

THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE MISSIONARIES  
OF THE CAPE EASTERN FRONTIER AND THE  
COLONIAL AUTHORITIES IN THE ERA OF  
SIR GEORGE GREY, 1854 - 1861.

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Finally, in compliance with the regulations of the University of Natal, I declare that this whole thesis, unless specifically stated to the contrary in the text, is my own original work.

ABSTRACT

In the work of radical historians and in Xhosa tradition the Cattle Killing has become the supreme example of the deliberately destructive impact of a colonial governor, helped by missionaries, on the Black peoples of the eastern frontier of the Cape. This figure of controversy, Sir George Grey, was Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner from 1854-1861. As a civilian, he sought to pacify the Xhosa through 'civilization' and education. To do this he enlisted the help of the frontier missionaries, who themselves desired a stable Xhosa society to aid their work. The result, it has been alleged, was the final demise of effective Xhosa resistance to the encroachment of imperial forces and white settler society.

By the early 1850s the work of the missionaries on the frontier was at an all-time low. And so they certainly did hope that Grey's plans, of which the extension of education was part, would provide a long-sought breakthrough for them. But this, in turn, has led to the accusation that the missionaries acted merely as mercenary imperial agents and as a 'collaborating group'

for the extension of colonial authority over the Xhosa, rather than for the benefit of their would-be converts. Because of the nature of the allegations, it seemed a significant historical exercise to investigate more closely the nature and extent of the links which the missionaries did in fact forge with Sir George Grey.

It must be admitted that Grey's frontier plans, together with the steady erosion of traditional society over the years, economic distress in the mid-1850s, and the Cattle Killing dealt a death-blow to effective Xhosa resistance to colonial encroachment. Radical historians have blamed Grey and the missionaries of deliberately engineering the Cattle Killing for their own Machiavellian purposes. There is not enough evidence to convict Grey on this charge, but certainly his actions, or lack of them, during the crisis suggest that once the Cattle Killing had started he deliberately allowed it to develop to the point where the Xhosa could be more easily subordinated. It can not, with any justification, be said that the missionaries had a part either in instigating or maintaining the crisis,

though they were not slow to hope for some advantage from it in the shape of a more receptive Xhosa nation driven by adversity to 'humble themselves before God' and accept conversion.

The Xhosa were deeply divided over Nongqawuse's prophecy - which was a fact that tended to work very much to Grey's advantage. He also used the crisis to break the chiefs who survived the disaster and to evict Sarhili from his ancestral land in Kaffraria Proper. On what seems to have been fabricated evidence, Grey accused Sarhili, together with Moshoe-shoe, of plotting the Cattle Killing to force the Xhosa into war with the Colony. Far from this being the case, the Cattle Killing should rather be regarded both as a millenarian movement and as a feature of a so-called 'closing' frontier.

Grey had hoped to use the crisis to extend his 'civilizing' plans to Kaffraria Proper; but though his expulsion of Sarhili to beyond the Mbashe River prepared the way, he did not receive official sanction to go ahead with his plans. This, together with other setbacks to his plans, may well have led Grey to accept a transfer to New Zealand in 1861, sooner

than had been expected.

It has been suggested that the Cattle Killing resulted in an unprecedented advance by the missionaries, but detailed investigation of their records has shown this to be untrue. The influence attributed to the missionaries has, thus, been somewhat overrated and their links with Grey, who was essentially a man of independent and arbitrary action, exaggerated.

Although their converts were few, missionaries did, however, foster far-reaching changes in traditional society. One of the most notable was the growth of peasant communities around the stations, which supplied a viable alternative to wage labour in the pre-capitalist colonial society. They also contributed to the stratification of Xhosa society and to the creation of an educated élite which would become leaders in a new industrial situation of contracting options.

Grey was Governor at a time when the frontier was in the process of closing. A study of his era is,

thus, relevant not only in terms of the relationship between the missionaries and the personality embodying the authority of the colonial state - and their consequent combined impact on Xhosa history - but also in terms of more general frontier studies.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

C.O.	Colonial Office Records, Public Record Office, Kew.
B.K.	British Kaffraria Records, Cape Archives.
Br. Parl. Papers	British Parliamentary Papers, Irish University Press.
WMMS	Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society Archives, London.
Grey Coll.	Grey Collection, South African Library, Cape Town.
SOAS	School for Oriental and African Studies, London.

NOTE ON SPELLING

Throughout the thesis the modern spelling for Xhosa names has been followed.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

As a frontier zone, the present Eastern Cape has received much attention from historians, beginning with settler historians like Cory, passing through liberal writers such as W.M. MacMillan, to the modern radical historians who have recently been offering new interpretations of frontier processes.

Until these revisionist writings appeared, much attention had been given to the white settler tradition though, with the closing of the frontier, black Africans were drawn inexorably into colonial society and became inextricably bound up with that society, both economically and politically. According to these historians, as class attitudes among the white settlers hardened into race attitudes and economic imperatives increased the need for cheap labour, both the economic and political options were deliberately closed for frontier blacks. Within this context and in addition to the tradition attributed to white settlers and their descendents by Liberal historians, the Eastern Cape was to produce a second 'independent'

tradition - that of mounting black reaction and resistance to the closing of these options. In the early years, the leaders of this resistance movement were men of the stature of J.T. Jabavu and his son Davidson Don. With these men, and others, the eastern Cape became, in fact, the seed-bed of African Nationalism and Black Consciousness. The new generation of leaders in the wider South African context, reacting to a new industrial situation and apartheid, were men like Nelson Mandela and Steve Biko.

If there was, and is, a common denominator for these men, it was the fact that they had all received a mission education. The leading figures in the early African National Congress (ANC) were drawn from a small élite of highly educated Africans whose Christian mission backgrounds were a source of their liberal 'bourgeois' aspirations. Their main goal was the maintenance of the Cape non-racial franchise and its extension to the other provinces; while later generation of leaders were, to some extent, inspired by the myth of Cape Liberalism.

But, in spite of this impetus given to African Nationalism by mission education, a real and deep anger has

fomented among Africans against the missionaries and their work. In the Eastern Cape it is linked to the still almost painful reality of that tragic event of 1856/7 - the great Xhosa Cattle Killing. Even over a hundred years later, the pain of it at times is as fresh as it was then. There are memories in the place names as well: Mpetu, between Komgha and the Kei Mouth, is the 'place of maggots', so-called from the maggots which fed on the dead during the Cattle Killing.

There has always been a tendency in history to search for villains and scapegoats, and the events of the 1850s have provided no exception. In earlier - 'settler' - historiography Nongqawuse, Mhlakaza and Sarhili were cast as the 'villains', while Sir George Grey, Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner for Southern Africa, was 'good'. Missionaries, it was suggested, were more or less impotent onlookers. More recently black and radical historians have reversed these roles. Grey and the missionaries are now cast as villains who deliberately plotted in 1856/7 to destroy the Xhosa chiefdoms. The missionaries have a reputation as 'agents of conquest' who promoted colonial expansion and the

capitalist system.

As Croce has remarked, every age rewrites its History, and within this context the continuing relevance of the Cattle Killing, and the renewed interest in the event for purposes of modern propaganda and polemic, make a reassessment valid. Apart from this, events on the Cape eastern frontier and the 1850s in particular have an added personal relevance. The writer of this thesis was born and bred in the Eastern Cape; an ancestor was a missionary to the Thembu in 1856/7; a Xhosa friend, to whom the events of the Cattle Killing and the 'traditional' roles of Grey and the missionaries are still very real issues, made his suggestion for a re-investigation of the event into a challenge; and, finally, a question put to an Armenian Archbishop by a black listener, and his answer, acted as a further incentive. In this interchange a theological student at the Federal Theological Seminary asked the Archbishop whether it would not have been better for Africa to have been missionized by the more spiritual Eastern Orthodox Church. In his answer the latter suggested that it was now time to stop being angry about the past, and to take what

was good from it and build the future. This led to the question, simply put, of just how 'bad' the missionaries had in fact been for Africa, and for the Eastern Cape in particular. Did they really offer anything 'good' in Xhosa terms?

There is no denying that the 1850s were a decisive decade. The governorship of Grey saw the 'beginning of the end' for the Xhosa. After it, inclusion within the colonial society either as labourers or later, owing to the accelerating territorial annexations, was more rapid than it had previously been. Because of the unflattering roles recently attributed to the governor and the missionaries, a reassessment of this period on the eastern Cape frontier made it necessary to discover whether they were, in fact, involved in a conspiracy against the Xhosa, and whether they could, with any truth, be regarded as either consciously or unconsciously opening the way for the determinist forces and processes which subverted the traditional way-of-life and drove that age-old communalism to destruction.

To make this assessment a further historical investi-

gation of what appears to have been the critical element - the link between Grey and the missionaries - was also unavoidable. This thesis is not therefore an attempt to reassess the whole frontier situation or even the Cattle Killing as such, but, rather, for the purpose of achieving an M.A. focus, it is an essay at concentrated analysis of this simple, but vital, central issue - the coupling-point (or chain of interaction) between the two agencies of political incorporation and ideological transformation.

At its most basic level, the Cattle Killing was a frontier incident which seemed to contemporaries to herald another Cape-Xhosa war in the tradition of Nxele and Mlanjeni. In the face of the continuing challenge posed by the expanding British polity at the Cape the political leadership of the Xhosa had, since 1819, tended to pass at critical points into the hands of prophet figures. This, too, has been identified as a feature of 'closing frontiers' - in which a return to traditional nostrums has seemed often the only way to deal with novel circumstances posed by intrusive modern cultures. Nxele and Mlanjeni had been 'war doctors' who had led their people into battle. Nong-

qawuse was certainly the spiritual heiress of these two, but with a difference. In spite of what was felt at the time, and evidence later led, there seems to have been no question of war-intent directly linked with the Cattle Killing. The tragedy of this growing 'prophet tradition' for the Xhosa was that traditional techniques had become increasingly impotent against European power.

The Cattle Killing was the critical turning-point at which the Xhosa resistance in the 'Hundred Years War' on the Cape eastern frontier really broke. That it happened in peace-time, and as part of the prophetic tradition, underlines the undermining effect of previous wars and the nature of the overall 'frontier process' at work at the Cape. The 'eastern frontier' was just one of many such frontiers in which the expanding European metropole pushed out from the 15th Century onward over the land surface of the other five continents and over the East and West Indies and Oceania.

Distinctions between the 'pre-industrial' and 'industrial' phases in such frontier processes have often



been drawn. In the case of the Cape in the 1850s the mineral revolution had not yet transformed the country into a full sub-metropole of industrialization; yet Grey and the missionaries have been seen as representing the extended arms not only of an industrial state but also, at the same time, of the struggling society in a weak colony attempting to turn itself into a replica of the metropolitan power.

Apart from its subsistence sector, the Cape Colony certainly had some of the elements of a developing capitalist economy - which, in the very nature of the imperial relationship, was closest-linked to industrial Britain. By the 1850s mercantilism, and with it, preferential treatment for her colonies, had ended as a powerful force in Britain. It was hoped that the encouragement of Free Trade would bring peace among nations. These new ideas of Free Trade also led to widespread discussions in Britain on the reformulation of colonial policy and on the introduction of self-government into the colonies. On one hand, the Manchester School of Cobden and Bright favoured self-government as they felt that Free Trade must sooner or later make colonies

unnecessary and, on the other, a group dominated by Edward Gibbon Wakefield, urged self-government in order to retain the Empire.

These new directions in colonial thinking, coupled with demands from the Colony itself, led to the granting of representative government to the Cape in 1853. The franchise, which was 'colour blind' with a £25 property and a £50 salary qualification, became the best known aspect of what came to be considered as Cape Liberalism. But, according to radical historians, the intrinsic nature of 'liberalism' at the Cape was fundamentally questionable, owing to its connection with underlying economic imperatives. On some levels, it seemed to be little more than an alliance of missionaries, merchants and administrators, all of whom supported the creation of an African peasantry for their own ends. This fostering of African peasant farmers was, in the absence of numerous white settlers, not only supported by local officials, but also by Imperial authorities themselves. They saw in an African cash-crop production a way of getting newly annexed territories to pay their way.

The missionaries have an ambivalent place in the newer types of frontier history. Because of their indirect and often tenuous association with government frontier action, they are often bracketed with governor and magistrates as part of the colonial 'state'. Together with the latter, they are seen as representing the superstructure and coercive element which reinforced the 'capitalist mode of production' that was increasingly dominant in the substructure. An obvious reliance at other times on government support for survival and for the maintenance of order has reinforced this impression of the role of the missionaries. Along with traders and settlers, they have been classified as 'informal agents' of the empire in southern Africa who transformed Africans into 'inoffensive Christians' in the material interests, in this case, of the Cape colony. The Protestant churches, but more particularly the Wesleyans, have been seen, first, as carriers of the work-discipline, second, as seeking outright confrontation with pagan cultures, and, third, as aiming at 'revolutionizing' those societies - to the advantage of the established colonial social order and to the disadvantage of the indigenous society concerned.

In recent historiography the role of the 'imperial state' and its representatives is seen as swinging the 'balance of advantage' in quite evenly-balanced white and black frontier societies in the pre-industrial era decisively in favour of the whites and the capitalist mode. This intervention, though at times couched in terms of 'humanitarian' apologia, was ultimately directed towards the protection of imperial interests and was essentially linked to the development and demands of the British economy.

In the final analysis this interpretation of the imperial role in southern Africa is rather too mechanistic, especially when applied to the missionaries. Their actions, when investigated at the micro-level of their complex interaction with state-authority and Sir George Grey, simply does not always conform to that pre-designated role which makes them hardly distinguishable from the 'imperial state' at the macro-level.

On the other hand, it must be accepted that economic and social processes cannot allow one to treat the actions of the frontier missionaries in pure isolation from the overall context and simply as those of disinterested individuals. In some respects they did

form a group, and their overall role can therefore be brought under certain forms of collective and umbrella-assessment. In making such an analysis of group-action, Marxist and Weberian paradigms have both been found useful, especially where the religious part of the missionary commitment overlapped a set of ethics on 'work', 'dress' and 'behaviour' - which was in itself subversive of the whole ethos of traditional society and to the advantage of local markets and traders.

While such an erosive element can be identified, it is, however, a moot point whether the missionaries were in a sufficiently strong position to achieve overwhelming success in this 'undermining'. What seems crucial here is the extent to which they had gained a preponderant influence in frontier matters on one hand with the Governor, and on the other, with traditional society. Close investigation of this double-influence may reveal an inherent anomaly: that, in fact, the missionaries were little more than limited agents; that they were not always the Governor's 'collaborators'; that they generally did try to help the Xhosa according to their some-

what limited lights, even during the Cattle Killing crisis; and, finally, that their overall role must be downgraded from the importance which it has been assumed to have.

Close examination of this role may also have the reciprocal advantage of throwing a new light on the part played by the Governor on the frontier. If the missionaries did not have the influence attributed to them, who did?

Clearly the Imperial government had concerns other than that of simply reducing its tax-burden at Westminster. It had also to make colonial society more viable by lifting the threat of the turbulent frontier away from the colony and by reducing the cost of incursions to the frontier people. If in the process the colony improved its labour supply, so much the better. And though labour relations did in fact form a major part of the interaction and conflict at the Cape, it is perhaps too simplistic to say that they were at the very centre all the time.

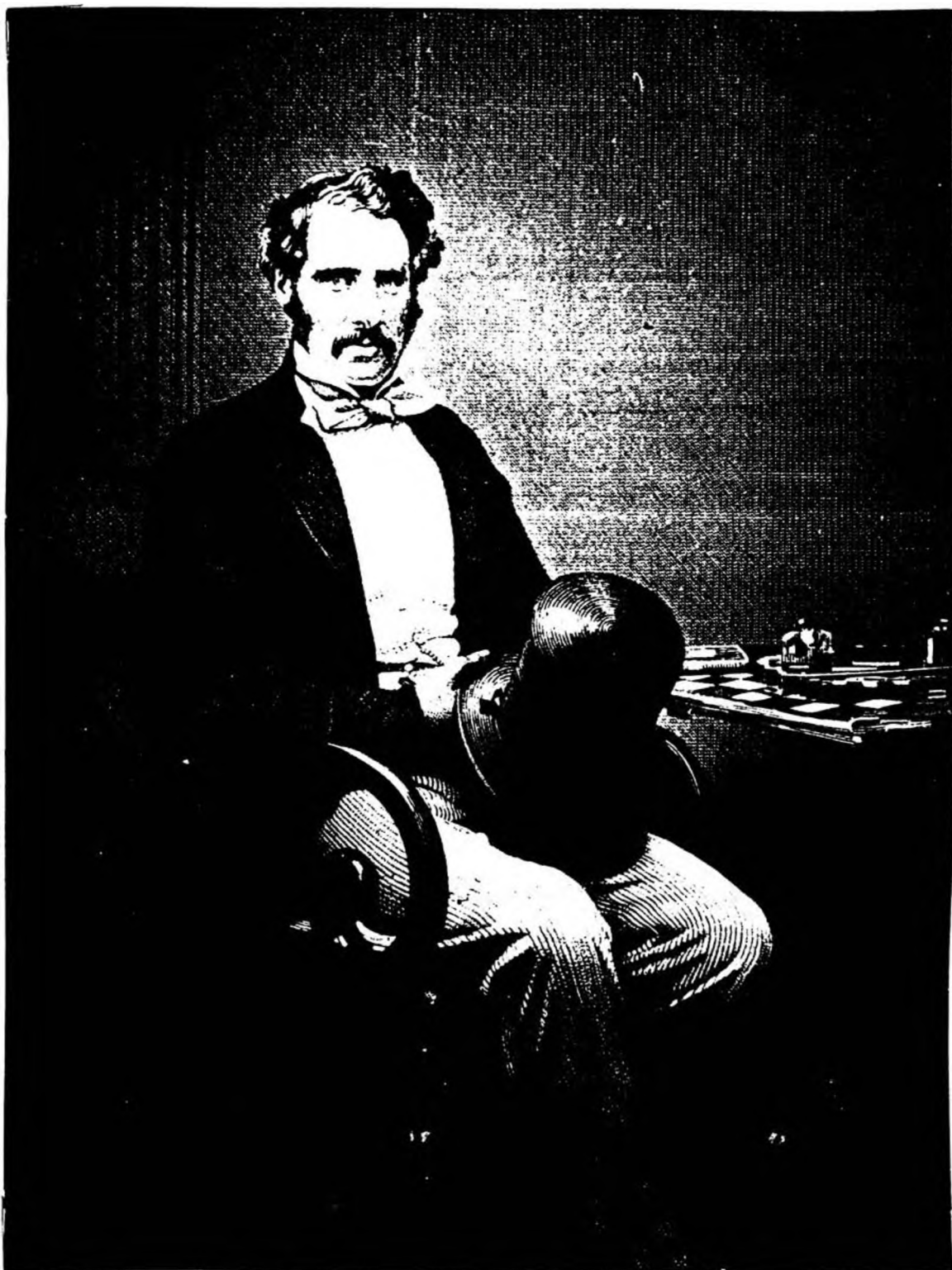
In the mid-19th Century, the colonial state was in the process of expansion. Costly new districts and the newly-established colonial parliament had made both local and central government more elaborate. All this suggests that the 'imperial state' needed to take a more active role in both pacifying and neutralizing the frontier zone. Nevertheless, the actions of the various governors on the frontier were idiosyncratic and did not always follow a straightforward, conventional path toward 'conquering and proletarianizing' the indigenous blacks nor the Weberian example of 'disenchanted and rationalizing' their belief-system. Hence, Grey as an individual colonial administrator with very strong personal convictions and commitments is a worthy subject of study in his own right.

For the purposes of this thesis the Cape eastern frontier has been considered to include not only the colonial side of the frontier, but also British Kaffraria. Lying between the Keiskamma and the Kei Rivers this was brought under British 'sovereignty' by Sir Harry Smith in 1847. But, by 1854 this territory was still not formally part of the Colony,

though it was administered separately through the Cape governor as High Commissioner. At times in the thesis this concept of the Cape eastern frontier has been stretched to include Kaffraria Proper, or the Transkeian territories, which means the land lying beyond the Kei River and still independent of formal British control. Across this extended belt of territory the persuasive influence of the missionaries and the pervasive power of the governor and of his supporting civil and military agents were harnessed to draw together. But which partner mainly pulled the Xhosa polity asunder remains the central question that this study will attempt to answer.



SIR GEORGE GREY - GOVERNOR



(Cape Town Archives - AG 7362)

## CHAPTER TWO

### SIR GEORGE GREY AND HIS 'CIVILIZING MISSION'

The governorship of Sir George Grey saw a turning point in Xhosa history as well, so it is maintained, as in missionary fortunes in southern Africa. Together, Grey and the missionaries have been indicted of being instrumental in the destruction of the Xhosa nation as an effective power. The missionaries have been accused of softening the edge of Xhosa resistance to colonial advance and Sir George Grey of destroying the Xhosa polity and thus opening the way for an unprecedented advance of missionary work among the Xhosa people. This was achieved in a relatively short space of time, 1854 - 1861, when Sir George Grey was Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner for southern Africa.

Grey's directive on arriving at the Cape was to create a stable and lasting peace on the frontier and to reduce the costs of maintaining the Cape Colony for the Imperial Government. As a civilian governor, his answer lay in a 'civilizing', integrationist approach which was couched in humanitarian language but often concealed a determination and threat of force.

Grey's personal aims were far-reaching, and in an age of avowed anti-imperialism, they paradoxically included the extension of British influence in southern Africa. It is difficult to ascertain with any certainty the true mind and ambitions of Sir George Grey. Most of his private papers were destroyed by his niece and his official communications were at times confusing and always written for the public eye. Grey's biographer, J. Rutherford, has suggested that he was a romantic imperialist, an opinion which was backed up by James Milne in a panygeric work compiled from discussions held with Grey, and published in 1911, not long after Grey's death.<sup>1</sup> According to this, Grey's overriding belief was in the mission and destiny of the Anglo-Saxon people. In South Africa, Grey spoke of a federation of states under British influence, but if Milne is to be believed, this would have been only a part of a world federation of British possessions which would have given Britain the balance of power. But no doubt, this was Grey talking for posterity and caution

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1. J. Milne, The Romance of a Pro-Consul, (Thos. Nelson & Sons, 1911).

is needed in accepting what was said at face value.

As men of their age, not only Grey, but also the missionaries active on the Cape eastern frontier, believed in the civilizing mission of Great Britain, and both inherited the 'liberal' and 'humanitarian' attitude of the British Government towards the African people within their sphere of interest. This was an attitude which had its roots in the 1820s and 1830s and which, from the actions of at least some of the local administrators, could be called into question. In South Africa, Grey hoped that his measures would pacify the frontier region, stabilize the Cape Colony and lead to an economic saving for Great Britain.<sup>2</sup> He wished to extend British influence and control over the people between the Cape and Natal<sup>3</sup> and, if possible, create a federation of states under Britain. It was, however, too soon after the Sand River and Bloemfontein Conventions for the Colonial Office to view the latter plans with any sympathy. Grey needed the willing co-operation of the Cape Parliament, and the incentive he offered was that his

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2. C.O.48/365: Sir George Grey, Governor, to Grey, Secretary of Colonies, No.22, 31 January 1855.
  3. C.O.48/365: Note to Sir C. Trevelyan, 14 May 1855; D. Williams, Umfundisi - A biography of Tiyo Soga 1829-1871, (Lovedale Press, 1978), p.52.

plans would turn the Xhosa people into a labouring and money-making community which would be the means of expanding the Cape economy.<sup>4</sup>

Official Colonial contact with the Xhosa prior to 1854 was characterized by vacillation and confusion. The Dutch officials of the 18th Century had favoured a policy of exclusion but were unable to enforce the Great Fish River boundary proclaimed in 1780. When the British took possession of the Cape Colony, the exclusionist policy was at first perpetuated, but with more resolution and force. The Xhosa were expelled from the Bushmans-Sundays River area across the Fish and white British settlers introduced to consolidate the frontier.

After the War of 1819, Governor Somerset attempted to establish a buffer zone between the Xhosa and colonists. A strip of land beyond the Fish River was expropriated from the Xhosa and proclaimed a neutral territory. This 'Ceded' Territory was soon violated, first by the traders and then by the extension of magisterial district boundaries across the Fish. Missionaries and settlers

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4. C.O.48/368: Grey to Grey, No.39, 17 March 1855. Speech opening the second session of the Colonial parliament.

followed.

The confusions which arose from the attempts of the colonial authorities to deal with a paramount chief representing all the Xhosa chiefs led to a system of treaties with several chiefs after the death of Ngqika in 1828. The success of this system was limited and the following years were characterized by advance and retreat. Governor D'Urban extended British authority over the Xhosa between the Keiskamma and Kei Rivers in 1835, but was forced to abandon the territory. However D'Urban's action was significant in that it was the first attempt at the incorporation of the Xhosa within the colonial system.

The policy of undermining the authority of the chiefs which Grey was to follow with such vigour, was suggested by Governor Sir Harry Smith after the War of the Axe 1846-7, when a system of direct control over the Xhosa was re-instated. In 1847 Sir Harry had annexed the land between the Keiskamma and Kei Rivers which became known as British Kaffraria. A year earlier, the Governor of the Cape also became High Commissioner, entrusted with the solution of frontier questions. British Kaffraria was ruled directly by the High

Commissioner and though Letters Patent for the institution of British Kaffraria as a separate territory had been prepared, by the time Sir George Grey became Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner in 1854, these had not been promulgated.

