S.A., 1950.

EDUCATION: Page County High School, Virginia, 1964-68.
James Madison University, Virginia, 1968-72.
B.A. (History), 1972; James Madison University,
Virginia, 1972-73.
M.A. (History), 1973

EXPERIENCE: Lecturer in History, University of Natal,
Durban, 1977-80.

AWARDS: Masters Degree Scholarship, James Madison University,
1972-73.
Human Sciences Research Council Grant, (Ph.D),
University of Natal, Durban, 1979.