The Xhosa nation had been a formidable foe to the colonists over the years, but by 1854 the forces at work within Xhosa society had already contributed significantly to the erosion of that polity. In assessing the impact of Grey and the missionaries, it would be essential to investigate the background and extent to which the Xhosa social system had begun to break down, and the nature of the forces which were at work.

Two major splits in Xhosa society had occurred before 1770.<sup>5</sup> By 1750, several minor chiefdoms had broken away and were settled between the Kei and the Keiskamma Rivers. These were the Ntinde, Mbalu, Dange and Gqunukhwebe. The lattermost group was regarded as inferior by the Xhosa because they were partly of Khoikhoi origin.

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5. Information based on H. Giliomee, 'The Eastern Frontier 1770-1812', in R. Elphick & H. Giliomee (eds), The Shaping of South African Society 1652-1820. (Longman, 1979), p.291 ff.

The other schism occurred when the Xhosa nucleus split into Gcaleka and Rharhabe. Rharhabe moved westwards towards the Fish River and in the authority crisis which followed, the Rharhabe and Gcaleka chiefs each claimed to be a paramount chief with some authority over the other chiefs in his vicinity.

The relationship of the chiefs in the Ciskei with Rharhabe and his successors was fluid and the chiefs already west of the Kei were unwilling to acknowledge his paramountcy when he moved into their area. The Xhosa and colonists in the Fish River area had, by this time, worked out a measure of co-existence. Their lifestyles followed similar patterns. Both were cattle owners, and both needed to expand when the territory they occupied could no longer meet the needs of those living on it. When expansion beyond the colony was no longer possible for the colonist, expansion into Xhosa territory appeared to offer at least one solution. Thus, at the turn of the century, the Zuurveld was an area where chiefdoms and colonists competed for land. The competition was exacerbated by conflicting views of land ownership. The colonists believed in private ownership, whereas the Xhosa held land communally.



By 1854 Sarhili was paramount chief of the Gcaleka (east of the Kei) and was held responsible by the colonial government for the depredations of the other Xhosa chiefs. The Xhosa west of the Kei had by that time further divided into the Ngqika and Rharhabe. The Ngqika Xhosa were under the nominal rule of Sandile, and were divided into lesser chiefdoms under Oba, Stock, Anta, Xhoxho, Tola, Botomane and Ian Tshatshu. Also west of the Kei were the Ndlambe under Phato, who had been 'loyal' in the war of 1850. Kama, his brother, and a number of followers had broken away and settled further west. Kama was the first Christian chief, though Christianity had not been accepted by his followers, nor encouraged by him. Chief Mhala, situated between Sandile and Phato, veteran foe of 1835 and 1846 wars and a friend of Sarhili, was regarded by the colonial authorities as untrustworthy.

The Zuurveld regions was, in the Legassick sense, a 'frontier zone' and at the end of the 18th Century was a fluid region of social transition, relatively autonomous from both colonial base and the indigenous social systems, but also dependent on both.<sup>6</sup> Until the arrival

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6. M. Legassick, 'The Northern Frontier to 1820: The emergence of the Griqua people', in R. Elphick & H. Giliomee, The Shaping of South African Society, p.247.

of the British at the Cape, the frontier remained in limbo. After 1806, the processes were set in motion for the re-incorporation of the frontier zone into the Cape Colonial system. H. Giliomee has called the time prior to re-incorporation the 'open frontier', when individuals and groups had a measure of liberty in establishing relations and maintaining their interests, and when land was relatively sparsely populated.<sup>7</sup> The 'closing' of the frontier in the 19th Century was, among other things, characterized by pressures on land on both sides of the frontier and the deterioration of labour relations in that region.

Contact with the Colony on various levels had made significant inroads into traditional Xhosa society. Trade had been an early source of interaction and by 1830 the settler trading network had extended as far as Pondoland. According to J.B. Peires, in The House of Phalo, the extension of the trade network resulted in the Xhosa becoming increasingly dependent on the colony and even posed a threat to Xhosa national sovereignty.<sup>8</sup> Xhosa traders were edged out of the

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7. H. Giliomee, 'The Eastern Frontier 1770 - 1812', p.316.

8. J.B. Peires, The House of Phalo, (Raven Press, 1981), p.102.

market because of the more efficient organisation of the colonial traders in terms of wagon transport and supply of goods. Trade in labour had begun as early as 1777 but as long as the Xhosa still had an independent subsistence base in Xhosaland, they, as a people, could not be forced onto the labour market and could still opt out of it. As Xhosaland became unable to provide for its population in the 1830s the option of leaving his employer became increasingly less open to the Xhosa labourer.<sup>9</sup>

The Xhosa were inexorably caught up into a relationship with advancing colonialism which was to end disastrously for at least one chief and his people. Ngqika, in seizing power from his uncle Ndlambe in 1819, allied himself to the Cape Colony, an ally which was to prove unfaithful and treacherous. He probably did more than any one else seriously to weaken Xhosa resistance.<sup>10</sup>

The total war against the Xhosa initiated by Lt. Col.

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9. Ibid. p.163.

10. J.B. Peires, 'Ngqika', in C. Saunders (ed), Black Leaders in Southern African History, (Heinemann, London, 1979), p.15.

Graham on the orders of Governor Sir John Cradock in 1811, and the subsequent expulsion of the Xhosa from their lands west of the Fish River, created a set of problems which the chiefs were unable to solve. Their well-ordered universe had been deranged by the whites, and the Xhosa had to work out a suitable corrective. The response of many was a re-assertion of their traditional values, so political leadership tended to pass temporarily from the hands of the chiefs into the hands of prophet figures such as Nxele, Ntsikana, Mlanjeni and in 1856 to Nongqawuse and Mhlakaza whose great revelation was to all but destroy the Xhosa people.<sup>11</sup>

Political divisions and petty rivalry between the eastern chiefs were aggravated by interaction with the Colony. Phato stayed out of the war of 1834-5 and Maqoma retired early in 1846. Some minor chiefs defected altogether. By the 1850s the Xhosa political system was in a state of permanent instability.<sup>12</sup>

Though the struggle against the Colony did much to heal

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11. J.B. Peires, 'Nxele, Ntsikana and the origins of Xhosa Religious Reaction', Journal of African History, 20, 2(1979), p.52.

12. J.B. Peires, The House of Phalo, p.163.

the breach between chiefs and commoners, it also created new cleavages. A notable example was between what Peires terms 'resisters and collaborators'. The latter group included the Christian chief, Kama, and the community of school-people around mission stations.<sup>13</sup> What Peires has not mentioned is that in 1850 the school-people were a small group and an analysis of the group shows them to have been, apart from Mfengu and Gqunukhwebe, on the whole outcasts and refugees from Xhosa society, and mostly women. However, the introduction of the plough and market concept by the missionaries did have far-reaching effects and was more subversive of the old way of life than many of the other divisions. Both traders and missionaries created demands for new types of commodities which slowly drew the Xhosa into the cash economy of the Colony.

The political and economic instability of the Xhosa weakened the resistance to the blow soon to be delivered by Grey and the Cattle Killing. Grey, who considered the continued existence of the Xhosa social system to be inimical to the progress of civilization and the

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13. Ibid. p.164.

success of his frontier plans, deliberately aimed at undermining the power of the chiefs and encouraging the traditional tendency of the Xhosa towards fission. In all his actions he set out to weaken any possibility of a combined resistance to his measures, to the extent that he refused to hold a general meeting with the chiefs, and would not allow Maclean, Chief Commissioner of British Kaffraria, to do so either. Grey, as High Commissioner, felt that he had the power to introduce his new system into British Kaffraria, though there was some doubt, especially in the mind of Col. Maclean, as to whether the Xhosa were in fact true subjects of the British Crown. Grey chose to ignore this.

Grey tackled the task before him promptly and vigorously, overriding local objections to certain aspects of his plans and often presenting the Colonial Office with a fait accompli which they sanctioned with varying degrees of reluctance. In his role as colonial administrator in New Zealand and South Africa, Grey felt that he had been given a unique task to mould raw human materials to higher ends, though on a more realistic level he admitted that the problem posed

for him in the colonies was rather how to utilize the 'natives' for the civilization which had begun to invade both these territories.<sup>14</sup>

Grey's reputation as a humanitarian begins to falter under closer scrutiny. The Cape colonists believed implicitly in his benevolence and the Advertiser of 2 December 1854 reported him as 'a lover of the Kafir race', 'a man of Christian humanity', 'with a character of benevolence, wisdom and virtue'.<sup>15</sup> His despatches and speeches supported this view, but his actions certainly did not always give credence to his words and, underlying it all, his first concern was not unnaturally for the interests of the British Empire and the Cape colonists. Xhosa interest came a rather poor third, and the threat of coercion to get what he wanted was never very far below the surface. Philanthropy was a thin veil over his iron will.

Peace on the frontier may well have been necessary for

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14. J. Milne, Romance of a Pro-Consul, p.104.

15. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey K.C.B. 1812-1890, (Cassell & Co., London, 1961), p.305.

the progress of the Xhosa in the arts of 'civilization', always supposing the Xhosa wanted to advance in those arts, but it is difficult to see how submission of the Xhosa and their removal from their land in British Kaffraria to make way for white immigration could possibly be described as humanitarian or in the interests of the Xhosa people. In planning their removal, Grey ignored the promises made to the Xhosa by previous governors regarding the tenure of their locations. He declared that the Xhosa must either be absorbed by the Europeans or succumb to them,<sup>16</sup> and came to the amazing conclusion that 'throughout British Kaffraria the native has no recognized right or interest in the soil'.<sup>17</sup> Again and again his concern for British interests emerges from his descriptions of the benefits of civilization for the Xhosa. The chief was to be stripped of his power because it stood in the way of the advancement of civilization, but Grey later also pointed out that leaving the chiefs in control would lead to the increase of a dangerous

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16. C.O.48/381: Grey to Labouchere, No.35, 23 March 1857; J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.329.

17. Br.Parl.Papers XL of 1857/8 (2352), p.36: Grey to Labouchere, No.12, 18 October 1856; J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.329.



power already in existence.<sup>18</sup> He was sure that his new system of administration for the Xhosa would secure colonial property, stimulate industry and in time to come prove to be a source of revenue to the Crown.<sup>19</sup>

What recommended Grey as the governor who would be able to stabilize the frontier and bring peace and prosperity to the Colony, was his supposedly successful term of office as governor of New Zealand and his handling of the 'Maori problem'. Having brought the Maori wars to an end, Grey had experimented with a policy of 'civilizing' the indigenous population and hoped to repeat his success in South Africa. The response to his ideas in the Colonial Office in London was a mixture of optimism and pessimism, but the underlying theme was that there would be no harm in letting him try. Grey's friend, Sir George Barrow, was encouraging, saying that if he succeeded it would be a glorious triumph.<sup>20</sup> Sir William Molesworth, however, pointed

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18. C.O.48/368: Grey to Sir William Molesworth, No.46, 18 December 1855.

19. Cape of Good Hope - Parliament Correspondence between Grey and Sec. of State for Colonies, presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency, April 1857, Grey Coll. G.11.c.20: Grey to Maclean, 17 September 1855, Encl.5 to No.46.

20. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.318.

out that the situation in South Africa was different from that in New Zealand. If Grey succeeded, he would accomplish an extraordinary feat and one that would be most beneficial to the Empire, but he cynically concluded that in New Zealand Grey had been dealing with smaller numbers and the problem had been infinitely smaller:

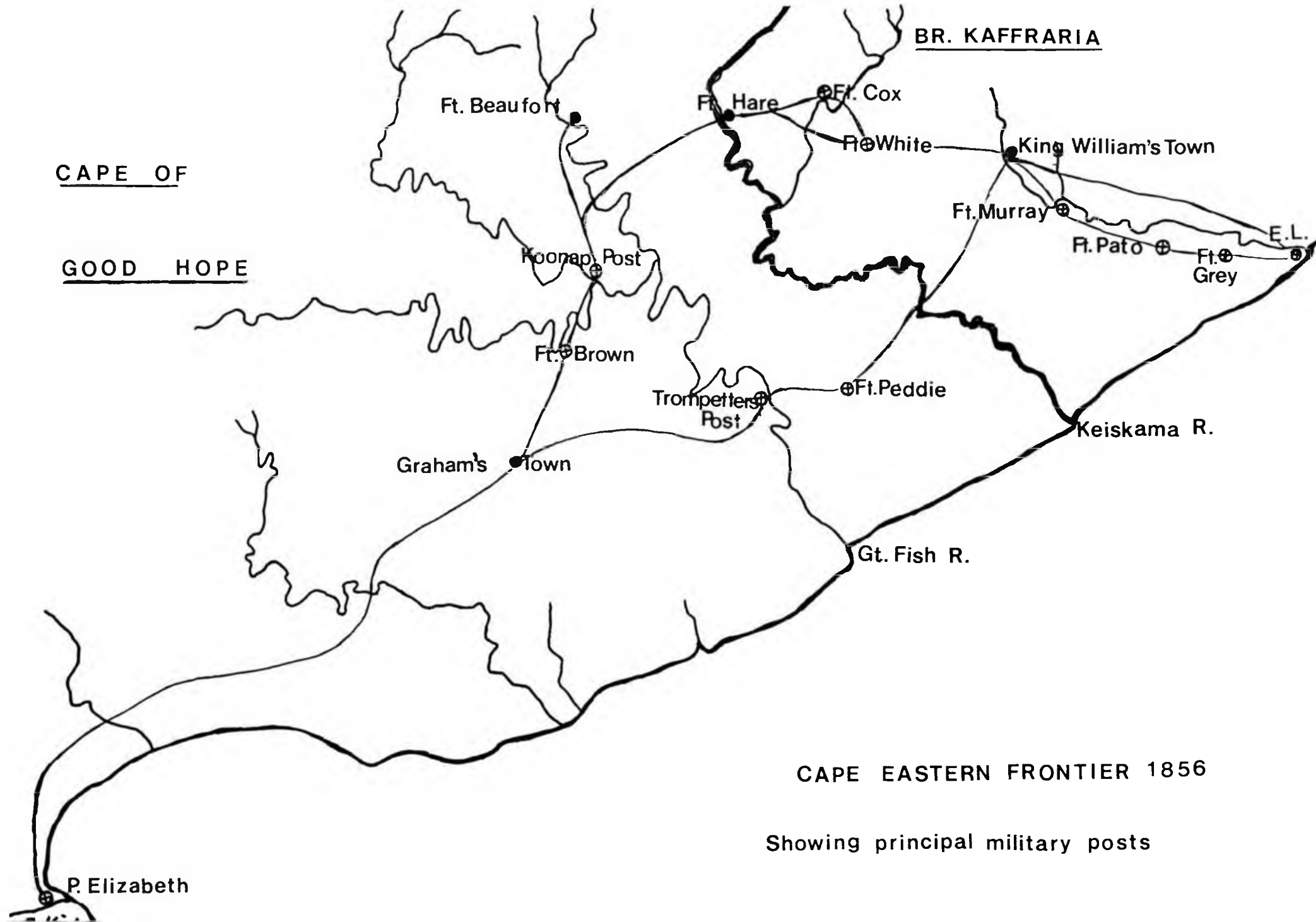
'They (the Maoris) were early influenced by the missionaries and they are rapidly dying out. In another generation or so they will be exterminated by European colonization and disease and the problem will be solved.'<sup>21</sup>

This was a sobering example of the realism displayed by the men of the Colonial Office.

Grey's proposals for South Africa were identical to those he had employed in New Zealand, and he seemed to have had little doubt that he would be as successful with the Xhosa as he considered himself to have been with the Maoris. He planned to strengthen colonial defences and build strategic roads. Chiefs were to be encouraged to accept salaries and in return hand over their judicial functions to magistrates who would be stationed with the chiefs. Tribal law would be replaced with a suitable code of laws which would aid

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21. C.O.48/365: Note from Sir William Molesworth on No.14, 11 June 1855.



the absorption of the Xhosa into the European polity on an economic level. Christian missions, schools and hospitals would promote civilization and counter-act superstition and 'witchcraft'. Employment on public works would be offered to the Xhosa to inculcate industrial habits and to provide them with the means of purchasing food and other material goods. British Kaffraria would be opened up to white settlers to form a checkerboard of black/white settlement. Thus, civilization was to be helped along by proximity to those already civilized.

While putting his plans into operation, the frontier defences were to be strengthened as a precautionary measure. In fact, his public works programme, supposedly a further means of 'civilizing' the Xhosa, was linked to Grey's plans for frontier security. Thus, the roads which he built in British Kaffraria with Xhosa labour were military roads, and Grey was later to write with satisfaction, that the Xhosa were effectively opening up their own territory to colonial forces, 'conquering it for us'.<sup>22</sup> The power

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22. C.O.48/368: Grey to Lord John Russell, No.27, 19 September 1855.

of the chief was to be destroyed not only by the government salary, but also by replacing traditional customs with a system of administration devised by Grey. The people were to be settled in villages with a resident magistrate, appointed by Grey and not chosen by the chiefs, and later individual land titles were to be granted. This village scheme was not original. In 1850 the Rev. William Impey, a Methodist minister, proposed to Sir Harry Smith that the Xhosa and Mfengu should be concentrated in villages to facilitate measures for 'uplifting' and 'civilizing' them. He made similar proposals to Grey in 1857. The Rev. H. Calderwood, missionary turned government agent, had also suggested measures such as individual land titles and industrial schools.

Education had come to be regarded by colonial governors as one of the most effective means of controlling the Xhosa entry into relations with the Colony and of pacification. Grey was no exception. Indeed, he had a special interest in education, and it was here that the missionary body as a whole entered into his calculations. The missionaries were equally insistent on the value of education for the spreading of the Christian message and several educational establishments had already

been set up by missionary societies. Grey planned to use and extend these as part of his civilizing programme. Hospitals were to be used to counter the influence of the 'witchdoctors' from whom Grey expected his most spirited opposition.

Grey's plans for South Africa differed in one or two important aspects from those he had in New Zealand. Firstly, the Xhosa were not to be protected in the possession of their land as the Maoris had been. Secondly, the Xhosa were not actually within the borders of the Cape Colony. It would therefore follow that in order to subdue and 'civilize' them, and to incorporate them as a labour force, British Kaffraria would have to be drawn into a much closer relationship with the Colony, if not annexed to the Colony - which is exactly what Grey ultimately intended.

Furthermore, in granting land titles to the Xhosa, Grey either could not see, or would not see, that British Kaffraria was not as fertile as he imagined. The amount of land he envisaged for the individual titles was too small for South African conditions and the Xhosa way of life. Missionary voices were raised in protest when the details of Grey's land settlement

became known. It was pointed out that to deprive the Xhosa of their land was not only the quickest way of alienating them from British interests, but also that the two acres planned for the individual titles would be insufficient to support a man and his family.<sup>23</sup>

But again, Grey chose to ignore the protests and push ahead with his plans, believing implicitly in his own timing and judgement. He believed that the management of 'native races' resolved itself into a few natural laws, the most important of these being man's basic need for food. The path to adopt, then, was to be the means by which the Xhosa could obtain more food.<sup>24</sup> Thus, the public works programme fulfilled two functions. Apart from this, Grey was not the man to easily accept criticism and opposition to his plans. In the opinion of one of his supporters, Bishop Gray, Sir George was a 'proud, mean, overbearing man', high-handed in his actions and given to tantrums if opposed.<sup>25</sup>

This raises the question of the extent of the interaction between Grey and the missionary bodies on the Cape

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23. B.K.91: John Ross to Col. Maclean, 15 July 1856.

24. J. Milne, Romance of a Pro-Consul, p.105.

25. T. Gutsche, The Bishop's Lady, (Howard Timmins, 1970), p.169.

eastern frontier. Robinson and Gallagher have put forward the argument that the Imperial power needed to encourage local 'collaborating groups' with which it formed and maintained special relations.<sup>26</sup> Already Grey had solicited the help of two groups in introducing his new administration, the Cape Colonial Parliament as well as the missionaries. Atmore and Marks have pointed out that this tactic had also been used earlier: from the time of their occupation of the Cape the British had attempted to cultivate a local group of collaborators to establish an administration and to help finance that administration. The first of these groups had been the Cape Dutch, particularly the wealthy merchant class. As the number of British settlers increased, they augmented the Dutch as a collaborating group.<sup>27</sup> Grey had been instructed to reduce the cost of the Cape Colony to Great Britain and to do so he needed the collaboration of the new Cape Parliament. More specifically, he needed a Parliamentary grant of money for British Kaffraria, and its support in the defence of the Colony

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26. In R. Robinson, 'Collaboration in the Politics of the Colonies', quoted in A. Atmore & S. Marks in 'The Imperial Factor in South Africa in the 19th Century: towards a reassessment', Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, 3(1975), p.108.

27. A. Atmore & S. Marks, 'The Imperial Factor', p.111.



so that British troops could be released for service in other parts of the Empire. The incentives he offered to Parliament would provide grist to any Marxist historian's mill. As the Cape merchants were a powerful group within the Colony, Grey continually emphasized the increased trade and wealth a 'civilized' population in British Kaffraria would bring. Shutting the Xhosa out of colonial interests would be reason for them to remain a troublesome people, but to include them would encourage the Xhosa to be:

'useful servants, consumers of our goods, contributors to our revenue; in short, a source of strength and wealth for this Colony as Providence designed them to be.'<sup>28</sup>

Grey hoped that the Xhosa would be changed into useful labourers,<sup>29</sup> and a 'tractable, money-making people',<sup>30</sup> but in a position in colonial society subordinate to the White colonists and bolstering their economy.

This was language that the colonists could appreciate and they enthusiastically supported Grey's measures.

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28. C.O.48/368: Grey to Grey, No.39, 17 March 1855. Speech at opening of the second session of Parliament.
29. C.O.48/381: Grey to Labouchere, No.45, 8 April 1857. Speech at fourth session of Parliament.
30. C.O.48/388: Grey to Labouchere, No.20, 10 March 1858. Speech at fifth session of Parliament.

In July 1855 the Cape Parliament passed an Act to provide an extra £34 940-4-4 in addition to sums already granted for 1855, to make provision for the changes Grey wanted to introduce on the frontier. They also provided for the equipment and maintenance of an armed Mounted Police Force of 500 men for the defence of the frontier and added another Judge to the Supreme Court. A burgher militia in each of the 21 districts was created, over and above the 500 Mounted Police, to be called out in defence of their district should danger threaten. Grey was satisfied and could write a year later that the European population was prosperous and contented and co-operating with the plans of the government.<sup>31</sup> In fact, as Rutherford points out, the colonists were soon convinced that Grey was the best governor they had ever had.<sup>32</sup>

While making overtures to the Cape Parliament, Grey, in 1855, was also making contact with the various missionary bodies. Bishop Gray of Cape Town, who had become a friend and confidant to Grey, was enthusiastic about

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31. C.O.48/375: Grey to Labouchere, No.60, 14 July 1856.

32. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.295.

Grey's plans. He promised Anglican support and the entry of the Church into the mission field. In the frontier regions the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and the Free Church of Scotland were already well established and their co-operation in Grey's plans for extending education among the Xhosa people as a civilizing agent has led to the accusation that they too, were a collaborating group intent on the destruction of the Xhosa as a nation. Aspects of missionary policy and actions certainly do seem to lay them open at times to such charges. Insofar as the missionaries believed that the 'wickedness' of traditional Xhosa society stood in the way of the Gospel and education was a way of eradicating this, they must be seen as a collaborating group. However, in the early phase of missionary work they cannot be accused of wanting to educate the Xhosa to the subordinate place in colonial society that Grey did. The type of education planned by Grey differed from the education the missionaries, particularly the Free Church of Scotland, were offering.

Grey wanted to change the emphasis of the education available to Africans, and the grants he offered to missionaries for education were for industrial

departments or for the setting up of new industrial schools. This was part of his plan to produce a group of useful labourers, as well as to train the Xhosa in trades and as teachers. Grey was insistent that the 'native' was not the equal of the European and could not form a friendship with him, even after receiving education. This was his rationale behind extending education to Xhosa girls. They could then become partners for the educated young men who could not be fully assimilated into white society and who were no longer comfortable in 'traditional' society.<sup>33</sup>

On the frontier, existing schools were to be expanded and new ones set up. The Anglicans now entered into the mission field, and Bishop Armstrong, newly appointed to Grahamstown, undertook to set up stations and schools at Keiskamma Hoek in the Crown Reserve, at Mhala's and Sandile's locations as well as with Sarhili in Kaffraria Proper.<sup>34</sup> Grey seemed particularly impressed with the Methodists and gave them generous aid. Healdtown, the largest of the Methodist education

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33. J. Milne, The Romance of a Pro-Consul, p.110.

34. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.318.

institutions, was set up with the grant from the Governor. However, it was the Mfengu rather than the Xhosa who would derive the most benefit from the facilities. In this regard, it was the Methodists anyway who reflected most closely Grey's aims for African education. Perhaps, because they had not been as active as the Presbyterians in this field, the educational institutions they established followed Grey's pattern of trade schools more closely than, for example, Lovedale.

Grey's aid to missionary institutions and his emphasis on education were an important part of his plan to pacify the frontier and make the Xhosa more amenable to his system of administration. Education was, without doubt, one of the most effective means of undermining traditional values, but the attendance at the schools in the 1850s was small, as the main body of the Xhosa were still unwilling to send their children to school.<sup>35</sup> Thus, at least in the early part of Grey's governorship, the impact of missionary education was not great. More effective as an agent of destruction, would be his system of replacing the authority of the chief with that of the special magistrate, his forced removals of chiefdoms, and their resettlement in villages

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35. C.O.48/400: Bishop Henry of Grahamstown to the Duke of Newcastle, 15 July 1859.

under police control. This was accomplished without reference to the missionaries.

Although Grey went out of his way to foster special relations with the Colonial Parliament and the missionary bodies, he insisted on having complete freedom of action and on several occasions deliberately acted contrary to the advice of men on the spot such as Col. Maclean, and Charles Brownlee, the Ngqika Commissioner. Both protested that the introduction of Grey's proposals was premature and hazardous, as the Xhosa were a conservative people, suspicious of white interference and unwilling to be civilized.<sup>36</sup> Governor Cathcart had reinstated the chiefs' jurisdiction over their own people and Maclean doubted whether the Xhosa were in fact British subjects. Grey, however, felt it his duty to act on his own judgement and carry out his plans.<sup>37</sup> This highhandedness was criticized by a contemporary visitor to the Cape, Robert Wilmot, who considered

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36. Cape of Good Hope - Parliament, Grey Coll.G.11.c.20: Maclean to W.F. Liddle, Enc.2 to No.46, 4 August 1855; J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.334.

37. Cape of Good Hope - Parliament, Grey Coll.G.11.c.20: Grey to the Rt. Hon. Sir William Molesworth, Bart., No.46, 18 December 1855.

it to be 'mere presumption and not statesmanship' on the Governor's part.<sup>38</sup> The Xhosa for their part were not given the opportunity to discuss the new arrangements. Grey was prepared to meet the chiefs, but not prepared to listen to what they had to say in case he led them 'to hopes which he later could not fulfil'. When the chiefs pressed the point, he changed the conversation and promised them gifts and insisted that all communication with him should be in writing.

The Colonial Office was informed of the introduction of Grey's new system of administration after the event. In reporting his fait accompli, Grey supported his actions by highlighting the possible danger to the Colony of allowing the chiefs to remain independent. The Colonial Office accepted his actions with little protest. Sir William Molesworth noted on the relevant despatch that the Colonial Office would not normally countenance a High Commissioner acting independently, but that Grey had taken the opportunity offered by the outbreak of lungsickness among the

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38. Robert Wilmot, A Cape Traveller's Diary, 1856, (A. Donker, 1984), p.68.

cattle and had probably done well in doing so.<sup>39</sup> He did express a fear that Grey had been too rapid in pushing forward with his ideas and that he should have started with the 'loyal' Mfengu, but the general sentiment was one of resigned acceptance.

Grey, himself, was prepared to go to almost any lengths when determined to carry through his policies and was a master at writing despatches which showed his actions in as favourable a light as possible, if not always in as accurate a light as possible. Part of his settlement plans for the frontier included white settlement in British Kaffraria in an attempt to even out the black/white ratio, promote civilization by example and consolidate the frontier. He wrote of the ability of British Kaffraria to carry a dense population when he must have been well aware that this was not true. It seems that to reduce the Xhosa population in British Kaffraria he may even have intended to move them out of the territory to make way for the proposed white settlers.<sup>40</sup> Grey was determined to introduce military pensioners into that area even though the

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39. C.O.48/368: Sir William Molesworth to Labouchere, Note on No.46, 18 December 1855.

40. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p328.



scheme had not been an unqualified success in New Zealand. He was prepared to set aside the objections made by Col. Maclean who knew the country intimately. When the latter presented his report containing his reservations about the scheme, Grey owned 'that he had sent home his despatch on the subject long before' and that Maclean's report 'put a rope around his neck'.<sup>41</sup> The Governor had no intention of modifying his plans however.

Grey had only six months to put his measures into operation before the Cattle Killing gave him an unprecedented opportunity to complete, as far as he could, the break-up of the chiefdoms. However, even before the Cattle Killing got into full swing, he was writing of the success of his measures. One has to read Grey's despatches with some caution, but it seems remarkable that he was able to induce the chiefs to accept their new position, when in August 1855 Charles Brownlee was convinced that only a revolution in both the circumstances and sentiments of the Xhosa could get them to accept Grey's proposals, and he had advised

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41. R. Wilmot, A Cape Traveller's Diary, p.68.

a delay.<sup>42</sup> Yet, in March 1856 Grey wrote to Labouchere mentioning that the Xhosa, both chiefs and people, had appeared to accept the special magistrates.<sup>43</sup> This seems all the more remarkable when one notes that in 1860 even Kama, the 'loyal' Christian chief, was attempting to free himself from the restraints of his magistrate.<sup>44</sup>

Once on the pay roll, Grey could use 'strong arm' tactics to keep a chief there. The chief, if recalcitrant, could be struck off and disciplined with the threat of force; a threat which was meted out to chief Anta when he tried to evade the village system in 1858. He was told by Col. Maclean that whatever opposition was encountered, the system would be carried out and the Xhosa not located in villages in a reasonable time would be treated as 'vagabonds and unauthorized squatters and would be punished accordingly'.<sup>45</sup> In the report on Kama, Maclean went on to note that similar attempts might be made by other chiefs, as they were by the Thembu in 1860, and that military

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42. Cape of Good Hope - Parliament, Grey Coll.G.11.c.20: Grey to Molesworth, No.46, Encl.4, Brownlee to Maclean 23 August 1855.
43. C.O.48/373: Grey to Labouchere, No.12, 22 March 1856.
44. C.O.48/402: Sub.Encl. to No.51, Maclean to Lt.Gov. Wynyard, 10 March 1860.
45. C.O.48/389: Encl.1 to No.86, Maclean to Maj. Francis R.S., Sec. to the High Commissioner, n.d.

force was important to the full development of the magisterial scheme as well as the colonization of the territory between the Kei and the Mbashe Rivers. But this was after the Cattle Killing, and Sarhili had been banished from his country by the Mounted Police, and colonization of his territory was being proposed by Grey, Lt.Gov. Wynyard and Maclean.

Why then did the chiefs accept the new dispensation prior to the Cattle Killing? They, in fact, never really had a choice. The veiled (and not so veiled) threats of force coupled with economic and political dislocation must have provided fairly strong motivation. Grey's introduction of his new system of administration coincided with a serious outbreak of lungsickness among the cattle in British Kaffraria and Kaffraria Proper. This severely depleted the chiefs' source of income and wealth, and the salary offered by Grey to the chiefs and counsellors was an attractive alternative. The introduction of salaried chiefs also encouraged the tendency of the Xhosa chiefdoms towards fission, and reduced the possibility of combined opposition in any form. Maqoma refused to meet with Sandile to discuss Grey's measures and sent a message to Col. Maclean stating that he would

at once accept Grey's offer if the Governor made him independent of Sandile.<sup>46</sup> He saw clearly the implications of receiving a government salary, as did Sandile's counsellor Soga, who strongly advised his chief to refuse the salary. In a message to Sandile Maqoma asked whether he was fully aware of what he was about to do, as hitherto the Xhosa had been British subjects in name, whereas now they would be British subjects in truth.<sup>47</sup> As far as possible Maclean met the chiefs singly to introduce the new system, and he positively refused a request from the Ngqika Xhosa to meet in counsel with the Ndlambe Xhosa.<sup>48</sup>

Apart from linking Xhosa interests to the Colony, Grey hoped with his measures seriously to weaken the authority of the chiefs over their people. In this regard it seems that his plans may well not have succeeded. Wilmot felt that the government salaries strengthened the chiefs' hold over their counsellors at least, as the chiefs had control of their

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46. Cape of Good Hope - Parliament, Grey Coll. G.11.c.20: Brownlee to Maclean, Encl.7 to No.46, 18 October 1855.

47. Ibid. Brownlee to Maclean, Encl.8 to No.46, 6 December 1855.

48. Ibid. Brownlee to Maclean, Encl.7 to No.46, 9 October 1855.

subsidies.<sup>49</sup> According to Wilmot, this was also a fact which annoyed Col. Maclean.

As far as at least one of the missionaries was concerned, it seems that Grey's intentions were also misunderstood. The Rev. William Sargeant of Annshaw Mission expressed the hope that Grey's scheme would consolidate chief Kama's authority and influence over his people and enable him to exercise a stricter surveillance over the more remote parts of his country. Not unnaturally, Sargeant also hoped that the new arrangements would facilitate missionary work as well.<sup>50</sup>

The chiefs' reasons for accepting Grey's plans are not all recorded and one can only guess at them. Certainly, introduced when the steady erosion of Xhosa society was reaching a climax, and at a time of economic distress, his system of administration must have done more than anything to sound the death knell for traditional society. An indication of the

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49. R. Wilmot, A Cape Traveller's Diary, p.62.

50. Grey Coll.G.33.c.14; Wesleyan Missionary Notices, 25 January 1857.

authority exercised by government agents among the Xhosa was given early in 1855 when first Maclean and then Major Gawler, magistrate to Mhala, were able to interfere in 'smelling out' ceremonies.<sup>51</sup>

There is little doubt that the Cattle Killing was to give Grey an undreamed of opportunity and success in his attack on the fabric of Xhosa society, but it is probably also true that, given time and his characteristic determination, Grey would have struck a hard blow at traditional chieftainship even without it. He showed this determination right at the beginning when he refused to discuss his plans with the British Kaffrarian chiefs. Grey also held high hopes for the mission schools, and intended that in a few years (he was writing in 1857) they would exercise a great effect on the Xhosa people. But although education was important to him, the educational institutions were not large and by 1856 had had little impact. Nor were they to have in the near future. So, while education could possibly

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51. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.321.

draw people from the chiefdom and provide them with new values and loyalties, it was Grey who was to provide the most potent attack, at the very heart of the Xhosa system - the position and authority of the chief, if not among his counsellors, then certainly among his people.

After the Cattle Killing, events were to move fast. By January 1857 a village system had been established<sup>52</sup> and in April Grey reported to the Cape Parliament that this, coupled with the introduction of special magistrates, salaried chiefs and the appropriation of fines for the Crown had begun to break down the 'worst parts of the Kafir polity'.<sup>53</sup> It was in this speech that Grey first broached the subject of a strong white settlement in Kaffraria Proper to control the people there. This was said soon after the first horrors of the Cattle Killing were becoming known.

Grey's 'grand design' for British Kaffraria was, however, something more than just the extension of British influence. He was interested in the Science

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52. C.O.48/380: Grey to Labouchere, No.6, 19 January 1857.

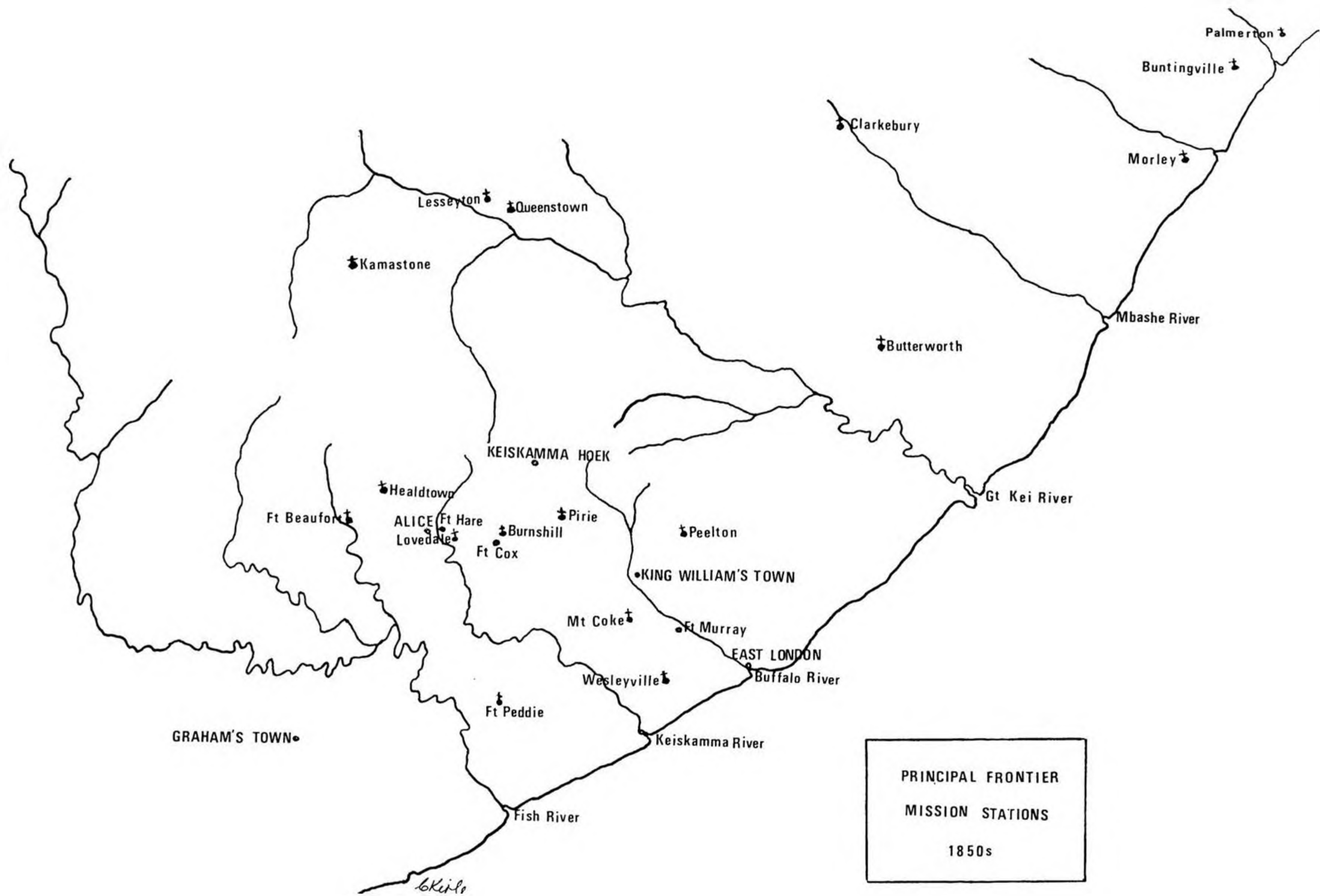
53. C.O.48/381: Grey to Labouchere, No.45, 8 April 1857. Speech at the opening of the fourth session of the Cape Parliament, 7 April 1857.

of Man, and regarded British Kaffraria as an area in which he could put his theories into practice - an area in which he could experiment. Like the Benthamites, he seems to have believed that Man could be civilized by legislatively changing his environment. He also believed that the 'civilization of the savage' could be reduced to a few natural laws, the most important of which was the drive towards food. The missionaries would have their part to play in the multi-pronged prosecution of his theories; they would be the instruments of conversion to Christianity and the educators; white immigrants would be living examples for the Xhosa to follow; and the military 'might' of the Colony would provide strong persuasion. Grey's approach to the problem was coldly clinical and authoritarian (he had more than a passing acquaintance with Carlyle and believed himself to have been influenced by him), and at times he seems to have forgotten that he was dealing with people and that Man, primitive or otherwise, can not be reduced to a 'few natural laws'.

Whenever possible, Grey utilized frontier 'agents' to his advantage. Of these the missionaries, because of the nature of their work and their relative



prominence in frontier society, have been linked most closely with Grey in Xhosa tradition and recent historiography. Because of this, it is important to analyse their work more closely and to investigate the extent of their interaction with Grey and other local colonial officials.



### CHAPTER THREE

#### THE MISSIONARIES AND GREY 1854-6

Of all the 'collaborating' groups that were involved in Grey's frontier plans, the missionaries have been singled out for the most criticism in after years. Radical historians have accused them of paving the way for the extension of colonial authority and of co-operating with Grey to break the power of the Xhosa as a nation. In the sense of Atmore and Marks<sup>1</sup>, they have been called a collaborating group, and at times have been considered the most effective collaborators of all.

There is little doubt that the missionary bodies were more than willing to assist Grey in his plans for the extension of Christianity and for the 'civilizing' and educating of the Xhosa, but before a blanket judgement from the hindsight of the 20th Century can be passed, one needs to investigate their <sup>yes ✓</sup> motives for 'collaborating' and to look at their view of the role they were to play in Grey's

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1. A. Atmore & S. Marks, 'The Imperial Factor', p.111.

frontier plans. To answer the accusation that the missionary bodies were the most effective collaborators of all, it is necessary to examine their contribution in real terms to Grey's overall scheme and to assess the success of the part they played.

As part of his 'civilizing' programme Grey planned to extend the existing missionary establishments, especially in the field of education. He hoped not only to encourage the spread of Christianity but also to introduce the teaching of trades. Grey's emphasis on Christianity was not so much the result of a deep religious conviction on his part, but because he considered Christianity to be the 'highest moral system' that man had yet developed.<sup>2</sup> Grey hoped, through Christianity and medical hospitals, to break down superstition and with the trade schools, to provide Xhosa youths with an entry into the capitalist cash economy of the Colony.

Grey introduced his plans to the Cape Parliament in the philanthropic terms which the missionaries could understand and appreciate. According to him the Xhosa

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2. J. Milne, Romance of a Pro-Consul, p.271.

could not be left alone without attempts to reclaim and civilize them, as one could not ignore one's duty to one's fellow man. He proposed to make unremitting efforts to 'raise the Kaffirs in Christianity and civilization' by establishing and using missions connected with industrial schools. In order not to be misunderstood by the members of parliament, Grey spelled this out more clearly, underlining the advantages to the Colony itself. His course of action would pacify the frontier and bring the Xhosa into an economic relationship with the Colony.

It is necessary to consider just how successful Grey hoped the missionaries would be and, therefore, how large a role he expected them to play in his plans. The Colonial Office spoke in sweeping terms of Grey's success at the Cape opening up 'vast territory' to the influence of Christianity and, therefore, civilizing 'savage tribes'.<sup>3</sup> But Victorian administrators sometimes had difficulty in distinguishing between the spread of Christianity and the extension

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3. C.O.48/365: Draft George Grey (Bart.) to Grey (Governor), No.23, 3 June 1855.

of the British Empire. Grey, himself, spoke enthusiastically of the work to be done by the missionaries, so much so that the residents of King William's Town, in an address to Sir George on the 11 June 1856, thanked him under Providence for peace, for opening a source of wealth and security to them, and for the cheering prospect of thousands of heathen being 'brought to that light where salvation is to be found'.<sup>4</sup> This was before the Cattle Killing raised their hopes even further.

Grey was a persuasive speaker and not above distorting the truth when it suited him. He must surely have been aware that the missionaries in their thirty or so years on the frontier had had little visible success and that little short of a miracle would bring the impact that Grey was suggesting within the next few years. What, then, did Grey really want? In pushing forward a vigorous, multi-pronged attack on the Xhosa social system, he viewed the missionaries as forming but one of the tines. It remains to be

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4. C.O.48/375: Address from the European Residents of King William's Town to Grey, 11 June 1856, Encl.1 to No.60, 14 July 1856.

seen how important a time. To the missionaries, Grey's suggestions appeared to be the opportunity they so desperately needed to be able to make a significant impact on the Xhosa. He was not the first governor to consult the missionaries,<sup>5</sup> but he seemed to promise more than other governors before him. The future seemed brighter than it had been since their first years in South Africa, and they hailed Grey as a great Christian governor.

The Evangelical Revival in Britain in the 18th Century led to the establishment of several missionary societies based on Christ's injunction to go out into all the world and preach the Gospel. By the 1850s the most active of the missionary societies on the frontier, and the longest in the field, were the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and the Scottish Missionary Societies (by the 1850s, the Free Church of

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5. M. Ashley, 'African Education and Society in the Nineteenth Century Eastern Cape', in C. Saunders & R. Derricourt (eds.), Beyond the Cape Frontier, (Longmans, 1974), p.202; R.H.W. Shepherd, Lovedale South Africa 1841-1941, (Lovedale Press, 1940), p.130. Sir Harry Smith sent out a circular in 1848 asking missionary advice on how best to achieve his aim of 'civilizing' frontier tribesmen. This was followed by gifts to various mission stations of a plough, a trek tow, five yokes, one muid each of wheat, barley and oats as seed, and in some cases, spades and axes were added.

Scotland). They typified the Victorian ideals of 'Protestantism and Improvement',<sup>6</sup> and the work-ethic which permeated the outlook not only of the British administrators at Westminster, but also of the Cape administrators battling to maintain stability on the frontier. It was in some respects unfortunate for the success of missionary work that both missionaries and administrators thus viewed the Christian religion and 'civilization' as two sides of the same coin. In discussing the relationship between the missionaries and the colonial authorities (in this case, Grey) it was found both convenient and appropriate for the above reasons, to concentrate research almost entirely upon these two societies.<sup>7</sup>

Methodist Missionary activity began rather haphazardly in southern Africa in the early 19th Century, but by

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6. D. M. Schreuder, 'The Cultural Factor in Victorian Imperialism: a case study of the British 'civilizing mission'', in The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, 4(1975-76), p.285.
  7. German missionaries and the London Missionary Society were both active on the frontier at this time, but to a lesser degree. The Anglican Church only entered the mission field in response to Grey's offer of aid to missionary societies.



1826 Barnabas Shaw, the first really active Methodist minister at the Cape, had established a thriving station with a permanent Christian community. From this station grew other centres for evangelism.

The real period for Methodist growth started after the arrival of the 1820 Settlers. William Shaw had been invited to the Cape as chaplain to a group of Methodist families. Once on the frontier, he undertook to care not only for the whole region, but for all races. He planned a chain of connected stations from the Cape frontier region to Natal. Wesleyville was established in 1823, Mount Coke in 1825, Butterworth in 1827, Morley 1829, Clarkebury and Buntingville in 1830 and Shawbury and Palmerton a little later. Shaw had laid the foundations for the first coherent systematic missionary expansion right into the heart of Xhosaland across the Kei River.

Education was one of the major interests of the Scottish missions. The first two missionaries to arrive in the Eastern Cape, William Thomson (paid by the government) and John Bennie, both of the Glasgow Missionary Society, established themselves at Chumie

between the Fish and Kei Rivers. They joined John Brownlee, former London Missionary Society missionary, who was now a government missionary agent. In 1823 John Ross of the Church of Scotland arrived at Chumie, bringing with him a small printing press. As Xhosa was developed into a written language, so books were printed in Xhosa. With this went the necessary education to make the people literate. The main purpose of their education was evangelization and the training of so-called native agents and teachers. The Presbyterian system of church government through lay committees also made it necessary in all new mission fields to offer a comprehensive education. In the 1850s African converts sat regularly on the Lovedale Presbytery meetings as Elders of the Church.

By the end of 1824 Bennie and Ross, as the representatives of the Glasgow Missionary Society, established a stations about 12 miles south east of Chumie and named it Lovedale. The heart of Lovedale was to be its seminary. Ecclesiastical disputes in Scotland split the work in South Africa in two: partly a missionary undertaking by the Free Church of Scotland and partly the work of the United Presbyterian Church. Lovedale became the responsibility of the Free Church of Scotland. The seminary established there was

open to all races and denominations and by the 1850s was providing a sound education.

The missionaries on the frontier found themselves caught in a dilemma: on the one hand they could co-operate with the colonial authorities and survive; on the other, raise obstacles and run the gauntlet of officialdom. Because they never quite solved this problem, they were not wholly trusted either by colonists or by the Xhosa, and the more they were seen to co-operate with Cape administrators, the more they were regarded with suspicion by their would-be converts. Col. Maclean typified the sort of reserve felt by those in authority towards the missionaries. He was willing to accept the general principles of missionary institutions and any 'safe' plan for the promotion of Christianity and civilization, but distrusted the discretion and motives of certain individuals and was a little jealous of the influence the missionaries seemed likely to gain under Grey. He kept a close watch over the working of different institutions so as to 'obviate any danger to the safety of the Queen's territories'.<sup>8</sup> He drafted

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8. B.K.90: Letter dated 30 September 1854.

a letter to the Rev. Richard Birt of Peelton, which included an assurance of his full support for all 'good missionaries'<sup>9</sup> and was very abrupt when he considered a missionary to be interfering in general governmental preserves.<sup>10</sup> Most of the criticism from officials and colonists arose when missionaries attempted to protect the interests of their converts or possible converts. The criticism levelled at the missionaries by the colonists was at times more vicious than the authorities'. In 1854 the military chaplain at Keiskamma Hoek expressed his opinion of the danger which resulted from the 'missionaries being permitted to assemble together under pretence of converting the heathen'.<sup>11</sup> He pointed out that not a fraction of the Xhosa in Kaffraria had become Christians, nor had the others any intention of becoming so, and he acidly remarked that the missionaries would have far more success if their influence were confined to moral influence alone. This comment

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9. B.K.90: Draft of a letter written in 1855.
10. Such as in the matter of the settlement of Mfengu and Xhosa in the Crown Reserve in 1856. The Lovedale missionaries tried to protect the interests of the Mfengu in the area; B.K.90: Laing to Maclean, 20 December 1854; Maclean to Laing, 24 July 1856; Minutes of the Lovedale Presbytery, July 1856.
11. B.K.90: Military Chaplain to Maclean, 22 September 1854.

also highlights the conflicts which existed not only within the missionary movements themselves (by now more or less resolved), but also between the different religious denominations and between missionaries and colonial ministers.

The mid-19th Century was a period of stagnation for frontier missions, especially for the Methodists.<sup>12</sup> They had, perhaps, over-extended themselves with their rapid expansion into the Transkeian territories and frontier wars had resulted in the destruction or abandonment of several stations. The Methodist Church as a whole had also been disrupted by controversies in the 1840s. Had the missionaries been able unreservedly to throw in their lot with the Xhosa, they might well have had more success, but they needed the sanction of the colonial authorities to set up, or to re-occupy, stations in colonial territory, and on occasion, had to rely on the strong arm of the law for help in difficult times. The Rev. Richard Birt expressed this clearly when he 'acknowledged with

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12. P. Hinchliff, The Church in South Africa, (S.P.C.K., London, 1968), p.48.

thankfulness' the support he had obtained from Maclean when required for 'the enforcing of order or the expulsion of the refractory' from Peelson.<sup>13</sup> The missionaries had needed government protection on occasion and even went so far as to ask for government help in eradicating what were to them, obnoxious customs among the Xhosa.<sup>14</sup> At least three missionaries had turned government agent: John Brownlee and William Thomson in the 1820s, and Henry Calderwood in the 1850s. This certainly identified the missionary movement more closely with the colonial administration.

This obvious connection with governmental authority and the attempt made by the missionaries to bring an entire 'system', rather than simply the Christian message, to their would-be converts made the Xhosa reluctant to accept Christianity. In spite of the

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13. B.K.91: The Rev. R. Birt to Maclean, 4 October 1860.

14. B.K.91: Rev. Greenstock to Maclean, Keiskamma Hoek, 23 March 1859; requested that a stop be put to circumcision among Mfengu in the Reserve; Ibid. Memorial from Anglican missionaries to the Lt. Governor, K.W.T. 25 February 1861, requesting that the government actively discourage Xhosa customs, especially intonjane.

slow erosion of their traditional social system by the 1850s, the Xhosa polity was still strongly resistant to the missionary onslaughts. Many chiefs accepted missionaries, but seldom for religious reasons. The political advantage of using missionaries as mediators between themselves and the colony was a strong incentive to having a missionary residing near by. Some minor chiefs accepted missionaries in order to improve their own status among their people. The two groups which more readily accepted Christianity, the Mfengu and Gqunukhwebe, both existed outside the mainstream of Cape Nguni life and did not possess the same degree of social cohesion as the other Xhosa people.

Not only were there few converts, but acceptance of a missionary, therefore, did not necessarily mean acceptance of the Gospel. This is not made clear in missionary conversion figures themselves. There was a deep suspicion of their secular motives and of the attack launched on Xhosa customs. Some missionaries considered the Xhosa to be sunk in a 'state of the lowest wretchedness and the vilest

wickedness,'<sup>15</sup> and aimed to 'uplift' them by bestowing upon them all the benefits of a superior civilization. It is perhaps relevant to point out here that, for the missionaries of this period, the issue was a cultural one, not racial. Once Christianity and education had been absorbed, the new convert was accepted on the same terms as any other Christian.

The missionaries' main targets were some of the Xhosa's most fundamental social institutions such as witchcraft, polygamy and initiation. They could also not understand the missionaries' objections to dancing and nudity. The traditional religion of the Xhosa was so bound up in all phases of Xhosa life that, as long as that system maintained some sort of coherence, there was little likelihood of great numbers accepting a new religion. This was clearly recognized by J. C. Warner, 'Tambookie Agent', when he wrote:

'... the political and religious governments of the Kaffir Tribes are so intimately connected that the one cannot be

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15. G. Brown, Personal Adventure in South Africa, (London, 1855), p.143.



overthrown without the other - they must stand or fall together.<sup>16</sup>

The Xhosa could see no reason why they should believe the missionaries' message. 'How did those words get in the book you tell us about? How did the first man who wrote them know them?' they asked.<sup>17</sup>

The reaction to the missionaries and their work by both colonists and the Xhosa was strong, in spite of the fact that the missionaries were relatively few in number. The Xhosa chiefs, rainmakers and witch-doctors were deeply concerned about the threat of Christianity to their position in traditional society. If unconvinced about the Gospel itself, Xhosa people were, nevertheless, prepared to utilize certain aspects of Christianity if it seemed appropriate to the occasion. From time to time missionaries were consulted as potential rainmakers and missionary Young once told a group of Xhosa who were reluctant to leave their ploughing for his preaching that God would send a crop failure.<sup>18</sup> The

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16. Col. Maclean, A Compendium of Kaffir Laws and Customs, (1856). Part of the concluding remarks of the contribution of J.C. Warner.

17. Quoted in J.B. Peires, 'A History of the Xhosa c1700-1835' (unpublished thesis, Rhodes University, 1976), p.146.

18. Ibid. Footnote 52.

threat succeeded - which left a deep impression on those around the station!

There was also predictable concern among the chiefs about the habit cultivated by the missionaries of gathering their converts around the mission stations and of the converts then transferring their loyalty to the missionary and local government. This would result in a steady erosion of their power by a whittling away of their followers. Sandile expressed a wish that the teachers among his people would go to the people and not gather them around mission stations where they were beyond his influence. He expressed this fear clearly when he asked of the missionaries:

'Are they not men who at home have no people of their own, and they come here to take my people from me? .... They only take my people and give them to the government ... only teach men that they are not to fight even although their chief be in danger ....'<sup>19</sup>

The accusation is, of course, true, as Christian converts generally stayed out of frontier wars. It was precisely this which appealed to Grey, who hoped that an extension of mission work would increase the numbers

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19. Quoted in G. Brown, Personal Adventure in S.A., p.154.

of Xhosa who would become 'loyal' to the colony and passive during any frontier disturbances. The missionaries, for their part, considered it a distinct drawback for their teaching not to have their people living on mission land.<sup>20</sup> The reasons for this were not only the practical difficulties of itinerating among scattered communities (at least for Methodists), but also the probability of the converts slipping back into 'heathen' ways if left without the guidance of a missionary among their own people.

The lifestyles of the converts living around the mission stations also changed radically as their needs altered and their material demands became more sophisticated. Subsistence cultivation and communal ownership of land was superseded by individual land tenure and increased agricultural production as the Xhosa became inextricably bound up with the colonial cash economy.

The reaction and resistance of the chiefs to Christianity might seem to indicate that the missionaries

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20. B.K.91: A. McDiarmid to Col. Maclean, 15 March 1859.

were having at least some success in converting large numbers of Xhosa. But an analysis of their converts prior to 1856 clearly shows that this is not true. The largest number of converts were Mfengu and Ggunukhwebe who were regarded as inferior by the Xhosa. They were the 'social misfits' on the frontier. The Xhosa proper living on the mission stations were, for the most part, refugees from their own society and mainly women. They had chosen to live on the mission stations because they were seeking protection for various reasons. They were young girls escaping from forced marriages; widows who had fled the levirate;<sup>21</sup> those accused of witchcraft and condemned to death.

In fact, missionaries counted their success in small numbers. In the annual report of Kamastone Methodist Mission station for 1855 it was mentioned that at only one of the five outstations could a class be formed, and that class consisted of five - one member and four on trial. The number in the society on the main

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21. Levirate: the custom by which the brother or next of kin to a deceased man was bound under certain circumstances to marry the widow and raise children in the dead man's name.

station at Kamastone was:

Whites	7
Coloured	95
On trial	18

Reports from the Free Church of Scotland stations were little different. The Rev. John Ross noted in his journal in March 1853 that on one Sunday he had visited three outstations. He had twenty adult hearers at the first station among the Mfengu, and twelve at another. There was no gathering at the third, but he spoke to some individually.<sup>22</sup> Once peace returned to the frontier after the 1850-53 War, attendance did increase, and at some services attendance could even be counted in the hundreds, but of these few were converts, and the numbers given for converts can seldom be taken at face value.

With this missionary record, what success did Grey hope the missionaries would have in the overall scheme of things on the frontier? And given his critical attitude towards the 'political' role of the missionary bodies in New Zealand, why did he here place such emphasis on the influence for the colonial good that the

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22. Ross papers, Cory Library, MS 3274: The Journal of the Rev. John Ross, March 1853.

missionaries would gain over the Xhosa people? Certainly, by using missionary bodies Grey was giving substance to his 'philanthropic' speeches about the Xhosa and giving credibility to the image of a 'Christian' governor that he was carefully fostering. He was trusted by the missionaries who had access, however limited, to the Xhosa on a non-official level and the missionaries were the only agents of education on the frontier to groups other than the whites. Grey was practical about his use of the missionaries: at no time did he allow them free rein. They were watched closely and upbraided when considered to have stepped out of line. Grey was also determined to carry through his proposals as soon and as vigorously as possible and the missionaries provided an additional opening into Xhosa society, increasing the scope of his attack. The missionaries would supply a more subversive and subtle approach than his resident magistrates, undermining Xhosa society from within, while he took issue with the chiefs themselves. In this instance, then, the missionaries could well be accused of opening the way for colonial advance, however small the opening may have been.

But most important was Grey's firm belief in the

efficacy of education in the 'civilizing' process. He was sure that education would be the answer to the frontier problems, especially the education of the sons of the chiefs, and he was later to found Zonnebloem in Cape Town for this purpose. The missionaries were the best people to offer this education. Not only were they already established on the frontier, but their views (particularly those of the Scottish missionaries) on the importance of education in the process of civilization coincided with his own. Both considered the extension of Western learning to be the surest way of breaking down tribal custom and superstition and of drawing the black man into the colonial society on various levels. They agreed on the desirability of destroying the tribal system, but on the 'level' of entry into colonial society Grey and the missionaries differed. Grey wished to educate the Xhosa into a subordinate role in colonial society, something which cannot be said of the missionaries, at least until (perhaps) the late 1860s.

Grey was also interested in forming as large a group as possible of 'loyal' subjects. Education introduced a new 'class' distinction in Xhosa society between pagan 'red' Xhosa and 'school' people. An educated person was willy-nilly alienated from his

former interests and comrades, and drawn towards colonial society and values. He tended, therefore, to stand aloof from the Xhosa in times of war. Unfortunately for the convert, as far as the colonists were concerned, he was not accepted as an equal and at the same time was now rejected by his fellow Xhosa.

Thus, Grey saw missionary education as a means of spreading his influence over the Xhosa a little further, though in the wider 19th Century context, humanitarians on the whole were convinced that the salvation of the 'benighted' heathen in this world, and the next, could be attained only through religious instruction and education.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately for the missionaries and for the immediate success of Grey's plans, the schools were made the focal point of pressure on those aspects of traditional Xhosa culture which they considered most obstructive to the advance of Christian civilization. For this very reason the Xhosa as a whole rejected missionary education, and would continue to do so for a number of years to come.

Chiefs found 'school' people as unamenable to their

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23. J.S. Galbraith, 'Myths of 'Little England' Era', in American Historical Review, 67(Oct. 1961),p.45.



authority as the Christian converts, and again, the Mfengu and Gqunukhwebe formed the main focus of the educational efforts in the first half of the 19th Century. They remained the hope on which the missionaries pinned their faith for a breakthrough among the Xhosa as a whole. The Rev. William Govan in 1854 wrote of the Xhosa:

'Whether we look at the social position of these peoples just beginning to emerge from barbarism and in that state thrown among and mixed up with an energetic, progressing and encroaching Colonial population; or at their spiritual interests - the establishment and advancement of the Gospel among themselves; or whether we advert more to the propagation of the Gospel through the great Continent of Africa, into which the Cape Colony forms one, and perhaps the most important outlet - in every view, Education - sound and effective Christian Education is the great desideratum.'<sup>24</sup>

This statement succinctly sums up the emphasis the missionaries placed on education. The Wesleyan Missionary Society went even further in recognizing that the Xhosa youth should be their prime target, for, as they said, it was only in the raising of a class of young persons who would be better instructed and more thoroughly imbued with the principles of Biblical

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24. Church of Scotland Archives, National Library of Scotland, South African Papers, Acc.7548: The Rev. William Govan to I. Hawkins, Esq., 16 February 1854.

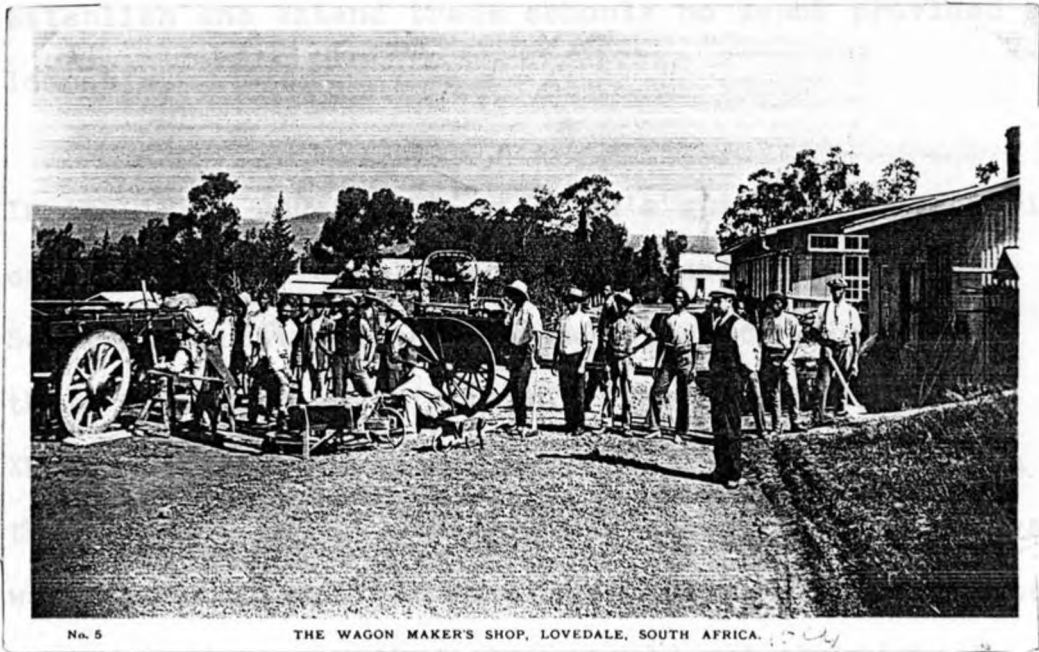
truth than the adult converts, that there would be any hope for the future.<sup>25</sup> However, in spite of Xhosa opposition, education had, by the 1850s, more effectively begun to nibble at the edges of the pre-literate Xhosa society than Christianity alone had, and Grey and the frontier missionaries might be forgiven for thinking that doubling the effort would bring significant numbers to the schools.

One of the biggest problems for the missionaries prior to 1854 (especially the Methodists) had been the lack of funds and suitable teachers. Grey's proposal to provide grants to extend existing institutions and establish new ones, would mean new opportunities for the societies. It is, perhaps, to the credit of the Free Church of Scotland that their Synod did not immediately accept the grant. It was opposed in principal to government interference in religious matters, and felt that it could not at the same time accept money from friends of the Missionary Society and from government authorities. The majority of the Synod, however, were not against the use of government aid to advance the secular education and well-being of their converts.<sup>26</sup>

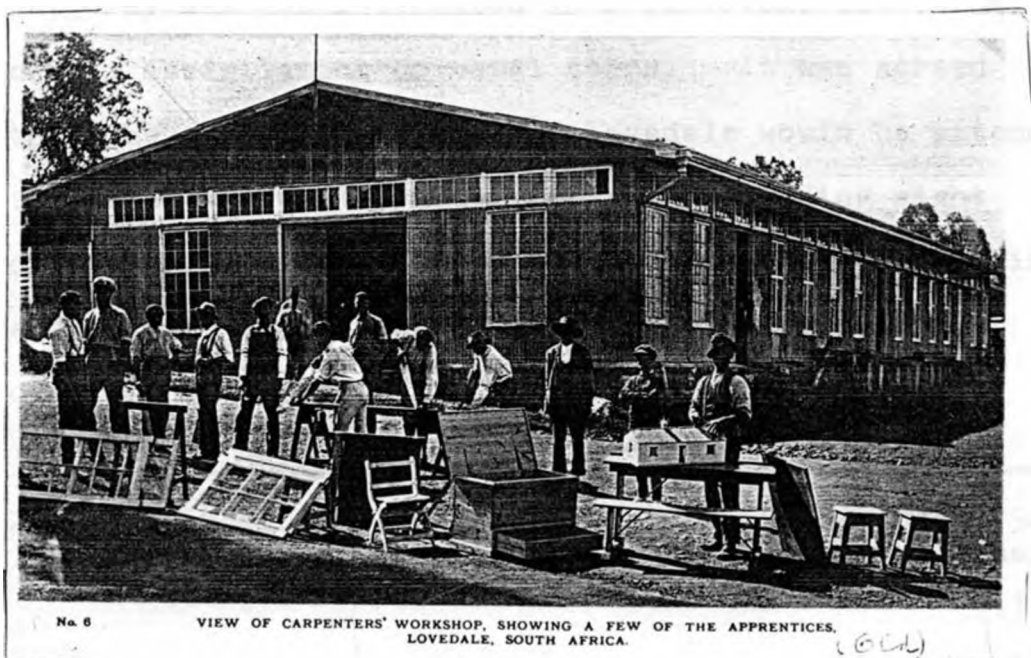
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25. Papers relative to the Wesleyan missions and the state of the heathen countries, No. CLIII (S.A. Library): Report of the Wesleyan Mission Station at Salem, September 1858.

26. Church of Scotland Archives, Edinburgh, MS156-80: A. Somerville, Sec. to the Rev. J. Cumming, 31 May 1856.



## Lovedale - trade departments



Thus, Grey's proviso that the grant should be used to establish and extend trade schools no doubt provided a loophole.

In the 1850s under William Govan's guidance, the curriculum at Lovedale followed the 'classical' lines of Scottish education, and several students completed their education in Edinburgh. Tiyo Soga, the first Xhosa missionary, was a product of Lovedale. Though the emphasis at the Seminary was later to change, Govan was convinced that the Africans' future lay in an integrated society and that they should get the highest form of European education they could cope with. In other words, the Xhosa, Mfengu or any fully educated person should be fully assimilated into white society. But Grey was not interested in a classical education, nor in assimilation on equal terms. It was agreed that the education offered at Lovedale would be extended to include several trades, but without losing sight of the primary aim. Grey advanced £2 200 for building and £600 to start waggonmaking and blacksmiths' departments.<sup>27</sup>

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27. Church of Scotland Archives, S.A. Papers, Acc.7548: Report on Foreign missions submitted to the General Assembly, May 1858.

The Wesleyan Missionary Society had no major educational institution until Grey's time. Evangelism rather than education had been the main emphasis, and its men were not as highly trained as those of the Free Church of Scotland. The Society was given a donation of £3 000 from the Imperial Treasury and an industrial school was opened at Healdtown with the Rev. John Ayliff in charge. The emphasis at Healdtown was on religion and the teaching of useful trades, with some basic instruction in subjects in the ordinary school curriculum given in the morning. The Methodists with their educational institutions thus fell more in line with Grey's provisos. In the first year at Healdtown there was a total of 63 pupils, both boys and girls. Projects for 1857 included the establishment of trades such as carpenters, wheelwrights and blacksmiths, and, if possible, tailors and shoemakers. This was, as Ayliff wrote, in order to carry out fully the 'benevolent plans of the government'.<sup>28</sup>

Grey's financial support and encouragement led to the

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28. WMMS, Archives, Cape Town, A80: Report of the Healdtown Industrial Institution, 1856.

establishment of industrial departments not only at Lovedale and Healdtown, but also at Salem, Lesseyton, D'Urban, Shiloh and Goshen. Healdtown was established mainly for the Mfengu as it was situated in Mfengu territory. Even though this group had a tradition of 'loyalty' to the government, they, too, were initially suspicious of the institution, because they believed that the government intended making the boys soldiers. However, by the end of the first year (1856), Ayliff was able to report that the Mfengu regarded Healdtown as one of the 'richest boons conferred upon them and their children by the government.'<sup>29</sup>

Ayliff was perhaps the one missionary who gave the Governor his full support, but with the realism of one long in the mission field, he was not too optimistic about quick results. He ended his report for 1856 by saying that Grey's scheme would have to be carried out with energy and perseverence.<sup>30</sup>

The smaller schools established in other parts of the country had more limited aims than Lovedale and Healdtown.

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29. Ibid.

30. My italics.

The success of the new educational institution in promoting Grey's plans depended in the first instance on the missionaries and their teachers, but Grey left nothing to chance. He had a genuine interest in education and children, and in testing his theories on the 'native races', but he had an even greater interest in maintaining a check on the work of the missionaries while keeping an eye on frontier developments. Grey was determined not to give the missionaries the chance to assume a political role or to be able to take any independent action in any situation which might arise.<sup>31</sup> In fact, the Free Church of Scotland Synod had been offended by the implication that they might have any political objectives on the frontier.<sup>32</sup> Grey visited the schools as often as he could, listened to lessons and examinations, distributed prizes, talked to pupils and teachers, and generally tried to 'win friends and

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31. Both Grey and Maclean were determined to curtail any 'political' activity of the missionaries and were quick to let them know if they had stepped out of line; cf. B.K.90: Letter from Private Secretary's Office, Grahamstown, 4 February 1854; B.K.90: Maclean to Birt, draft of a letter written in 1855; B.K.91: Maclean to Kayser, 19 December 1857. The Rev. Thomas Jenkins, missionary with Faku in Pondoland, was thanked by Maclean for his services as peace maker between Chief Umdumbi and the government without assuming the character of a political agent.
32. Free Church of Scotland Archives, MS156-80: A Somerville to J. Cumming, 31 May 1856. The Synod instructed the Rev. J. Cumming to lodge a complaint, and decided against setting up a new station with the Thembu because of Grey's insinuations.

influence people' by distributing largesse from his private purse. The institutions, for their part, were required to submit an annual report of progress as well as copies of their accounts.

Whatever Grey and the missionaries had hoped, there was no immediate increase in the numbers of those wanting education. The Xhosa remained as slow to accept education as they had been to accept Christianity, one of the major problems being that the missionaries were not prepared to offer education without religion. After all, one of the basic aims of missionary education was to enable the converts to read the Bible. It was, in fact, only in the 1870s and 1880s that a general demand for education came from the Xhosa themselves, not only from mission people and their connexions, but also from a tribal élite. In the 1880s there was a growing level of hostility among whites towards African education, and a swing, even at Lovedale, towards Grey's notion of educating blacks for a subordinate role in white society. The demand from the Africans was for a return to the original education offered by Lovedale in the early years and was a response to the closer contact with whites in the new industrial situation in South Africa.



Though not government spies in the conventional sense of the word, by the 1850s the missionaries had more or less been forced to accept their dependence on the colonial government. Their work seemed, therefore, more and more to support colonial aims. On the frontier the missionaries were the link between two worlds, reluctant to relinquish ties with the old, or to make concessions to the new. Inevitably they were caught between the two. It is clear that the missionaries hoped that Grey's support would at least herald a new age of success in the field, but what measure of success in his terms the Governor himself hoped for from the missionaries and from the extension of the educational establishments is not clear. The Rev. H. Calderwood, for one, was convinced that Grey's use of missionary bodies as agents of civilization was essential to the success of his plans,<sup>33</sup> but Ayliff, Grey's most ardent supporter, knew that perseverance would be necessary if significant results were to be seen.<sup>34</sup> The programme of 'civilization' relying on missionary education would be a long, slow process, and Grey must have known it. Certainly,

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33. H. Calderwood, Caffres and Caffre Missions, (London, 1858), p.139.

34. See p.81.

these long-term results would be likely to correspond to what Grey wanted, because the missionaries were first and foremost Englishmen (or Scots) with similar beliefs in order and good government, and Christian converts were notorious among the Xhosa for their alienation from their old loyalties. But it was the Mfengu who were 'government people' and the most likely candidates for education, and it was the Xhosa as a whole whom Grey wanted under his control. It was also clear to the missionaries that the most likely progress would be among the Mfengu. McDiarmid in a letter to Maclean mentioned that the Mfengu were 'desirous to stand well with the government' and that gentle pressure on those near the station would fill the schools.<sup>35</sup>

There is little doubt that the missionaries aimed to make 'loyal' subjects out of all of their converts. This aim was clearly stated by the Rev. R. Birt of Peelton, and could stand as a representative comment from nearly all the missionaries:

'... my ambition as an Englishman, as well as a Christian teacher is, that the govern-

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35. B.K.91: A. McDiarmid to Maclean, 15 March 1859.

ment may have on this station a community on which it can look with approval and satisfaction.<sup>36</sup>

So far so good. Grey would have approved. But there just were not that many Xhosa on the stations, as Grey must well have known.

The missionaries did help Grey in other, less specific, ways as well. In 1855 the Rev. William Shaw, travelling in British Kaffraria and Kaffraria Proper, prepared the residents for a visit from Grey and furnished the Governor with somewhat optimistic information when he mentioned that the 'great numbers' of people under the influence and control of the missionaries amounted to some '10 000 souls' between the Mbashe and Umzimvubu Rivers.<sup>37</sup> Shaw had the grace to admit that they were not all Christians, but still insisted that they submitted to the missionaries. Perhaps Grey was led astray by such optimistic accounts, having himself a penchant for accepting only what he wanted to hear. But it is this sort of exaggeration which could only too easily have given rise to the accusa-

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36. B.K.91: The Rev. R. Birt to Maclean, 4 October 1860.

37. C.O.48/367: The Rev. William Shaw to Sir George Grey, 10 July 1855, encl. to No.101, 17 July 1855.

tion that the missionaries were followed by the British government, and the extravagant use of numbers could easily make it seem that the missionary work was more successful than it was.

A sober look at the facts of missionary advance on the frontier must have shown Grey that if it was quick results he was looking for, he could not rely too heavily on the missionaries. Education had, certainly, made a slow but steady advance, but the same could not be said for Christianity. Anthony Trollope, writing some twenty years after the Cattle Killing that was supposed to have given the missionaries their breakthrough, commented that the simple teaching of religion had never brought large numbers of 'natives' to 'European' habits, though he had no doubt that European habits would bring about religion.<sup>38</sup> Robert Wilmot, in 1856, expressed similar sentiments when he suggested that missionary efforts had been useless and would continue to be so unless the Xhosa were first 'civilized'. In a pre-industrial era, Wilmot hoped the 'civilizing schemes of

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38. Quoted in Schreuder, 'The Cultural Factor in Victorian Imperialism', p.309.

the farmer and mechanic' would prepare the way for Christianity.<sup>39</sup> Even Ayliff thought that much of the resistance to him might be broken down if he could offer the Xhosa employment.<sup>40</sup> These remarks highlight a debate, which will be discussed more fully later, about religious expression in society. The most familiar writers in this field are Durkheim and Max Weber. Durkheim's proposition, in general terms, was that religious belief synchronized with the network of social relations in a primitive society; Max Weber, on the other hand, was interested primarily in the ways in which different types of social experiences were related to different modes of religious expression and belief, and he believed that, in the Protestant Ethic, religion provided the rationalization for social actions.

In the final analysis the missionaries on the Cape eastern frontier formed just a part of Grey's programme for pacification, but in taking any part at all, they laid themselves open to some of the later accusa-

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39. R. Wilmot, A Cape Traveller's Diary, p.126.

40. C.O.48/368: Ayliff's report on Healdtown for 1855, Encl. to No.129 of 28 November 1855.

tions against them. Given missionary fortunes at the time, it is a moot point whether they could have remained aloof from any government plans in the 1850s. In any event, they were not to play the most effective part (Grey's system of resident magistrates would probably have done that), nor were they to be the most spectacular part of the scheme (Dr. Fitzgerald and the new hospital at King William's Town were that), but by associating themselves with Grey in however minor a role, they linked their reputations to his in the years which followed. The government agents, or resident magistrates, usurped much of the chiefs' power; the public works programme opened up British Kaffraria to the colonial military forces; the hospital attempted to show up 'witch doctors' as charlatans, and the granting of land titles was to take the place of the chief's delegation of communally held land. To complete the picture, the patchwork of European settlers in British Kaffraria was to act as an 'example' to the Xhosa - civilization by osmosis.

If the missionaries in their collaboration with Grey were intended only for a minor role, what then did

Grey see as the key to his plans? Perhaps the clue lies in the speech he addressed to the Cape Parliament in March 1856. In making a plea for military pensioners to assist in his defence arrangements he went on to say that those acquainted with 'barbarous tribes' knew that unless there was a force available sufficient to:

'... coerce and punish them if they break into revolt, it is almost hopeless to attempt to elevate and civilize them.'<sup>41</sup>

He continued that barbarians attribute kindness to fear and generosity to 'timid apprehensions'. As usual, one has to be careful about accepting Grey's words at face value, especially if he was after something - in this case, support from the Cape Parliament - but the thought is worth mulling over. Did Grey intend to use force if necessary to carry out his re-organization of the frontier districts? He wanted to extend British rule to Natal and would certainly have needed a force in reserve to overcome possible resistance. Nearer at home, and more immediately, he probably felt that he needed strong backing for the introduction of

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41. C.O.48/373: Speech delivered by his Excellency the Governor at the opening of the Third Session of the Colonial Parliament, encl. to No.18, 14 March 1856.

his new system of administration among the Xhosa, for both Maclean and Brownlee had told him to expect opposition. When Grey spoke of British Kaffraria supporting a large population, he knew that in order to introduce European settlers, space would have to be made by removing the Xhosa already living there.

Grey's actions in the first months of his governorship lend weight to this theory. He early set out to convince the Colonial Office that troops should be retained at the Cape at a time when the same Colonial Office was hoping to reduce expenses at the Colony. Grey did this in typical Grey fashion - by pursuing his cause with a doggedness which at times exasperated those receiving his despatches. Long before his 'chiefs' plot' was set in motion after the Cattle Killing<sup>42</sup> Grey had introduced the idea of a Xhosa 'threat' to the Colony.

In January 1855, a month after arriving at the Cape, Grey reported a deathbed 'confession' of a Xhosa/Mfengu

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42. See J. Peires, 'The late great plot: The official delusion concerning the Cattle Killing 1856-1857', a Paper delivered at the biennial conference of the S.A. Historical Society, 17-19 January 1983. Grey maintained that the Cattle Killing was the result of a plot by Sarhili and Moshoeshoe to involve the Xhosa in a war with the Colony.



alliance against the Colony.<sup>43</sup> Vigilance, he said, would be necessary. In March of the same year he again reported a possible Xhosa/Mfengu alliance.<sup>44</sup> The Colonial Office was, at first, receptive to the suggestions, even seeing war preparations when Grey did not. Grey reported the frontier districts to be in a state of complete tranquility in June 1855, with chiefs turning their attention to agriculture, but the men in London were not satisfied, having had the seeds of doubt sown by Grey in previous despatches. A note on the despatch pointed out that the Ngqika could be deceiving Grey and that the sowing of crops could just as well be a preparation for war.<sup>45</sup> This was a point forgotten by them when, a year later, it was frequently suggested that destroying crops was a preparation for war. However, as Grey's threats of war turned up with monotonous regularity in the following despatches and changed into the 'chiefs' plot', the men of the Colonial Office became somewhat terse in their reactions, not only to his war scares, but to other aspects of his administration as well. Their comments illustrate clearly the methods used by Grey

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43. C.O.48/365: Grey to Grey, No.17, 27 January 1855.

44. C.O.48/365: Grey to Grey, No.35, 7 March 1855.

45. C.O.48/366: Note on despatch No.14, 11 June 1855.

to beat down resistance to his actions:

'Nothing can be more ingenious than the number of arguments Sir George Grey deduces from the same premises of fact.'<sup>46</sup>

And later:

'This despatch is merely one of the running fire of commentary and argument which Sir George Grey loves to keep up ....'<sup>47</sup>

So, from the first months of his governorship, Grey was making sure that he had a strong force available. It will probably never be known if he intended using it to force his plans onto the Xhosa in British Kaffraria, but he certainly was prepared to use force after the Cattle Killing, against Sarhili in Kaffraria Proper as well as against several other chiefs. Before he had time to implement his plans fully, the Cattle Killing removed the need for coercion and left the way open for him to 'conquer' without resistance.

To the missionaries, the Governor seemed to be in their terms a genuinely good man. He appeared to have the interests of the Xhosa sincerely at heart, spoke in

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46. C.O.48/385: comment on despatch No.212, Grey to Labouchere, 30 December 1857.

47. C.O.48/395: comment on despatch No.82, Grey to Lytton, 14 June 1859.

terms which they recognized and welcomed, and apparently came with a sheathed sword. Because Grey never had to use force against the Xhosa nation as a whole, his image as far as the missionaries in South Africa were concerned was never tarnished as it had been in New Zealand after his pacification of the South.<sup>48</sup> It was only on relatively minor issues that the aims of Grey and the missionaries in South Africa clashed. The missionaries, for their part, genuinely thought that they were doing their best for the Xhosa. In the mid-19th Century they were motivated by a desire to give rather than take. That this was accompanied by a paternalistic attitude is more the fault of the age than of individual missionaries. Their aim was to spread the Good News without which they believed no man could attain a state of salvation. Their methods would not receive 20th Century approval but, given their convictions, their motives for the most part cannot be questioned. To say that they paved the way for colonial advance, at this stage, is to attribute a greater success to their work than facts will allow. To absolve them, however, is not

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48. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.99 ff.; George Clarke, Notes on Early Life in New Zealand, (Hobart, 1903), p.97.

to deny that, given greater success, they would probably have been more effective in encouraging precisely this colonial advance. But to see it again in a Victorian light: the missionaries like all 'good' Englishmen (or British) of their age implicitly believed that the British culture was next to God and considered it a benefit to anyone falling under British administration. Together with the Gospel, they felt that they had a mission to carry that civilization to those less fortunate than themselves. A 20th Century judgement of these values would perhaps be too harsh.

The missionaries certainly provided a point of entry, though small, into some aspects of Xhosa life, and it remains to be seen whether or not their influence was to increase after the Cattle Killing. But co-operation with Grey did not always mean wholesale approval of all Grey's actions. The Rev. Richard Ross noted in his report to the Free Church of Scotland in Edinburgh that he had constantly to act on the defensive for 'the natives who are always being aggrieved by the government';<sup>49</sup> the Lovedale missionaries

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49. Grey Coll., S.A. Library: Home and Foreign Record of the Free Church of Scotland, August 1858, p.60.

were concerned about the rights of the Mfengu in the Crown Reserve; and even Ayliff was troubled by some of Grey's measures and considered questioning a 'peremptory' instruction from the Governor not to allow any Xhosa to enter service with Mfengu after the Cattle Killing.<sup>50</sup> The letter, which in the end he could not bring himself to send, highlights two things: the first is the light in which missionaries viewed their converts, and the second the realisation that it was not wise to antagonise the Governor. Ayliff, in asking that the Xhosa be allowed to enter service with the Mfengu, made a plea that the Mfengu be regarded as British subjects with equal rights to their fellow colonists; and at the end of the letter he anxiously noted that he did not wish to appear troublesome, or desirous to interfere with Government arrangements. Perhaps Ayliff had by this time experienced another facet of Governor Grey's character: he demanded implicit obedience. This was recognized clearly by a young man well disposed towards Grey, who declined Grey's offer of a position as special magistrate in Kaffraria. Apart from the fact

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50. WMMS, C.T. Archives, A80: Healdtown diaries, Ayliff to Southey, Government Secretary, 30 September 1857.

that he wanted to get married, John Blades Currey also turned down the position because of Grey's attitude:

'As long as you were what he called one of his fish he would look after you, but he had more than once told me if his fish got into another man's pond he had done with them.'<sup>51</sup>

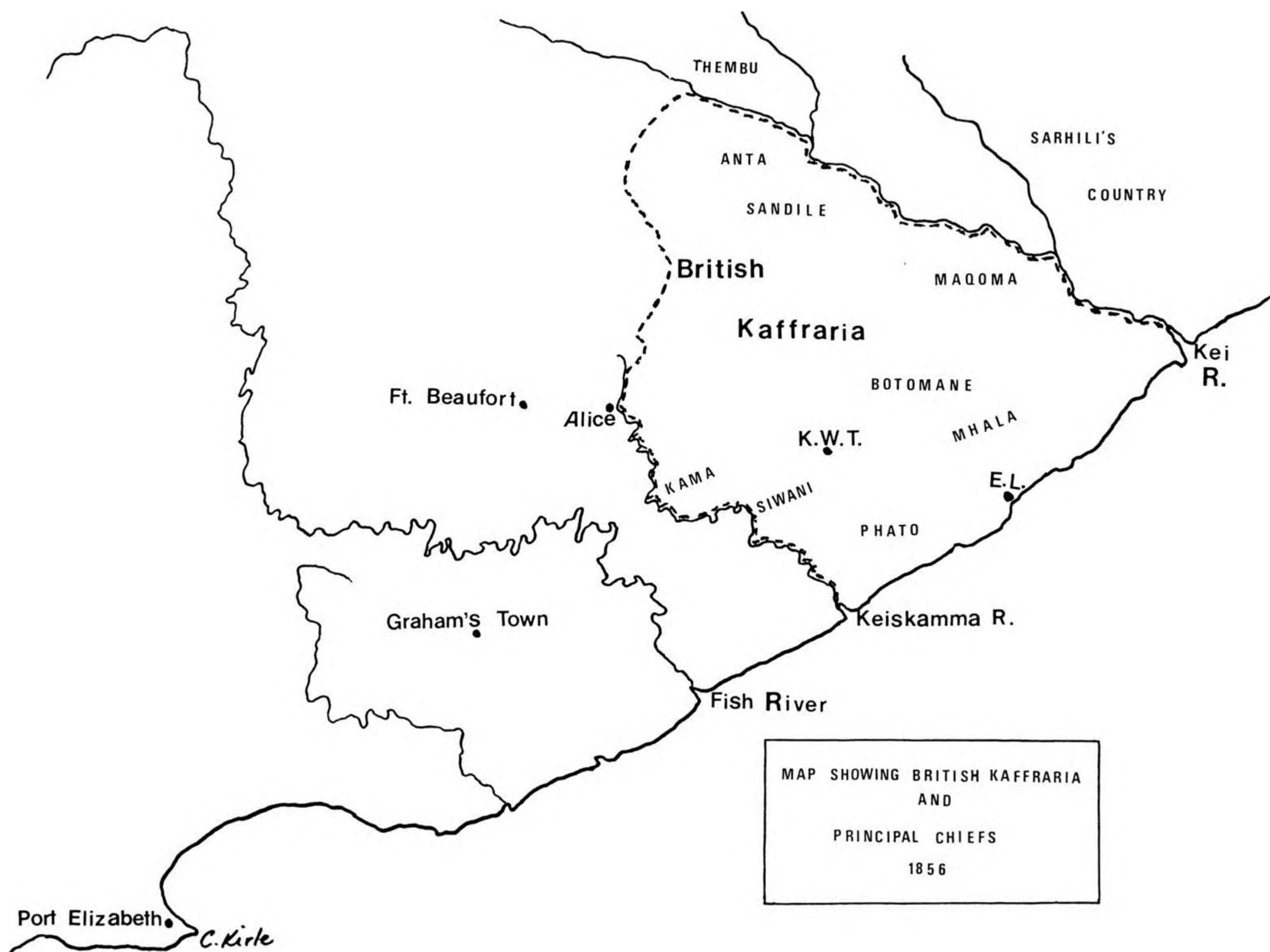
The missionaries could ill afford for Grey to have done with them, and Ayliff in the end preferred not to send the letter. What is clear is that, at this early stage, there is no evidence to suggest that the missionaries deliberately plotted with Grey to subjugate the Xhosa and bring them into an inferior relationship with the Colony. They certainly wished to destroy many aspects of the Xhosa social system, but they genuinely believed that they were offering something better in return.

The new schools had hardly opened their doors when the first signs of the Cattle Killing became evident. Xhosa tradition lays the blame for this tragic

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51. John Blades Currey, 'Half a Century in South Africa 1850 - 1900', Phillida Brooke Simons (ed), unpublished manuscript in the South African Library, p.168.

event squarely at the feet of Grey and the missionaries on the frontier, who both stood to gain from the downfall of the Xhosa nation. Because this tradition is still very much alive, it is important to take the accusations seriously and investigate the roles played by the missionaries and Grey in the Cattle Killing, and to assess what each gained at the end. The prophecy lasted less than a year, with sporadic outbreaks after the first prophecy ended in catastrophe, but its results were enormous for the Xhosa people themselves and for the advance of colonial influence if not for Christianity.





## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE CATTLE KILLING 1856/57

The Cattle Killing which lasted for several months over 1856 and 1857 did more than any other single event to bring about the collapse of the Xhosa as a nation. For the next twenty years or so it brought the peace on the frontier that the colonists so eagerly sought and which would allow for the consolidation of the new parliamentary system at the Cape. It opened the way for the extension of Grey's frontier plans, and tradition has it that it sparked off an unprecedented advance of Christianity among the Xhosa.

Historians such as Majeke<sup>1</sup> have accused Grey of deliberately instigating the prophecy for his own Machiavellian purposes. He has suggested that, in apportioning blame, one should be guided by the results, and he asks the question: who gained the most from the prophecy? His answer? At one stroke

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1. N. Majeke, The Role of the Missionaries in Conquest, (Johannesburg 1952), p.74 ff.

Grey was given the opportunity to realise all his plans (or, in Marxist terms, all his labour requirements to build up the embryo Cape capitalist system). Grey was said to have been helped in his designs by the missionaries, in that the form in which the prophecy expressed itself, in Majeke's opinion, was the direct result of missionary teaching. His argument is that the desperate situation in which the Xhosa found themselves made them seize upon the elements in the Christian Gospel most likely to offer protection - the belief in miracles, the resurrection of the dead, the promise of peace and plenty after tribulation and sorrow. He feels that the impact of the white man's religion was capable of producing such a blind act of faith as the Cattle Killing demanded. Here was an appeal to the supernatural to which the Xhosa were all too ready to respond in the hopes of deliverance from the intolerable situation in which they found themselves. Mutwa, a Zulu historian, takes the argument further by claiming that the concept of the resurrection had never entered the minds of the Xhosa at any previous stage in their history.<sup>2</sup> According to Mutwa, it was the part of

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2. Quoted in E. Moorcroft, 'Theories of Millenarianism considered with reference to certain southern African movements', (unpub. B.Litt. thesis, Oxford 1967), p.69.

Nongqawuse's message that chiefs would rise up from their graves which most caught the imagination of the people, as did the figures which appeared to her in the reeds who were obviously physical but from their graves.

The belief that Grey deliberately destroyed the Xhosa through the prophecy of Nongqawuse and Mhlakaza is still strong among them, and because of this, it cannot be dismissed out of hand. The most specific accusation the writer came across was that Grey actually drugged Nongqawuse to induce the visions because he knew that the Xhosa were a superstitious people and would be likely to believe her. The fact that Nongqawuse was afterwards given colonial protection and that Grey did not really do all he could to stop the progress of the Cattle Killing is also offered as proof of culpability.<sup>3</sup> This oral tradition deserves perhaps a moment's consideration when one realises that Grey was reportedly constantly in pain from wounds sustained as a young man in Australia and that he supposedly relied heavily on drugs (lauda-

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3. Informant was a graduate of the University of Fort Hare.

num) for relief. Rutherford treats the suggestion that Grey might have been a drug addict with caution<sup>4</sup>, but mentions a certain amount of evidence in favour of the opinion. His moods fluctuated rapidly between depression and elation and he made a highly suggestive remark when he reportedly said that, when one felt downhearted, a little medicine would always set you right.<sup>5</sup> There is, however, no positive confirmation that Grey was a drug addict, though his behaviour might, at times, lend credence to the suggestion.

In the light of these accusation the roles of Grey and the missionaries in the Cattle Killing crisis justify investigation, as does the assertion that the prophecy reflected Christian teaching rather than traditional practices.

As the main features of the Cattle Killing are generally well-known, it will be necessary only to give a broad outline. Nongqawuse, a young initiate, was visited by messengers claiming to be from the ancestors.

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4. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.vi.

5. Quoted in J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.573.

They appeared in the reeds of a river pool when she went to draw water. She was directed to call her uncle, Mhlakaza, who was senior prophet to the paramount chief, Sarhili, of the eastern senior branch of the Xhosa. The Xhosa, through Mhlakaza, were directed to sacrifice all their cattle and destroy their crops and, on an appointed day, a whirlwind would then drive the English and unbelievers into the sea, new and healthy herds of cattle would replace those killed, and grain would fill the newly prepared grain pits. Old people would be made young again and ancestors would arise. Help was to be expected from the Russians who had been fighting the English in the Crimea and who were believed to be black warriors, and the Xhosa would be restored to their former power and to their lands.

Although the Cattle Killing is generally considered to have started in about June 1856 among Sarhili's people in Kaffraria Proper across the Kei, there were indications as early as February 1856 that something was afoot in British Kaffraria just beyond the colonial frontier. In that month Grey was raising one of his periodic 'war scares' by emphasizing fears of a com-

bination of Xhosa, Mfengu and Khoi. As evidence of this, he quoted Lt. Gen. Jackson's report that the Xhosa denied that they had ever been conquered.<sup>6</sup> Rather than being a pointer to the war-like designs of the Xhosa, this could well have been the first stirrings of the prophecy that would soon gain such force. In March 1856, while Grey was reporting that the Xhosa seemed to have accepted his special magistrates, rumours were rife among the chiefdoms of British Kaffraria that the Russians were defeating the English in war.<sup>7</sup>

Lt. Gen. Jackson, who was immediately in command of frontier defences, also had a penchant for war scares. In April 1856 he took up the oft-repeated fear that a war was brewing on the frontier and cited as evidence a belief among the Xhosa that 'Lynx, Gaika and Umlangeni', their old prophets and paramount, were fighting for the Russians and that the Russians were black warriors who had died in frontier wars.<sup>8</sup> In

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6. C.O.48/372: Sir G. Grey to the Rt.Hon. G.Grey, Bart., No.8, 8 February 1856.
  7. C.O.48/373: Grey to Labouchere, No.12 (High Commissioner), 22 March 1856.
  8. Ibid. Lt. Gen. Jackson to Grey, Encl.1 to No.32, 15 April 1856.

reality Jackson had thereby, unwittingly, reported the beginnings of the prophecy. In a further enclosure to the same despatch Walter Currie reported a similar rumour of the resurrection of warriors and great men who were on their way to join their respective chiefdoms.<sup>9</sup> In June Jackson was again harping on the threat of war and supporting it with the news that the Xhosa believed that Britain had been defeated in the Crimean War and were now expecting the Russians to come to their aid. He also reported that Phato's people were not cultivating and were killing their cattle every day, and that a rumour was spreading that a number of men had arrived from beyond the seas and that Moshoeshoe had begun to fight.<sup>10</sup> In an elaborately worked out explanation of the crisis Grey later accused Moshoeshoe of planning an attack on the Colony in conjunction with Sarhili.

It is generally accepted that the Cattle Killing originated with Nongqawuse and Mhlakaza, but according to these earlier reports, similar beliefs were

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9. Ibid. Encl.8, 19 April 1856.

10. C.O.48/374: Grey to Labouchere, No.50, 6 June 1856; also encl. to No.50, Fort Beaufort, 3 May 1856.

rife in British Kaffraria some time before the great prophecy. Unless Nongqawuse's prophecy began earlier than has been thought, it seems that she probably drew on rumours already circulating on the frontier. This view is corroborated by the missionary John Ross, stationed at Pirie in British Kaffraria, when he wrote in November 1856 that the 'delusion' had started some six months previously when several of those 'people who peep and mutter gave out various and diverse sayings'.<sup>11</sup>

In June 1856 Grey was on the frontier arranging for arrival of his German military settlers. Whether one accepts that the prophecy began in the early months of 1856, or in June with Nongqawuse, it was in any event in full swing while Grey was visiting the frontier districts. Yet Grey did not mention it to the Colonial Secretary until 16 August, the first date set for the fulfilment of the prophecy. By this time he had already decided that it was a plot against the Colony hatched by Sarhili and Moshoeshoe and that his response would be to take up a defensive position.

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11. Cory Library MS3236: The Rev. John Ross to Alex Thomson Esq., 24 November 1856.



The question that needs answering is why he took so long to report the prophecy and, indeed, why he had done so little at that stage to stop it. Officially, Grey maintained that Mhlakaza was a tool in the hands of Sarhili who was using him to work on the superstition and ignorance of the common people to drive them to war.<sup>12</sup> There is, however, some reason to believe that Grey did not really believe in Sarhili's guilt and with the help of Col. Maclean fabricated the evidence against the chief to suit his own purposes.<sup>13</sup> This brings us back to the origins of the prophecy: Grey blamed Sarhili; and the Xhosa blame Grey. Where did the truth lie?

As far as Grey is concerned two issues are relevant: first, did Grey engineer the prophecy; and, second, given the fact of the prophecy, did he do everything in his power to stop it? By June 1856 when Grey was on the frontier, the prophecy was centred around Nongqawuse and the pool in Kaffraria Proper (i.e. beyond the Kei River and, therefore, beyond formal colonial influence). In February of that

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12. Br.Parl.Papers XL of 1857/8 (2352), p.15: Grey to Labouchere, No. 4, 21 August 1856.

13. see J. Peires, 'The Late Great Plot', passim.

year, when the first stirrings of the prophecy were felt in British Kaffraria, Grey was in Cape Town. He had contacts in Kaffraria Proper through missionaries and traders, but there is, as yet, no evidence that he himself visited the area during the time of the Cattle Killing. The actual logistics involved in organising such a fraud, either personally or through subordinates, would have been enormous and there would have been a good chance of the secret leaking out. That it has not leads to the necessity of a verdict of 'not proven' against Grey. But because of the lack of concrete evidence either way, the case cannot be closed.

The next question to be asked is: did Grey really want to try to stop the Cattle Killing? Historians, both sympathetic and antagonistic towards Grey, have agreed on one point: that the Governor did what he could to try to halt the spread of the prophecy and thereby stop the sacrifice of cattle. But closer examination of the facts leaves several questions unanswered. Two months elapsed before he officially reported the prophecy to the Colonial Office, and the date of his despatch was that of the expected fulfilment of the prophecy. In this despatch Grey maintained that every

measure was being taken to encourage the chiefs of British Kaffraria in their opposition to Mhlakaza's message. Yet no attempt was made to visit Kaffraria Proper. As the heart of the prophecy lay there with Sarhili, it would surely have been more effective to tackle the problem at its source?

An investigation of Grey's measures in fact shows them to have been more 'defensive' than 'offensive'. He ordered grain to be stored against the famine which he knew would come, and he planned employment for the Xhosa in the colony when the excitement had died down.<sup>14</sup> He also placed the Colony in a state of military preparedness. All these actions point to the fact that he was not only not expecting an early end to the Cattle Killing, but was aware of what it would mean to the Xhosa in terms of famine, and was prepared to allow it to run its course in order, if possible, to bring the Xhosa to their knees. Grey explained his defensive stance as a measure to avoid provoking war, and this excuse was used successfully throughout the crisis to explain his lack of any positive action. Given the strength of the Xhosa belief

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14. C.O.48/376: Grey to Labouchere, No.76, 16 August 1856.

in Mhlakaza, perhaps Grey could not have effectively halted the Cattle Killing, but it does seem that he made little honest effort to do so.

Grey's actions and instructions during the months of the Cattle Killing give weight to this suggestion. Magistrates with the chiefs were instructed to do what they could to halt the prophecy, yet Grey kept tight control of their actions and sharply reprimanded anyone who appeared to be taking any independent action. Charles Brownlee, Ngqika Commissioner, rode tirelessly among the Xhosa to urge them to forsake Mhlakaza and to insist that the prophecy would never be fulfilled, but when he wanted to visit Sarhili, and begged Grey to return to the frontier, the Governor's reply was terse: Brownlee was to stay at his post and obey Maclean's orders implicitly.<sup>15</sup> Brownlee had been convinced that if chief Sandile visited Sarhili with him, it would strengthen the resolve of those who were wavering to stand firm against the prophecy, and it would afford Sarhili the opportunity of undoing what he had so far done.<sup>16</sup> Maclean

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15. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.352.

16. Br.Parl.Papers XL of 1857/8 (2352), p.23: Brownlee to Maclean, 18 August 1856, sub-encl.2 in Encl. in No.6, 27 August 1856.

himself was not spared Grey's displeasure when it became known that he had communicated with Sarhili without the Governor's permission.<sup>17</sup>

Grey did visit several of the chiefs in British Kaffraria, but not Sarhili beyond the Kei; letters only were sent to the latter to warn him against Mhlakaza and against contact with Moshoeshoe, but any personal contact was actively discouraged. Grey early warned Sarhili that he would hold him personally responsible for any disturbances on the frontier and would punish him accordingly. He further warned Sarhili that he would make a better enemy than he had friend if he were forced to take action against the chief - a fact he was to prove later.<sup>18</sup> Had Grey truly wanted to end the prophecy, a visit to Sarhili would have been the logical action to have taken. It therefore seems that the Governor's 'defensive' policy was little more than 'letting the situation develop' before moving in to reap whatever advantages were offered. In fact, Grey and Maclean

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17. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.352.

18. Br.Parl.Papers XL of 1857/8 (2352), p.30: Grey to Sarhili, 27 September 1856, encl.7 in No.8, 27 September 1856.

made no secret of their desire to use the prophecy to encourage fission among the Xhosa chiefdoms, with the former actually wanting to give the chiefs who defied him every opportunity to discredit themselves in the eyes of their people and to deplete their resources before he intervened.<sup>19</sup>

Rather than preventing the chiefs from following Mhlakaza, the presence of the special magistrates with the chiefs encouraged the divisions, and in some instances actually contributed to the spread of the prophecy when the Xhosa who were not participating in the Cattle Killing were urged to buy cattle and corn from those who were. Much more time and effort was spent in stockpiling food and in preparing for the coming famine than in taking positive steps to halt the prophecy. Magistrates were instructed by Grey to offer unbelieving chiefs and counsellors advance payments of their pensions to invest in stock and seed as well as to buy as much as possible from the people of Kaffraria Proper.<sup>20</sup>

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19. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.359.

20. Br.Parl.Papers XL of 1857/8 (2352), p.16: Maclean to Grey, 18 August 1856, encl.1 in No. 4, 21 August 1856.

These actions divided the believers from un-believers and made the latter more firmly dependent on the colonial government.<sup>21</sup>

Maclean also recognised that the presence of magistrates at times encouraged undecided chiefs to join the believers,<sup>22</sup> but made no effort to remedy the situation. Grey seems thus to have viewed the Cattle Killing as an unlooked-for opportunity to advance his plans for the frontier, and he was not going to lose it. He hoped to step in at the last moment, 'philanthropically', to save a destitute nation from famine and thereby discredit the chiefs and draw the majority of the Xhosa into a closer relationship with the government. He repeatedly emphasized the danger of war, but it does not appear that he really did believe that full-scale war would break out. This was certainly true in September 1856 when Grey talked with the principal chiefs in British Kaffraria. He wrote to Labouchere:

'I have now visited personally the location of each of the principal chiefs, and have seen and conversed with all the leading

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21. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.357.

22. B.K.14: Barrington to Maclean, 20 June 1857.

natives in the country. I have been everywhere received with respect and consideration . . . . I have failed, after the most careful observation, to detect . . . any hostile intentions on their part.<sup>23</sup>

Charles Brownlee had also been unable to discover any such intentions in the movement. In fact, he felt that the killing was wholly confined to the chiefdoms which had the least reason for war. He thought that Sarhili might be planning a war, but if so, that he had little hope of success as wars were not usually fought in seasons of scarcity. Should faming~~g~~ ensue, then, Brownlee felt, the Xhosa were much more likely to want to take service in the Colony than to fight.<sup>24</sup> This, of course, is exactly what Grey was hoping for. He seemed so determined to maintain a low profile in the crisis that he spent the months of increased killing and growing tension (October 1856 - January 1857) in Cape Town and not in the troubled area where one would have thought his presence would have been essential.

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23. Br.Parl.Papers XL of 1857/8 (2352), p.24: Grey to Labouchere, No. 7, 20 September 1856.

24. Ibid. p.13: Brownlee to Maclean, 2 August 1856, sub-encl. 6 in encl. 2, No.2, 16 August 1856.



Though the Governor kept a close watch over the actions of his magistrates, one of them was given a relatively free hand in his dealings with the Xhosa. This was Major Gawler, the hated special magistrate with Mhala. For personal reasons (Mhala had got the better of Gawler on several occasions), the magistrate was determined to destroy Mhala and virtually organized a revolution among the chief's people.<sup>25</sup> Not surprisingly, this received the approval of Grey and Maclean, which hardly makes it less surprising that Gawler was so disliked by the chief. This latter fact must have been generally known, as Sophy Gray, wife of the Bishop of Cape Town, in 1856 expressed anxiety for the safety of Mrs. Gawler and was of the opinion that the Gawlers had treated Mhala haughtily and unkindly.<sup>26</sup> All things considered, it must surely be said that Grey's actions in the months of the Cattle Killing encouraged, rather than slowed, the progress of the prophecy.

Although the missionary bodies had been given a special

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25. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.357.

26. T. Gutsche, The Bishop's Lady. (Howard Timmins, Cape Town, 1970), p.159.

place in Grey's frontier plans, he did not particularly need them at this point. He had a widespread system of intelligence operating to keep him informed of the progress of the prophecy, but this relied more on magistrates, and in Kaffraria Proper on a trader, Crouch, than on individual missionaries, though they did occasionally supply Col. Maclean with information about their areas.<sup>27</sup> But Grey did foresee a role for them once the prophecy had taken its toll and therefore included them in his plans to combat the envisaged famine. Mission stations were given special assistance in the form of money and supplies of seed corn to stimulate food production, and the construction of village 'out-schools' was subsidized with a view to their being used as relief-centres for the Xhosa children. The mission stations were also to care for orphans and the children of Xhosa who sought work in the Colony. As far as possible, the missionaries attempted to carry on as normal, though the disturbed state of the country sometimes made it difficult to visit the outstations.

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27. Br.Parl.Papers XL of 1857/8 (2352),p.48: Ayliff to Maclean, 11 October 1856, encl.2 to No.14, 20 October 1856; Ibid. p.35: Birt to Grey, 3 October 1856, encl. 3 to No.11, 3 October 1856.

Rather than having engineered the Cattle Killing, the missionaries expressed their general sentiment towards it in their writings in the form of bewilderment. They were at a complete loss to understand the phenomenon, and it seemed inexplicable that a 'shrewd' people like the Xhosa could reject the Gospel and yet accept Mhlakaza's prophecy. Ayliff described the prophecy as 'absurd nonsense' and could not comprehend how the Xhosa could believe something which was leading to their own destruction.<sup>28</sup> John Ross thought the Xhosa 'poor dupes'.<sup>29</sup> The prophecy was even regarded as the work of Providence (not that of the missionaries), and God's 'set time to favour the race' by humbling the Xhosa and making them receptive to Christianity.<sup>30</sup> In an appreciation of the situation which is astounding to the 20th Century mind William Holden of the Methodist Missionary Society wrote:

'God has turned the Counsel of Ahitophel into foolishness; so that that which we could not accomplish by our troops ... He has accomplished by the breath of his mouth; destroying them (the Xhosa) without hands making their own delusion and wickedness the instruments by which he has inflicted self-chastise-

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28. Grey Coll.G.33.c.14: Wesleyan Miss. Notices, 25 November 1857, Henry Dugmore's report of 18 July 1857; Healdtown Journal, 7 January 1857.
29. Cory Library, MS3236: The Rev. John Ross to Alex Thomson Esq., 24 November 1856.
30. The S.A. Evangelical Magazine and Church of England Recorder, March 1858.

ment upon them.<sup>31</sup>

While it is difficult for us to accept these sentiments, they were then generally expressed, and there is little reason to doubt that they were sincerely expressed. The work of the missionaries has been criticized with 20th Century hindsight, and, indeed, many of their actions appear to have been misguided, but it is difficult to question the sincerity of their religious motives. Certainly many expressed the hope that ultimate good (in their terms) would come of the movement and that the Xhosa would be moved to receive the Gospel.<sup>32</sup> Only Charles Brownlee came close to understanding why the Xhosa were acting as they were when he noted that the Xhosa 'have always regarded their chief doctors as inspired',<sup>33</sup> and, thus, that it was not really surprising that they believed in Mhlakaza's prophecy.

During the months of mounting crisis the missionaries were, therefore, superfluous to Grey's plans. His system of magistrates gave him the information and, more important, the control he wanted, and the

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31. WMMS Archives, SOAS, S.A.XXIV, Kaffraria File 1858: William Holden to the Gen. Secretaries, 13 January 1858.
32. Cape Town Archives, A80: Healdtown Journal, 7 January 1857.
33. Br.Parl.Papers XL of 1857/8 (2352), p.13: Brownlee to Maclean, 2 August 1856, sub-encl. 6 in encl. 2 in No. 2, 16 August 1856.

missionaries were used only when it suited him. Apart from the Governor's plans, the missionaries did what they could to help the situation, and their stations became places of refuge for unbelievers - on one occasion even for the cattle of the Ngqika chief, Sandile, during one of his bouts of indecision about the truth of the prophecy.<sup>34</sup> The missionaries also encouraged extensive cultivation to help relieve the coming famine, but in some cases the knowledge that their work was directed towards feeding the believers led the mission Africansto show some reluctance over planting too much.<sup>35</sup> The missionaries themselves, however, felt that they had made a significant contribution towards checking the spread of the prophecy<sup>36</sup> and claimed that it was the knowledge of the Gospel which had exposed the folly of Mhlakaza's words to unbelievers. This claim may have been valid for their own mission converts, but not for all those who refused to follow the prophet. There was a significant number of pagan Xhosa who refused to

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34. Br.Parl.Papers XL of 1857/8 (2352), p.18: Brownlee to Maclean, 16 August 1856, sub-encl.2 in No.4, 21 August 1856
35. Cory Library, MS3236: The Rev. John Ross to Alex Thomson, Esq., 24 November 1856.
36. WMMS, SOAS, Box 336: Methodist Missionary Society Report for Annshaw, 1856.

kill their cattle. Kama and Siwani stood firm against the prophecy, and Siwani was supported by a number of his chief counsellors. In both cases, though, followers living some distance from the chiefs took part in the Cattle Killing.<sup>37</sup> Although chiefs Maqoma and Botomane followed Mhlakaza, cattle and goats brought down by the Gcaleka were bought by their people.<sup>38</sup> Chief Toise remained steadfast against the prophecy, and chief Oba was particularly opposed to Mhlakaza and, although a number of his followers joined in the killing, more of his people than any others supported their chief's stand.

A number of Sandile's older counsellors took a firm stand against the call from Sarhili to join the sacrifice, chief among them being Anta, the half-brother of Sandile. He took the opportunity afforded by the confusion over the prophecy to disassociate himself from Sandile and attempt to set himself up as an independent chief under government protection.<sup>39</sup> Mhala

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37. Br. Parl. Papers XL of 1857/8 (2352), p.7: Brownlee to Maclean, 30 July 1856, sub-encl.1. in encl.1 in No.2, 16 August 1856.

38. Ibid. p.8: H. Lucas to Maclean, 1 August 1856, sub-encl.2 in encl.1 in No.2, 16 August 1856.

39. Ibid. p.20: R. Robertson to Maclean, 20 August 1856, sub-encl. in encl.1 in No.5, 25 August 1856.

who finally joined the Cattle Killing, was not supported by one of his chief counsellors. The Ndlambe were divided in their support for the prophet, as were the Thembu. In October 1856 Grey gave the list of chiefs who were cultivating and, therefore, resisting the call of Mhlakaza as Anta, Oba, Kona, Namba, Kama, Siwani, Tshatshu and Toise. All were supported by several of their followers.<sup>40</sup>

Overall, it must be conceded that there is little concrete evidence to prove that either Grey or the missionaries deliberately plotted the Cattle Killing, and certainly the latter had little hand in helping the prophecy along. But, going beyond this, Majeke has argued that the prophecy was directly influenced by Christian teachings, and Mutwa goes so far as to claim that the aspects of Christian teaching found in the prophecy, such as the resurrection of the ancestors, were never before present in the Xhosa tradition.

This brings us to the next point: if the Cattle Killing was not the work of Grey, what then were the origins? Grey, with the help of Colonel Maclean,

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40. Ibid. p.49: Grey to Labouchere, No.15, 23 October 1856.

worked out an elaborate case for the Cattle Killing having been a 'chiefs' plot' - the brainchild of Sarhili and Moshoeshoe in an attempt to force the Xhosa to attack the Colony. This is denied by Majeke, and even more vigorously denied by J. Peires in his paper attempting to expose the 'official delusion concerning the Cattle Killing',<sup>41</sup> and there is no reason to doubt this conclusion. Peires maintains that the Xhosa had never thought of making war on the Colony, and this view was certainly corroborated by Maclean himself in August 1856, though the Chief Commissioner was to forget it later when he was compiling evidence against Sarhili for Grey. He wrote at the time that the Xhosa were waiting for something to happen, rather than expecting to make something happen, and that the war-like rumours had all come from European sources.<sup>42</sup> This inadvertently backs up the theory put forward by E. Moorcroft, that the Cattle Killing was a millenarian movement and, as such, was sincerely believed in by the Xhosa who followed the prophet.<sup>43</sup>

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41. J. Peires, 'The Late Great Plot', passim.

42. C.O.48/376: Maclean to W.F. Liddle, Esq., encl. 1 in No.76, 4 August 1856.

43. E. Moorcroft, 'Theories of Millenarianism', passim.



In fact, the Cattle Killing was not the first prophetic movement in the Eastern Cape with millenarian overtones. Nxele (Makana) in 1819 led a Xhosa attack against the Colony with promises that the colonial bullets would turn to water. His prophetic tradition ran through Mlanjeni to Nongqawuse. On close examination it would indeed seem that the Cattle Killing bears a close relation to other millenarian movements. The early studies of the phenomenon of millenarianism have dealt largely with the Melanesian Cargo Cults <sup>44</sup> and the famous Ghost Dance of the Indians of the American North-west.<sup>45</sup> Later, Norman Cohn investigated the European millenarian movements that first arose in the Middle Ages and found that they appeared among the dispossessed and, particularly, among people who had no recognised secular means of asserting their claims and pursuing their interests.<sup>46</sup> Many of the manifestations of millenarianism have been found

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44. By performing certain rites a 'cargo' would arrive generally by steamer but later by aeroplane. The cargo was to consist of all the most desired European goods, not for the white man who would soon disappear, but for the Islanders.
45. The prophet of the ghost dance preached that if the proper ritual, which included a dance, was performed, then the Europeans would vanish, the ancestors would be resurrected and the buffalo would return.
46. L. Mair, An introduction to Social Anthropology, (O.U.P. 1965), p.225.

in territories under colonial rule and, significantly, the destruction of the oppressors has had an important part to play in such manifestations. During the early stages of the Cattle Killing prophecies foretold the destruction of the English by a whirlwind. It is interesting to note that the Dutch colonists were not included. In 1856 the British were not only the masters of the Cape, but their arrival had initiated 'total war' against the Xhosa in 1811, a situation unknown when the Cape was under Dutch administration and the frontier districts were, to a large extent, left to work out an existence, and, of necessity, a co-existence for themselves.<sup>47</sup> This was a time when the frontier was 'open'<sup>48</sup> and when there was a measure of political and social fluidity and a greater mobility of peoples. Very little formal control was exercised over the area at that stage, and a certain amount of racial co-operation was found. Indeed, Monica Wilson has made out a strong case in the Oxford History for the frontier situation producing co-operation between white, Xhosa

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47. J.B. Peires, 'Nxele, Ntsikana and the origins of the Xhosa Religious Reaction', Journal of African History, 20,1(1979), p.53.

48. H. Giliomee, 'The S.A. Frontier: A theoretical framework'. (unpublished), pp.5-7.

and Khoi on the Cape eastern boundary.<sup>49</sup>

From 1811 the boundary of the Colony was thrust inexorably eastwards, thereby depriving the Xhosa of land and tending towards a 'closed' frontier along which the freedom of action possessed by the frontiersmen of both sides of the border gradually disappeared. John Galbraith has also described this region as a 'turbulent frontier', as the boundaries were almost perpetually disturbed.<sup>50</sup> He points out that this type of frontier acted as an irresistible magnet to the extension of white power. Such a situation of cumulative coercive control could clearly give rise to a millenarian movement where a sense of oppression is an important element. The essence of millenarian beliefs is that a perfect state of the world is about to be brought into existence by some miraculous event. The event itself depends on the performance of appropriate rituals, and when it happens, those who have performed the rituals will enjoy the perfect world, while the people who, by refusing

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49. M. Wilson, 'Co-operation and Conflict: The Eastern Cape Frontier', in Oxford History of S.A. (O.U.P. 1971), p.233 ff.
50. J.S. Galbraith, 'The Turbulent Frontier as a Factor in British expansion', Comparative Studies in Society and History, II, 1959-60.

to do so, have delayed its coming, will be destroyed. As the Cattle Killing progressed and the first date set for fulfilment passed, the unbelieving Xhosa were included among those who were to be swept into the sea. Often the new age includes the return to life of those who are already dead, as was to happen in this case, and the myth is activated when a prophet appears with a message that the promised time is at hand.<sup>51</sup>

The weakness in Majeke's and Mutwa's theories about the Cattle Killing is their belief in the extent to which the movement was influenced by 'foreign' - Christian - teachings and by the statement that these elements had never before entered the minds of the Xhosa. E. Moorcroft has pointed out that as early as 1814 a prophet near van der Kemp's mission station had attempted to raise the dead. J. Peires in his paper on 'The Late Great Plot' agrees with Majeke that the idea of the resurrection was taken directly from the Christian religion and further maintains that the

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51. L. Mair, An Introduction to Social Anthropology, p.225.

traditional Xhosa cosmology had no place for the white man, or a formula for dealing with the threat posed, and so looked for the solution to that threat among the white man's beliefs. Moorcroft, on the other hand, believes that the Cattle Killing was a traditional response on a national scale to propitiate the ancestors and restore the old world order. Faced with these contradictory viewpoints, the investigator will find it both relevant and profitable to assess, even briefly, the extent to which the Cattle Killing prophecy relied on traditional beliefs and rituals and thereby reflected the traditional Xhosa cosmology.

The belief system of the Cape Nguni, to which the Xhosa belong, can be divided into four domains: those of the Supreme Being (a very loose belief), the ancestral shades, the River People, and of the witches.<sup>52</sup> The ancestral shades (or spirits of the ancestors) were the effective spirits in the Cape Nguni world view and were believed to be able to affect the living directly. In accordance with their beliefs, the Xhosa explained their existing misfortunes in terms of

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52. Most of the information about Xhosa beliefs is from W.D. Hammond-Tooke, 'The symbolic structure of the Cape Nguni Cosmology' in M.G. Whisson & M. West (eds), Religion and Social Change in Southern Africa, (David Philip, C.T., 1974), p.15 ff.

alienation from their ancestors, who communicated with them through dreams. Such visitations were usually occasioned by a neglect of a custom. The cosmological system of the Xhosa included a strong interest in the explanation of and dealing with misfortune. As the ancestral shades were the prime cause of misfortune, it was they who needed to be propitiated. If the cause of the misfortune was not clear, the people turned to the priest-diviner<sup>53</sup> for an explanation. In fact, Mhlakaza was the priest-diviner of the senior Xhosa chiefdom, the Gcaleka, which in turn made him senior priest-diviner of the entire Xhosa nation. Because the entire nation was now in distress, it was obvious that the national ancestors had been offended. As national priest-diviner, Mhlakaza had the responsibility of advising on the action to be taken.

Among the Xhosa, men and cattle lived in a symbiotic relationship, and the latter were regarded as the appropriate blood sacrifice to the ancestors. The goat, the other traditional domestic animal, was also an acceptable offering, but not horses or poultry, which

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53. A term used by Moorcroft in preference to 'witchdoctor'.

even now have not been incorporated into the symbolic system. It is, therefore, significant that during the Cattle Killing the ancestors demanded the sacrifice of cattle and goats - and a pathetic irony that in his attempt to assemble proof of Sarhili's intent to cause a war, Maclean used as part of his evidence the fact that horses had not been killed.<sup>54</sup> Had he but known it, Maclean was offering confirmation of Sarhili's 'innocence'.

That group of beings called the 'people of the river' are believed to live in the deep pools of certain water courses, where they have beautiful homesteads and keep dark-coloured herds of cattle. Although they are not generally regarded as official ancestors, some Xhosa groups equate the River People with their forebears. The River People can be both baleful and benevolent and are intimately connected with the initiation of diviners. It was not surprising, then, that such people should appear to Nongqawuse, who was herself an initiate diviner. And at certain times during the prophecy herds of cattle were allegedly heard lowing beneath the water in the pool and waiting to rise. Thus, it is possible that it was the cattle of the River People which were to have arrived

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54. B.K.373: Maclean to Grey, 25 March 1857; J. Peires, 'The Late Great Plot'.

with the resurrected ancestors to replace the diseased herds of the Xhosa.

Rather than relying on Christian beliefs to deal with the new situation, the prophecy seems to have incorporated a good deal more of the traditional Xhosa rituals and to have leaned more heavily on their traditional world view. What 'foreign' elements there were bore close resemblance to other millenarian movements and were not on that account particularly remarkable. It has also been pointed out that the idea of the resurrection was not a new one. That the Xhosa should have appealed to their ancestors in the situation in which they found themselves was also not surprising. Indeed, that they should have sacrificed their cattle was not unusual. But what was surprising was the extent of the slaughter. There was one contemporary witness of the Cattle Killing who unwittingly gives weight to the 'traditional' argument. F. Reeve, special magistrate stationed at Middle Drift, actually used the word 'sacrifice' when he reported that the Xhosa there were killing their cattle in defiance of Kama's orders.<sup>55</sup>

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55. C.O.48/376: F. Reeve to Maclean, 2 August 1856, encl. to No. 76, 16 August 1856.



The death toll resulting from the Cattle Killing was formidable. The official census returns of British Kaffraria showed a decrease in the black population of both sexes and all ages between 1 January and 31 July 1857 from 104 721 to 37 229.<sup>56</sup> This was in the territory adjoining the Colony which had King William's Town as a substantial administrative centre where food was supplied to some 29 000 people. The death rate must have been far greater in Gcaleka and Thembu countries. Mrs Brownlee, wife of the Ngika Commissioner, has left an eye-witness account of the distress after the failure of the prophecy:

'Those who reached us were most pitiable figures, breathing skeletons, with hollow eyes and parched lips. The innocent children looked like old men and women in miniature, some only a few days old. Day after day, day after day, as these spectres came in crowds and crawled along, one might have imagined that the prophet's prediction had come to pass, and the dead had indeed risen from their graves.'<sup>57</sup>

Thousands fled to the Colony in search of work, where the

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56. G.M. Theal, A History of S.A. from 1795 to 1872, Vol.III (Vol.VII of the series), (Allen & Unwin, 1904), p.206.
57. C. Brownlee, Reminiscences of Kafir Life and History, (Killie Campbell Africana Library Reprint Series - Univ. of Natal Press), p.137.

farmers were only too eager to employ them. A table of Xhosa registered and sent into the Cape from 1 January to 31 July 1857 shows that 19 239 men, women and children entered service in the Colony.<sup>58</sup> Mhlakaza died of starvation. Nongqawuse fled across the Mbashe River. In March 1858 she was handed over to Major Gawler by the Bomvana chief Moni. She was sent into the Colony, where she afterwards lived, but apart from making a brief statement to Colonel Maclean, could never be induced to speak of the Cattle Killing.

Government measures alone were insufficient to cope with the distress which followed, so mission stations and private charity had a role to play in alleviating the famine. Grey did not approve of the latter form of support. As before, he tried to keep tight control of the situation. The news of the suffering in Kaffraria was more than Bishop Gray could endure; and in defiance of Grey's express wishes he preached an impassioned sermon and opened his own relief fund.<sup>59</sup> On the frontier, groups of believers had organized

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58. C.O.48/383: Government Notice No.265, encl.2 to No. 124, 21 August 1857.

59. T. Gutsche, The Bishop's Lady, p.164.

themselves into bands of robbers who were preparing to plunder the unbelieving Xhosa and the whites. Several mission stations in fact found themselves in a precarious position and had to apply to Maclean for guns and ammunition to defend themselves.<sup>60</sup> The mission stations formed supplementary centres of relief. A German missionary, Rein, actually reinforced Grey's plans for attracting as many labourers as possible to the Colony when he promised to look after the children of those seeking work at the Cape.<sup>61</sup> This scheme also had the effect of safeguarding the mission stations. Grey later encouraged the chiefs to send their sons to his educational establishment in Cape Town, 'Zonnebloem', where they, too, could act as hostages for the good behaviour of their fathers, some of whom had been sent to serve sentences on Robben Island. The mission stations were also asked to look after as many orphans as they could, with the financial help of the government.

Neither Grey nor Maclean were altogether happy to have to enlist the aid of the missionaries in relieving the

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60. B.K.91: H. Lucas to Maclean, 14 November 1857; Maclean to Kayser, 19 December 1857.

61. E. D'A. Dowsley, 'An investigation into the circumstances of the Cattle Killing delusion in Kaffraria 1856-7', (Rhodes University), p.76.

famine. Maclean was insistent that any general relief would be neither 'politic nor true charity'. Such, he said, would simply assist the chief, encourage the able-bodied to live idly without labouring to support their families, and would, if large numbers of children were maintained, lead to the return of their parents as soon as their immediate wants were satisfied. Magistrates and missionaries were instructed to report cases of destitution, but Maclean preferred to rely mainly on the information from the magistrates who 'were more likely to learn the truth'.<sup>62</sup> In other words, both Grey and Maclean were afraid that general relief would diminish the labour supply to the Colony.

The 'Kaffir Relief Society' formed by the people of King William's Town, proved also to be a source of irritation to Grey. The demand for labour was still greater than the supply, so he did not want to concentrate relief in King William's Town or enable the Xhosa to avoid taking service. Because Grey was thus insistent that relief should be controlled by the

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62. Ibid. p.88

magistrates rather than by private initiative or missionary bodies, his actions leave him wide open to the Marxist interpretation of the crisis - that it had been engineered to supply the colonial labour market. In fact, Grey made no secret of his hope that the Xhosa people (or labour) would contribute to the greater development of the Colony.

Radical historians may label one of the results of the crisis as the 'proletarianization' of the Xhosa people and maintain that their introduction into the 'capitalist' labour market was forced. In such an interpretation the conflicting modes of production and the demand for labour were the ultimate motivating forces behind British Cape frontier policy. Capitalism everywhere seeks the cheapest labour possible. In South African circumstances labour cheap enough for the needs of a struggling sub-metropole of capitalism could be obtained only by coercion. Whether it was intentional or not, one supreme consequence of the Cattle Killing was thus to be the detribalisation of the Xhosa and the creation, over time, of a 'blurred frontier'. As a result of this 'closing' of the frontier, a horde of 'exploitable' black labourers

was introduced onto a market where their bargaining position was weak from the beginning. Grey's relief measures certainly appear to have been directed expressly towards that end.

It is the success which Grey had in breaking up the Xhosa people after the Cattle Killing which has led Majeke to accuse him of engineering the crisis. The missionaries were also said to have had an unprecedented breakthrough after the prophecy had ended, and their work in Kaffraria as a whole is supposed to have flourished as never before. While there is in fact no question that the Cattle Killing dealt a severe blow to the Xhosa polity and opened the way for colonial advance, there is certainly more doubt about the subsequent success of missionary work. A closer look at the facts and figures in missionary reports surprisingly gives a picture at variance with the generally accepted beliefs.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE AFTERMATH OF THE CATTLE KILLING (TILL 1860s)

Sir George Grey had deliberately allowed the Cattle Killing crisis to develop to the point where the Xhosa would be completely within his power. When the crisis was over, he went even further. Ignoring the fact that the results of the Cattle Killing were such that no dangerous power could still possibly remain in British Kaffraria, Grey instituted a purge of the remaining chiefs and any possible Xhosa leaders in that territory. He was determined to have complete and visible submission; and when there was nothing substantial to warrant an arrest and trial, Grey invented the crimes.

The measures against the chiefs were sweeping. Chief Magoma was convicted of receiving stolen cattle and guns and was transported for life. Mhala, the second ranking chief in British Kaffraria, who was now old and ill, was convicted on a trumped-up charge of conspiring to levy war. The Cape Attorney General, William Porter, felt constrained to voice his opposition to

Mhala's trial. He disagreed with the verdict and maintained that, given the jury, the verdict had been a foregone conclusion. However, Grey was determined to 'punish' the old chief and refused to call a mistrial. He did at least make a significant concession in the face of Porter's criticism by providing for the remission of Mhala's sentence if it were subsequently found that the Attorney General had been right and he, Grey, wrong.<sup>1</sup> Mhala was given a sentence of five years transportation rather than life.

The court convened to try chief Phato found him innocent of the charges against him. Grey was not prepared to accept this and immediately called a mistrial, whereupon Phato was found guilty of receiving stolen goods. By the time that Grey had finished, 900 prisoners had been sent to Cape Town, the chiefs to Robben Island, and the others into service. In British Kaffraria Maclean's gaol returns showed 75 - 100 prisoners per month serving sentences of hard labour.<sup>2</sup>

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1. E. D'A. Dowsley, 'An investigation into the circumstances of the Cattle Killing', p.104.
  2. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.380.



Chief Sandile was forced to make a public confession and submission and as a reward was made a paid officer of the government and allowed to retain part of his location, with a much reduced chiefdom.

Grey now felt that he was in a position to administer his coup de grâce to the chiefdoms. The system of direct rule that he instituted over the Xhosa in British Kaffraria meant that the Xhosa would be completely under Colonial control. The 'friendly' chiefs were pensioned off with farms and government salaries. New regulations strengthened the authority of the magistrates over traditional Xhosa authority. Villages were created from the scattered homesteads and each was placed in the charge of a paid headman and assistants. With the new system of village police, Xhosa movements would be more effectively monitored. Taxes were also imposed, so that the Xhosa would be able to pay for their own administration. The magistrates selected the sites for the villages, to which the people were required to move when their crops had been harvested. And so began the juggling of the population of British Kaffraria to create Grey's 'checkerboard' settlement of blacks and whites. Not unnaturally, it left the

Xhosa with feelings of suspicion and distrust.<sup>3</sup>

Whatever the outward signs of acceptance, Grey must have known that the Xhosa people were unwilling participants in the revolution of their lifestyles. This had been made clear even before the Cattle Killing in a letter to Grey from chiefs Maqoma and Botomane, in April 1856, when they asserted that they had not granted land; rather, it had been taken by compulsion for if they had refused it, Grey would have thought that they wished to fight.<sup>4</sup> This was written at a time when Grey was reporting the success of his measures in British Kaffraria. It would also seem that at least these two chiefs had recognized the Governor's ability to discover 'conspiracies' where none existed.

The interpretation of Liberal and Afrikaner historians of the effects of British Imperialism in southern Africa, though differing on certain aspects, agree

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3. Free Church of Scotland Archives, Cory Library MS9039: Minutes of Lovedale, 7 July 1858.
  4. Grey Coll. G.10.c.13(16): Letters from Kafir Chiefs to His Excellency Sir George Grey KCB, letter dd. 27 April 1856 signed with marks of uMakoma and uBotman.

on one thing: that British intervention was generally to the benefit of the African people. Radical historians have rejected this, and Atmore and Marks<sup>5</sup> have made a case for British intervention seeking nothing more than the protection of Britain's own interests, whatever the 'humanitarian' justification. They insist that economic interests played a major role in Imperial policy, and it was precisely these economic interests that Britain was seeking to protect by sustaining the white colonial economy at the Cape at the expense of blacks. As a result of this intervention, they claim, the white colonist society gained in economic and political power.

How do the actions of Sir George Grey and the missionary bodies on the Cape eastern frontier reflect these arguments? Grey was, to a considerable extent, motivated by economic considerations. In the years prior to 1870, Britain enjoyed a freedom of access to the markets of the world which was to be limited after that time, and her commerce was flourishing. Though the Empire grew steadily, it was also the so-called 'Little

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5. A. Atmore and S. Marks, 'The Imperial Factor in South Africa in the 19th Century', p.105 ff.

England' era, when certain Colonial Office authorities felt it would be expedient to limit the political extent of the Empire, and colonial administrators were directed to ensure the colonies paid for themselves. Grey was not prepared to limit British interests in southern Africa, but he did attempt to make the Cape pay its way. Unfortunately, he seemed to think that the only way to do this was to exploit the Xhosa and create a reservoir of cheap labour. This, then, touches on the second point made by Atmore and Marks, that the white colonial economy was sustained at the expense of Africans and that the colonial society gained in economic and political power. Grey's actions in British Kaffraria certainly did not benefit the Xhosa. Because he couched such actions in his 'humanitarian' terms and hedged them around with obscure and confused reasoning, he would have us believe that the Xhosa people were the ultimate beneficiaries. Thus, Grey has left behind him in South Africa, the myth of a 'just and humane' governor who wished to 'elevate' the Xhosa nation and confer upon it the 'benefits of civilization'. The fact that this resulted in the destruction of Xhosa society was applauded by contemporary white society, mission-

aries included, as 'bringing the Xhosa out of their barbarous state'. That Grey's sole desire was to ensure stability for the Colony to develop politically and economically, and the extension of British power in southern Africa, was delicately overlooked.

By the time of the opening of the Cape Parliament on the 7 April 1857, Grey had his plans well laid for the reorganisation of British Kaffraria and the introduction of white settlers into the now 'empty' space. He was also setting his sights on Kaffraria Proper beyond the Kei and a settlement in Sarhili's territory similar to that in British Kaffraria. In the latter territory, land was confiscated from Phato and Mhala and sold, with the best land being kept for the future white settlers. The best part of the Crown Reserve was also to be set aside for whites. Grey, ingeniously enough, considered it not only his duty to fill the 'vacant' land with prosperous white settlers, but also considered that he was not neglecting the interests of the dispossessed Xhosa. He reasoned that many Xhosa had perished of starvation, disease and recent fighting among themselves; others had joined more distant chiefs and had no intention of returning; thousands more had settled across the Kei in what he considered better territory than their own;

SIR GEORGE GREY - 'ROMANTIC IMPERIALIST'



(Cape Archives - AG 7391)

and thousands had gone to work in the Cape, so he was not in fact doing them a disservice by making use of their land! The Governor conceded that some Xhosa might in the future return from the Colony, but he was sure that the training that they had undergone while in service would render them useful to the new white settlers of British Kaffraria.<sup>6</sup>

Grey's biographer, Rutherford, has described him as a romantic imperialist, and there is indeed little doubt that he wanted to extend British influence in South Africa. British Kaffraria, which he hoped the Cape would agree to annex, and Kaffraria Proper would be the starting point for the consolidation of territory on the eastern seaboard. He hoped to extend indirect, or preferably direct, rule over the people in the Transkeian territories. His plans took the Colonial Office somewhat by surprise, and he encountered a measure of resistance, but for the most part, a feeling of resignation. What was, however, more surprising than his plans to extend British possessions was the fury that Grey unleashed on the chiefs in the

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6. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.381.

areas he wanted for his extension - in particular, on Sarhili, beyond the Kei. The Transkeian territory had been badly ravaged by the Cattle Killing, and from the reports of destitution in the area, the chiefs there could hardly have put up much effective resistance to colonial forces in any case.

In order to equalize as far as possible the black/white ratio in British Kaffraria, Grey wanted to resettle Xhosa and Mfengu from that part of the country along the Mbashe River. This meant clearing the area of proposed settlement of people already there. An opportunity offered itself in July 1857 when a minor Thembu chief, Vadana, plundered the Queenstown and Albert districts. A force under the enthusiastic leadership of Walter Currie, who was given carte blanche to proceed against the chief as he saw fit, captured Vadana, as well as the elderly chief, Quesha. In the process Currie's men shot down 49 Thembu apart from those wounded, captured 120 horses, 22 goats and 8 head of cattle, and set fire to the homesteads.<sup>7</sup> Currie was elated and hoped that at last the opportu-

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7. C.O.48/384: Grey to Labouchere, No.148, 3 October 1857; J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.384.



nity had arrived to keep the Xhosa as an entire nation under the colonial thumb.<sup>8</sup> Grey was full of admiration for such actions, and Currie himself was knighted.

Currie was now 'itching to go in at Kreli',<sup>9</sup> as was the Governor himself. From the ensuing action against Sarhili, it would appear that Grey had lost all sense of proportion as far as that chief was concerned. In order to justify his actions in the eyes of officialdom, he returned to an old and trusted theme - conspiracy, war and the danger to the Colony. With the aid of Maclean, Grey concocted an elaborate case to prove that the Cattle Killing had been a conspiracy between Sarhili and Moshoeshoe of Basutoland, against the Colony.<sup>10</sup> Now Grey mentioned in a despatch to Labouchere that Sarhili was using the news of the Indian Mutiny to revive the desire for war against the colony. The elderly chief, Mhala, was in the same despatch accused of trying to foment a rising within the Colony.<sup>11</sup> In other words, threatened by the enemy from within and

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8. W. Currie, 23 September 1857, quoted in Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.371.

9. Ibid. p.385.

10. See previous chapter.

11. C.O.48/388: Grey to Labouchere, No.9, 11 February 1858.

without, Grey would be 'forced' to drive Sarhili from his country and deal with Mhala in order to secure the safety of the colony. The man chosen to rout the already-destitute Sarhili was none other than Walter Currie.

Grey complained frequently of broken health. The Cattle Killing crisis had taken its toll both physically and mentally, and he was, in 1858, close to a breakdown.<sup>12</sup> He was a man of uncertain temper, querulous in the face of criticism or opposition, vindictive towards his enemies, real or imagined,<sup>13</sup> and, as his despatches show, a master of emotion-laden reasoning and justification. His attitude towards Sarhili seems to have been tinged with an hysteria which was almost aberrant. He was determined to have Sarhili's land and the chief's submission at all costs.

Grey's resolve was bolstered by Maclean who, just as much as the governor, wanted control over the frontier chiefdoms. He urged that the removal of Sarhili beyond the Mbashe was absolutely necessary for the

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12. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.391.

13. Private correspondence, Prof. B.J. Dalton to Dr. T. Gutsche, 14 February 1975.

future peace of the Colony, as that chief was the 'incenter and promoter' of all wars. He maintained that the British Kaffrarian chiefdoms looked to Sarhili for leadership and that to remove him would break the unity of the chiefdoms, leaving those in British Kaffraria to their 'own resources'. They would no longer have 'a depot in that (Sarhili's) country ... and we could take them both on the flanks and in the rear'.<sup>14</sup> There is no doubting that Maclean was a military man. The Chief Commissioner had lived at the Cape and on the frontier long enough to have known that he was employing faulty premises in attributing the strength of leadership that he did to Sarhili. One can only assume that he was giving Grey all the encouragement he could in order to bring Sarhili 'under control'. Not that Grey needed it.

Currie's expedition against Sarhili was highly successful in colonial terms. He drove that chief across the Mbashe river, using 'experienced riflemen' to deal with any resistance. He reported that Sarhili had

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14. Grey Coll. MSB 223: Maclean to Grey, 12 October 1859.

suffered 'considerable losses' and that the territory from Clarkebury down the Mbashe to the sea and back to the River Kei had been 'well swept, the gardens and huts destroyed and the country really cleared of its former inhabitants'.<sup>15</sup> The Rev. W. Impey, on a tour of mission stations in Kaffraria Proper, was constrained to remark that Currie had been most effective in clearing the country, but that the service he had rendered Grey had not been performed 'without unnecessary vigour'.<sup>16</sup>

The Governor had hoped to repeat the British Kaffrarian pattern of settlement in Kaffraria Proper, but the land remained in an unsettled state for the rest of his term of office. Certain resettlements were carried out, and 'Thembuland' and 'Fingoland' were thus created out of former Gcaleka territory. A mixture of Ndhlambe, Ngqika, Gqunukwebe, Mfengu, Khoi and Gcaleka were settled according to Grey's village system at Idutywa and Butterworth under the supervision of Lt. Colley.<sup>17</sup>

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15. C.O.48/388: Currie to R. Southey, Secretary to the Governor, 1 March 1858, encl. to No.18, 9 March 1858.

16. WMMS Archives, SOAS, Box 378: The Rev. W. Impey to the Secretaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, 7 June 1858.

17. C.O.48/398: Wynyard to Newcastle, No.22, 8 October 1859.

The vacuum created by Sarhili's expulsion was immediately attractive to people other than Grey, and by October 1859 one of Moshoeshoe's sons had moved into a portion of the territory, with some of his followers, to claim the land on behalf of his father. Unfortunately for Grey, his plans to annex Kaffraria Proper were scotched by bankruptcy and official disfavour. Already impatient with the Governor's growing disobedience, Fortescue, in the Colonial Office, reacted testily when the Acting-Governor, Lt. Gen. Wynyard, urged the permanent occupation of the Transkei. He noted on the despatch that the country between the Kei and Mbashe Rivers had anyway been occupied in 1857 without the Home Government being consulted.<sup>18</sup>

The final stage of settling parts of the Transkeian territories in the village system was carried out in 1861, after Grey's departure to New Zealand. The indefatigable Currie first moved into the territory with two detachments of Mounted Police, to support the authority of the magistrate who had been deputed to place the local people into villages. In a sudden rush of 'concern' for Sarhili and his people,

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18. Ibid. Note by Fortescue.

who were destitute and starving in the small area now allowed to them, Currie then urged the annexation of the Transkei in the interests of 'humanity', to 'put an end to such wholesale destruction of life'.<sup>19</sup> As Secretary of State, the Duke of Newcastle, commented that this same famine among Sarhili's people would help the new governor, Wodehouse, to carry out his instructions with regard to Kaffraria.<sup>20</sup>

After the destruction caused by the Cattle Killing, Grey's actions against the chiefs came like a death blow. Reaction manifested itself in fresh outbreaks of the prophecy. Official reports between 1855 and 1860 mentioned several prophets between the Mbashe and Umzimvubu Rivers. A revival of the prophecy occurred in Thembuland and in Sarhili's new location beyond the Mbashe. There, a new prophet, Bombo, prophesied the destruction of the whites and a fresh outbreak of cattle killing took place, though Sarhili refused to participate. It can only have been a deep sense of frustration and desperation which led thus to the revival of a

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19. C.O.48/408: Currie to Acting Colonial Secretary, 9 November 1861, encl. to No. 51, 22 November 1861.

20. Ibid. Duke of Newcastle, comment on No. 51, Wynyard to Newcastle, 22 November 1861.

prophecy which had already proved so disastrously ineffective.

Grey, and with him the Cape Colony, had apparently emerged from the crisis with undreamed-of gains. True, the Colonial Parliament was hedging over the question of the annexation of British Kaffraria to the Colony, and the Colonial Office was doing the same over absorbing Kaffraria Proper, but Grey had got the Xhosa nation where he wanted them, and the Colony itself looked forward to the prospect of stability and economic growth and the fulfilment of at least some of their labour demands.

But what of the missionaries? Contrary to Majeke's assertions, they were in fact the poor relations of Grey's schemes and therefore gained very little in real terms from the crisis. This is not to exonerate them completely from having cherished certain ambitious intentions towards the Xhosa people. They wanted to destroy what to them was barbarous in Xhosa society and thus co-operated willingly with Grey's plans. They applauded Grey's aims in British Kaffraria and hoped that he would be able to create a stable society which would then give them a more closely-knit population with which to work.

But the myth of the great advance of missionary work after the Cattle Killing is nothing more than that.

There was certainly the hope that the experience would humble the Xhosa and bring them within the Christian fold in a way that missionary effort alone had not been able to do. That this hope was not fulfilled is clearly shown in an analysis of conversion figures in the years after the Cattle Killing and in evidence of positive hostility towards Christianity and a return to 'nativism' in the 1860s.

Both the Free Church of Scotland and the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Societies kept yearly conversion and attendance figures. The ratio of converts to overall population surrounding the stations were similar, as were the figures indicating increase in members. These figures need to be treated with some caution and are an indication, rather than an exact reflection, of the status quo at the time. In some instances, there is no way of knowing how many white members were included in the returns, and in the late 1850s the Mfengu still formed the bulk of the Christian communities. Among other converts, the dividing line between true conversion and a conversion-of-convenience to gain refuge from



tribal custom was very thin. After the Cattle Killing the economic stress and social tensions were a stimulus to at least temporary conversion.<sup>21</sup> The missionaries were well aware that a distinction existed between the genuinely converted and these others, but made no attempt to distinguish between the two groups in their annual returns. Even if one does, however, accept the missionary records at face value, the numbers are not impressive.

Take the example of a single mission station: in 1859 Tiyo Soga of the Free Church of Scotland reported that there were 490 men, women and children living at Mgwali, a Church of Scotland mission station. Of these, 20 were catechumens and 61 were baptised. By December 1860 the number of those living on the station had dropped to 442. At the end of 1866, the population totalled 508. There were 7 000 Xhosa in the surrounding district. Of the station people, there were 167 communicant, 35 catechumens and 27 newly baptised.<sup>22</sup> There is no breakdown of these figures which might have

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21. D. Williams, Umfundisi: A biography of Tiyo Soga 1829-1871, (Lovedale Press, 1978), p.68.

22. Ibid.

indicated new converts, transfers, or Mfengu. It is also difficult to gain a completely accurate impression of the years immediately following the Cattle Killing because of the movement of the population in British Kaffraria and the Transkeian territories. Many of the new members of the stations were in fact transferred members from other societies within the colonial boundaries.

The Methodist Missionary Society recorded annual overall figures for British Kaffraria and Kaffraria Proper. The following figures were recorded between the years 1857 and 1868. They include both Xhosa and Mfengu and in some cases, white members.<sup>23</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Members</u>
1857	1 386
1859	1 662
1862	2 601) (includes the new ) Thembu location made
1863	2 563) up of colonial Thembu.)

This indicates an increase of 1 177 people living on the mission stations over 7 years, but not all of those on

23. WMMS Archives, SOAS, Box 337: Synod minutes, *passim*.

the stations were full members of the church.

By 1868, the numbers had increased to 4 678, but this figure included the new Mfengu villages at T'somo and Butterworth (613 people) and 598 Thembu who had been moved to Lesseyton and Mt. Arthur. The returns for the Peddie district within the colony, a prosperous area in terms of peasant farming, gave the numbers for mission station members as 400 - 500 in a total population of ca. 40 000.<sup>24</sup> An official census was taken in British Kaffraria and the Transkeian territories in 1858 and 1859. The figures for the 'Native Population' were given as follows:<sup>25</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>
1858	43 813
1859	58 317

In 1859 the Methodist Missionary Society figures were 1 662, i.e. 2,8% of the total black population. The Methodists were somewhat more active in the Transkeian territories than the Free Church of Scotland, so represented the higher proportion of members. Even

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24. WMMS Archives, SOAS, Box 313: I. Start to the Rev. E. Hoole, 26 November 1861.

25. C.O.48/403: Chalmers to Chief Commissioner, sub-encl. to No.77, April 1860.

with a combined 4% of the population living on mission stations, this does not constitute an 'unprecedented breakthrough' in missionary work, especially as the figures recorded by the societies are not reliable.

By 1859 the Xhosa were returning to British Kaffraria and the Transkei in significant numbers. Membership of the missionary societies did increase in the following years, but the Methodist returns of 1863 actually showed a decrease in membership. This reflects the growing antagonism towards Christianity which began to be felt in the early 1860s.

Where, then, did the myth of the 'great break-through' originate? Certainly not with the majority of the missionaries at the time. Without exception, they realised in 1857 that the time was ripe for increased efforts in the mission field. There was a sense of urgency in their letters, a feeling of 'now or never', but the realities were, nevertheless, clearly spelt out. They had neither the men nor the money to make use of the opportunity opening before them. There was no money to send more teachers even to chief Kama's people, when he requested them.<sup>26</sup> It was not

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26. WMMS Archives, SOAS, Methodist Missionary Conferences 1858-1860: The Rev. W. Garner to the Rev. G. Osborn, 6 December 1858.

only the missionaries themselves, who were aware of the lack of men in the field. Part of Grey's plans for the civilization of the Xhosa depended on the spread of missionary institutions. It was clear that those who had accepted life on the stations were not averse to the introduction of colonial law, but there were just not enough mission institutions to make a significant impact. Warner, Government Agent with the Thembu, thought that the number of missionaries and their agents would have to be doubled before a general impression could be made on heathenism.<sup>27</sup>

The missionaries themselves, were not very optimistic about their prospects. The Methodist Missionaries, so long in the South African field, were particularly realistic about the little influence one minister could expect to exert on the large populations surrounding the stations of British Kaffraria and Kaffraria Proper.<sup>28</sup> In 1860 William Holden disagreed completely with the remark made by the Bishop of Grahamstown that the Xhosa were turning to Christianity

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27. C.O.48/401: Warner to Southey, 2 January 1860, encl.2 to No.7, 16 January 1860.

28. WMMS Archives, SOAS, Box 313: The Rev. W. Gedye to the General Secretaries, 30 July 1859.

'in masses'.<sup>29</sup> Perhaps the missionaries who were new to the field, (the Anglican Church only entered the South African mission field in 1854), thought and wrote more enthusiastically and optimistically than the others, and this may have been the germ of the myth of the great advance.

An analysis of missionary correspondence of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and the Free Church of Scotland, shows far more complaints of slow progress of conversion and actual antagonism towards the Gospel and a reversion to traditional customs, than reports of advances. Certainly, some stations did report satisfying increases in membership and signs of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but these were isolated cases and the increases were not sustained.

The 1860s brought what D. Williams, in his biography of Tiyo Soga, has called a reversion to 'nativism'.<sup>30</sup> This was expressed in an antagonism towards the missionaries and an upsurge of traditional customs among mission people. It is true that some chiefs, the most

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29. Ibid. W.C. Holden to the Gen. Secretaries, 9 May 1860.

30. D. Williams, Umfundisi, p.19.

notable being Sarhili, requested resident missionaries after the Cattle Killing, but it was generally in an attempt to rescue some shreds of what they had lost in land and to place a 'buffer' between them and the colonial authorities. Tiyo Soga, a Xhosa himself and first missionary to his own people, attributed Sarhili's request for a missionary to political motives.<sup>31</sup> The request was made when he was allowed to return to portion of his former territory in 1864. With most of his land divided between Mfengu and Thembu, Sarhili was in a weak position and a missionary would thus have been a form of protection against further colonial demands.

For the most part, missionary prospects were bleak. When they returned to stations which had been abandoned during the crisis, it was to find that many former converts had not maintained their Christianity, but had slipped back into their old customs, using blankets instead of clothes, and smearing themselves with the red clay that was the mark of the pagan Xhosa. This happened on a number of occasions and was a reflection of how superficial the conversion experience often was.

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31. Ibid. p.77.

In 1860 there were complaints from the Buntingville station in the Transkeian territories about the heathenish influences acting on the minds of people who had previously been thought to have accepted Christianity.<sup>32</sup> On another station two 'native' preachers joined a sacrificial feast to the spirits of the departed and ate some of the meat.<sup>33</sup> There were complaints about beer drinking and Sabbath desecration,<sup>34</sup> about polygamy, witchcraft and the smoking of dagga.<sup>35</sup> The circumcision rites proved almost impossible to eradicate, with the young men on the mission stations defiantly taking part in the ceremony. The greatest opposition to the missionaries came from the Amaqira, or 'witch doctors', whose 'religious' position among the people was threatened.

By 1863 the heathen reaction in the Transkeian territories had become particularly strong, and in fact hindered the work at the mission stations themselves.<sup>36</sup>

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32. WMMS, SOAS, Methodist Missionary Correspondence Kaffraria, incoming, 1858-60: The Rev. J. Longden to General Secretaries, 29 May 1860.

33. WMMS, SOAS, Box 313: Briggs to Gen. Secs, 8 January 1859.

34. Free Church of Scotland Archives, Cory Library, MS9039: Minutes of Lovedale, October 1857.

35. WMMS, SOAS, Box 313: Gedye to Gen. Secs, 24 May 1864.

36. Ibid. J. Longden to Gen. Secs, 25 August 1863.



The missionary on the Morley station in that territory complained bitterly a year later of being surrounded by Xhosa utterly resistant to the Gospel message.<sup>37</sup> The population of Kaffraria was still unsettled, and the missionaries had to accept that removal of individuals from their personal influence invariably meant loss of converts.<sup>38</sup>

The position towards the end of the 1860s had not improved at all. The Xhosa converts in the Transkei were widely scattered, and the danger was still very real that the heathen Xhosa would convert the Christians rather than vice versa!<sup>39</sup> Many Christians had, indeed, already reverted to heathenism. As always, the strongest belief was still in 'witchcraft'.<sup>40</sup>

The myth of the unprecedented missionary advance has remained strangely resistant in the face of contrary evidence. Twenty years on, in the 1880s, the Chris-

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37. Ibid. W.D. Rayner to Gen. Secs, 26 March 1864.

38. Ibid. W. Hunter to Gen. Secs, 12 April 1864.

39. Ibid. E.J. Barrett to W.B. Boyce, 24 January 1868.

40. Ibid. Gedy to the Gen. Secs, 3 June 1868.

tians among the Xhosa were still very much in the minority and break-away groups had begun to form what became known as 'separatist' or 'independent' churches. Inherent in the movement was a desire to be independent of whites in church matters. Some of the churches, notably the Zionist groups, borrowed heavily from traditional rites and customs.

As far as the mainline churches are concerned, there is even today a larger proportion of Christians among the Tswana and South Sotho peoples than among the Nguni, of which the Xhosa is a branch. B.A. Pauw, in an article on the 'Influence of Christianity', has suggested that the explanation might lie in the fact that the former have a less elaborate and virile ancestor cult than the Nguni people.<sup>41</sup> The distinction between 'red' or pagan Xhosa and 'school' people still persists and the Christian Xhosa are still in the minority.

Although success in terms of Christian conversion was limited, the missionaries fostered other innovations

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41. B.A. Pauw, 'The influence of Christianity', in W.D. Hammond-Tooke (ed), The Bantu Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974).

which were relatively far-reaching. In one sphere, especially, they instituted changes on their stations among the mission people which were to revolutionize their way of life. The missionaries on the Cape eastern frontier believed that Christianity and 'civilization' went hand in hand. They also subscribed to the Protestant work ethic. They needed cash contributions from their flocks and with all this in view encouraged participation in the cash economy of the colony in the form of peasant farming. On the instigation of Sir George Grey, this was extended to the teaching of trades. However, missionary emphasis on the dignity of labour did not mean that the Xhosa people were to be pushed willy-nilly into the colonial cash economy in a position disadvantageous to themselves (which Grey may perhaps have wanted). As far as the missionaries were concerned, education and Christianity brought equality, and they hoped that, in at least some instances, men educated at mission schools would compete with whites on their own terms. With representative government instituted at the Cape and the 'colour blind' franchise as part of that constitution, mission-educated blacks were able to vote on equal terms with whites and at times influence the elections in certain areas.

Participation in peasant farming particularly offered a welcome alternative to working for white farmers at low wages. C. Bundy in The Emergence and Decline of a South African Peasantry also considers that it was a positive response by African agriculturalists to the expanding market opportunities in southern Africa.<sup>42</sup> With the expropriation of grazing lands by colonial expansion, the mission stations offered an alternative mode of access to the means of agricultural production, and thus became the centres of the earliest peasant communities. The Mfengu were not only among the first converts, and in the 1850s still the largest element, but they also formed the first sizeable group of peasant farmers around the stations. The Bundy thesis has, of course, not been without critics such as Jack Lewis, who has seen it as resting upon too-narrow a base of empirical data and an incorrect theoretical understanding of the pre-capitalist mode of production in traditional Xhosa society and the effects of conquest on it.<sup>43</sup> But the issue of the black response to white

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42. C. Bundy, 'The Emergence and Decline of a South African Peasantry', in African Affairs, 71(1972), p.370.
43. J. Lewis, 'The rise and fall of the South African peasantry A critique', Paper delivered at the Africa seminar, Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, 13 April 1983.

market forces in the form of peasant farming communities with a mission station as a generating-point nevertheless remains.

The Cattle Killing stimulated peasant production in certain areas. Mission stations were issued with extra seed and production was increased to meet the expected demands of the starving believers. The impetus given was impressive. Peasant cultivation around Healdtown increased to such an extent that during the ploughing season of 1857 the demand for ploughs in Fort Beaufort was so great that almost every plough brought in by the traders was bought by the mission people. The price was £6 each. Traders bought up the surplus grain to sell to the government. The Healdtown area produced an excess of 15 000 bushels of grain.<sup>44</sup> In the same year the Peddie district reported an increased 'temporal prosperity', and at Annshaw twice as much land as in 1856 came under the plough. Kamastone had an excess yield of grain of 20 000 bushels.<sup>45</sup> However, some mission residents

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44. Grey Coll. G.33.c.14: Wesleyan Missionary Notices, 25 October 1858, p.185.

45. WMMS, SOAS, Box 337: Synod minutes for 1857.

sold so much grain that they experienced shortages in the following year.

The building of a watermill at Healdtown for grinding corn led the cultivators there to grow wheat at the expense of Indian and 'Kaffir' corn. This was bought by the traders in the area.<sup>46</sup> Grey encouraged this increased production. In the short term, he needed food to relieve the famine after the Cattle Killing, but his long-term plans included not only a supply of labour, but also the creation of a small-holding class of Xhosa and Mfengu settled in villages as a 'buffer' in the frontier region. Land titles were made available, and both Xhosa and Mfengu availed themselves of the opportunity to purchase land. In 1858 Lovedale, too, was given an extra 500 acres for cultivation. Although Healdtown had been issued with land titles by 1859, many Mfengu from there left the district to purchase farms in British Kaffraria. Members of the King William's Town circuit bought land in the neighbourhood of Keiskamma Hoek, and many Mfengu also bought land in the Royal Reserve.<sup>47</sup>

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46. Ayliff Papers, C.T. Archives, Item 80(4): Address from Mfengu of Healdtown to Grey, 1 August 1859.

47. WMMS, SOAS, Box 337: Synod minutes for 1859.

The government notice permitting Xhosa and Mfengu to purchase land in freehold at £1 an acre was issued in King William's Town early in 1858. Within ten days of the notice, 11 'Kaffirs' (as opposed to Mfengu) purchased 336 acres of land in British Kaffraria.<sup>48</sup> Both Christian and heathen Mfengu near Healdtown increased their ploughing in 1858/9, and one young man who had been rewarded with land in the Kat River settlement after the previous war, sold his land to an Afrikaner colonist for £1 250 and purchased land in British Kaffraria instead. He spent £500 on the land, and planned to spend £200 on the erection of a watermill.<sup>49</sup>

By 1860 the Mfengu in the Peddie district were reportedly owners of very considerable property in cattle and land.<sup>50</sup> By the mid-19th Century wool had replaced wine as the Colony's major export. To meet the increased demand for wool, Acting-governor Wynyard encouraged sheep farming in British Kaffraria, and the Thembu in Glen Grey area, who were to a large extent becoming settled

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48. C.O.48/388: Grey to Labouchere, No.11, 13 February 1858.

49. C.O.48/396: Ayliff to Grey, encl. to No.97, 22 June 1859.

50. C.O.48/402: Acting-gov. Wynyard to Newcastle, No.59a, 2 April 1860.

cultivators and sheep farmers, produced 6 000 lbs of wool in 1859 and sold it to the local traders. The Thembu Resident, Warner, estimated that much more had probably been sold in the Queenstown district that year.<sup>51</sup> The overall wool exports for the Colony increased from £634 130 in 1855 to £1 680 826 in 1865.<sup>52</sup>

The Mfengu and Thembu resettlement in Fingoland and Emigrant Tembuland in the Transkei after 1864 led, according to Bundy, to the introduction of the innovative farming methods into that area as well. These settlements were on the land formerly belonging to Sarhili and his people and cleared by Currie. Grey's confiscation and sale of land 'depopulated' by the Cattle Killing thus contributed to the development of a class of peasant farmers (already forming around mission stations) who in turn successfully responded to the growing market demands. However, Grey also created a deliberate shortage of land available to the Xhosa in order to encourage a labour force for the Colony.

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51. C.O.48/401: Warner to Southey, encl.2 to No.7, 2 January 1860.

52. M. Wilson & L. Thompson (eds), A History of South Africa to 1870. (David Philip, 1982), p.290.



Bundy considers the height of peasant prosperity in the Eastern Cape to have been in the 1850s and 1860s. There must, however, have been an unequal spread of wealth in the frontier districts. Firstly, the Cattle Killing had left thousands of Xhosa with little other than their labour to sell. Secondly, in 1863 British Kaffraria and the Transkeian territories found themselves in the grip of a drought. Reports of poverty and distress, and the revival of the prophecy in several areas, came from the Healdtown and Alice districts, Kamastone, Mount Coke and Clarkebury.<sup>53</sup> By the mid-1860s the Colony was also hit by a severe depression, mainly because of the collapse of the wool prices on the international market. The missionaries, always ready to grab at straws, hoped that at last the hearts of the heathens would be softened and they would be ready to receive the Gospel.<sup>54</sup> That they still found it necessary to voice such hopes, is yet another indication that the Cattle Killing had not brought the hoped-for results by drawing significant numbers into the Christian fold.

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53. WMMS, SOAS, Box337: Albany Minutes and Reports, 18 November 1863.

54. Ibid.

Grey and missionary example had thus opened the way for the development of a South African peasantry in Colin Bundy's sense of the word.<sup>55</sup> There is no doubt that Grey, and to a lesser extent the missionaries, were hoping to develop new markets for British goods. The Xhosa in whom these needs and wants had been created and who had accepted the trappings of 'civilization', would not only contribute to the creation of a more stable frontier, and prove more receptive to Christianity, but would also be a hitherto-untapped source for providing raw material for British industry and a market for British goods. This link between missionaries and the economic interests of the British Empire was succinctly expressed in the Home and Foreign Record of the Free Church of Scotland in 1858. The writer mentioned the new commercial interest in Africa developing among all classes of the British community and was sure that Africa would not be allowed to remain 'barbarous'. The Dark Continent would have to be Christianized, he wrote, 'if not for the higher ends of Christianity,

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55. C. Bundy defines 'peasant' as a rural cultivator enjoying access to a specific portion of land and its produce and using family labour to meet not only the consumption demands of the family but also demands from a wider economic system.

yet for the lower interests of British commerce'.<sup>56</sup>

Grey was not to remain at the Cape much longer. He was recalled in 1859 but re-instated soon afterwards. In 1861 he left the Cape again to resume office as Governor of New Zealand. His work at the Cape and in the adjoining territories was not, as yet, finished, but his heart seemed no longer in it. He seems to have lost his driving force. But in his short years as Governor of the Cape he had, to all intents and purposes, achieved what no other governor had before him. His record as far as the colonists were concerned was positive, and his reputation and their admiration for him has lived on, enshrined in traditional South African historiography. When weighed in the balance, however, the record leaves much to be desired.

The missionaries, on the other hand, can perhaps lay claim to being a little whiter than they have traditionally been painted. Sometimes with the religious

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56. Grey Coll: Home and Foreign Record of the Free Church of Scotland, August 1858, p.58.

fanaticism of the crusaders themselves, they had striven to destroy whatever seemed contrary to Christian ethics and Gospel teaching. (The fact that their success was limited was largely no fault of their own.) But, unlike Grey, the missionaries of the 1850s destroyed in order to rebuild, and an assessment of their work in fields other than those closely related to their evangelising activities may in due course show something more positive to relieve the negative picture of the present.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

Grey's recall from the Cape in 1859 was followed by his fairly rapid reinstatement. He returned to take up office in 1860, after spending some months in Britain, mysteriously sans spouse. His years as Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner were drawing to a close, and in 1861 he departed somewhat precipitously for New Zealand to take up a second term of office as Governor of that colony.

Grey was a multi-faceted man, whose reputation had preceded him to the Cape. He was regarded as an intellectual and a humanitarian who was interested in the 'native races'. Most important for the colonists, it was hoped that he would repeat in southern Africa the success that he was said to have had in pacifying the Maoris in New Zealand. This view of Grey has, to a certain extent, survived the vicissitudes of time. He was admired by the white colonists of his day and has been lauded subsequently by many South African historians. More recently, however, doubts have been cast

upon the veracity of this tradition, and a new and, perhaps, truer picture of Grey is emerging. It is more in line with the Xhosa tradition which has cast him as the architect of the downfall of their nation.

Grey's position as High Commissioner and his failure to promulgate the Letters Patent for British Kaffraria gave him a position of unrivalled authority in that territory and, concomitantly, unequalled authority over the lives of the people there. The man that he was tended, thus, to be of the utmost importance in his dealings not only with his superiors in the Colonial Office in London but also with his officials, the missionaries and the Xhosa in the frontier region.

Grey undoubtedly possess<sup>ed</sup> an inquiring, intellectual mind which reflected the preoccupations of his time. He was interested in the Science of Man, especially the origins of Man and his diversity. He believed that, through the study of language and religion, one could glimpse the unity of the human species.<sup>1</sup> He

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1. R. Thornton, 'The elusive unity of Sir George Grey's Library', African Studies, 42, 1-2(1983), p.86.

assembled a priceless collection of books which was to have aided him in his researches and which he later donated to the Cape Colony. In New Zealand Grey studied the Maori language, collected and preserved their traditions and songs, and attempted to preserve their literature - which was indeed an interest one would have expected him to pursue in southern Africa.

Grey was also regarded as an accomplished linguist and was internationally recognized as such. A letter to Grey from Baron de Bunsen in 1860 clearly illustrates this and, as praise from an authoritative source, merits a quotation:

'You have heaped upon all scholars of African Ethnology and upon all friends of Comparative Philology, such rich treasures as new and true facts ....'<sup>2</sup>

Grey's 'enlightened and indefatigable researches and collections' had, therefore, surpassed Baron de Bunsen's fondest expectations.

In collecting for his library Grey maintained an extensive correspondence which kept him in touch with many

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2. Grey Coll. MSB 223: Baron de Bunsen to Sir George Grey, 2 October 1860.

leading intellectuals of the time. He attended scientific lectures, supported (in New Zealand at least) the Mechanic's Institute, and was interested in astronomy. While at the Cape he maintained a long acquaintance with the astronomer Thomas Maclear. He was also attracted to horticulture and the study of acclimatization and, to this end, sent southern African seeds and specimens to England.

It could then, with some justice, have been hoped that Grey would use his substantial talents to the benefit of South Africa. To some extent he did, but the benefits were largely confined to the Colony itself. His actions in British Kaffraria and Kaffraria Proper presented a very different picture. The inconsistency of the character which Grey displayed there profoundly affected his work in this area: in his relationship with the missionaries he tended to relegate them to the position of virtually impotent 'assistants'; as far as the Xhosa were concerned, they were to emerge from their contacts with him both broken and scattered.

In the preface to his biography of Grey, J. Rutherford has raised the possibility that the Governor might have



been a drug addict.<sup>3</sup> He used this suggestion to explain what at times seemed inexplicable fluctuations of mood, which are in turn reflected in the Governor's despatches. A reason for the taking of laudanum, which contained opium, could have been the ill-health that Grey was said to have suffered as a result of his years in Australia.<sup>4</sup> On his own admission, he spent much time on his back because of the pain from an old wound.<sup>5</sup> But it seems that Grey, rather than suffering from 'delicate health', was something of a hypochondriac who at times of stress, particularly when the Colonial Office was being censorious, complained of his health having quite broken down because of hardships recently incurred in the course of his duty.

Professor B.J. Dalton of Queensland University has noted that the apparently wide fluctuations between optimism and apprehension, as suggested by the drug hypothesis, occur in despatches of identical date and

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3. See above, Chapter four.
  4. J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.275: A contemporary in New Zealand thought that Grey's constitution had been so undermined that he was destined for an early grave; T. Gutsche, The Bishop's Lady, p.162: He was said to have been 'almost prostrate with pain and fatigue' when he returned from the frontier in 1856.
  5. B. Warner, 'Sir George Grey, Lady Grey and the Admiral Sir Henry Keppel', Quarterly Bulletin of the S.A. Library, XXXIII, 1 (September 1978).

were, instead, clearly related to the impact which each was intended to produce upon the recipient.<sup>6</sup>

In fact, most of the contradictions in Grey's character vanish when the inner truth is appreciated - that it was largely impossible to accept his word on almost anything.

As far as the officials at the Colonial Office were concerned (and, at times, the members of the Cape Parliament), this meant that they were never fully in the picture about frontier affairs. Grey twisted facts and arguments to suit himself and used exaggerated and faulty reasoning to put forward his point of view. An example of this was his speech to the Cape parliament in June 1856. He encouraged the economic co-operation of all southern African states and, as an incentive to the members of the Cape parliament, he exaggerated the potential advantages of trade. Trade with the interior was now in its infancy, but, said Grey, who could estimate what its value would be 'when vast tracts of the interior to which Emigrants are daily proceeding, swarm with a large population of

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6. Private letter, B.J. Dalton to G. Weldon, 28 November 1984

Europeans, or of almost civilized Native Tribes? <sup>7</sup>

In much the same vein Grey urged the Duke of Newcastle in 1861 to extend British control to Natal. His arguments had a familiar ring. If left to themselves, the Transkeian chiefdoms would be rent with internal conflict, refugees would fly over the colonial borders, with 'pursuing barbarians' pouring after them, and so on.<sup>8</sup> Thus, his advocacy was always livened with a strong admixture of make-believe.

Grey was impatient of curbs to his independence of action, completely unable to accept advice or criticism, and inclined to meet opposition to his wishes with tantrums. This affected his relationship with the missionaries on the frontier. Although he had co-opted their help in his frontier plans, it seemed that he did not trust them and gave them only as much leeway as suited him. To some extent this could have been the result of the brush he had had with the missionaries in New Zealand. Here he had been determined to abolish

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7. C.O.48/374: Grey to Labouchere, No.46, 5 June 1856.

8. Cape of Good Hope Annexures to the Notes and Preceedings to the House of Assembly, Vol.1, A122 - '61: Grey to Newcastle, 9 February 1861.

what he considered was their influence in the official conduct of Native Affairs.

Perhaps Grey wanted to prevent a similar situation arising in South Africa. Information about the progress of the Cattle Killing was gleaned from his magistrates. Indeed, neither Grey nor Maclean accepted missionary reports of distress in the months following the crisis, as they found it convenient to believe that these sources exaggerated the <sup>5</sup>situation. The missionaries were not allowed to participate freely in the distribution of relief to the starving Xhosa, because Grey questioned their ability to judge the genuine cases of need. As far as Grey's relief measures were concerned, it has been suggested that these were directed solely towards the supply of labour for the Cape.<sup>9</sup> Be that as it may, Grey's control of relief also highlights the fact that he was apparently incapable of translating humanitarian sentiments into a genuine concern about individuals.

Grey remained obdurate over his relief measures. Not even so eminent a churchman (and, incidentally friend) as Bishop Robert Gray was able to persuade the Governor to give the churches free rein to succour needy Xhosa.

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9. J.B. Peires, 'Sir George Grey versus the Kaffir Relief Committee', Journal of Southern African Studies, 10, 1 (April 1984), p.145 ff.

In two letters of June and August 1857, the Bishop urged him to do something more to relieve the starvation on the frontier. In both letters, he offered his personal services. By August Bishop Gray was so sickened by the reports of distress that he proposed convening a public meeting to organize further relief aid. With sad irony he asked whether Sir George would like to chair the meeting.<sup>10</sup> In fact, there was nothing that the Governor wanted less.

There is no doubt that Grey remained the dominant force in the interaction between the office of Governor and High Commissioner and the missionary bodies. He was prepared to use them, but not to trust their judgement in instances which ran counter to his desires. Even the extension of educational facilities was on his terms. The grants given to the missionary institutions were for industrial training - not to be used at missionary discretion where they saw fit. As far as the Xhosa were concerned, they were to be educated to serve the emerging colonial capitalist system. What might best serve those seeking the education did

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10. Grey Coll., MSE 223: Bishop Gray to Grey, 12 June 1857 and 9 August 1857.

not enter into Grey's calculations.

Indeed, an explanation of Grey's relations with the frontier communities may lie in the fact that he seemed to have a genuine streak of paranoia. This is no more clearly demonstrated than in the number of perceived conspiracies and plots which punctuated his career, not only in New Zealand, but also in South Africa. On numerous occasions these were used to justify the Governor's least defensible actions - in New Zealand his seizure of Te Rauparaha in 1846 and his invasion of the Waikato; in South Africa, his seizure of part of Sarhili's land. But they also cropped up in comparatively trivial instances, suggesting that they were something more than merely attempts to find excuses for ill-advised actions.

While at the Cape Grey was unfortunately encouraged by Lt. Col. Jackson, who was in practical charge of frontier defence. On at least fifteen occasions from January 1855 Grey reported rumours of combinations against the Colony, conspiracies, or intended uprisings. The last of these was just before he was due to leave the Cape for New Zealand in 1861.

In the wake of the Zulu 'unrest' Grey was convinced that the frontier chiefdoms would hazard another war if it was obvious that colonial troops were being sent to Natal.<sup>11</sup> It is significant that Lt. Gen. Wynyard, who was stationed as nearby as Grahamstown, was sceptical about the rumours of a possible uprising, but was, nevertheless, careful not to cross the Governor. He hedged his bets by remarking that, of course, he was not as likely to hear of rumours as Grey was because his information came from a 'far more indirect course'.<sup>12</sup> Grey proceeded to delay his departure to New Zealand because of this new 'conspiracy'. It did his reputation no harm with his mentor in London, Newcastle, who was the Secretary of State who had restored his Governorship.

It has, on a number of occasions, been suggested that the breakdown of Grey's marriage was the turning-point in his career that was directly responsible for his departure from the Cape. And yet, on closer examination of the facts, it would seem that Grey might rather

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11. Cape of Good Hope Annexures, Vol.1, A122 - '61: Grey to Lt. Gen. Wynyard, 27 July 1861.

12. Ibid. Wynyard to Grey, 1 August 1861.

have used the 'Keppel Affair'<sup>13</sup> to rid himself of an unwanted wife and to escape from the frontier difficulties which faced him on his return to the Cape. A faithful husband Grey was not. On much contemporary evidence, too persistent to be ignored, and on Lady Grey's own testimony, Grey was a notorious philanderer.<sup>14</sup> He publicly enjoyed the company of young ladies and their obvious admiration of him<sup>15</sup> and reportedly dallied with his wife's maid.<sup>16</sup> One particular informant remembered Grey in New Zealand being constantly surrounded by young Maori women and mentioned meeting a handsome and courteous young man who was rumoured to be Grey's son.<sup>17</sup> Faced with circumstantial evidence such as this, it becomes more difficult to accept Grey's 'distress' on the 'Forte'. The stalled situation in

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13. Sir George and Lady Grey sailed for the Cape in the flag-ship, 'Forte', which was also bringing Admiral Sir Henry Keppel to the Cape to assume office there. Grey spent much of his time on board on his back, and Lady Grey formed a friendship with the Admiral. She found in him a sympathetic confidant. Their cabins adjoined, and Grey found them exchanging notes. He made an hysterical fuss, threatening suicide, and the Captain agreed to return to Rio where Lady Grey and her maid were disembarked and sent back to England.
  14. B.J. Dalton to T. Gutsche, private correspondence, 14 February 1975.
  15. Life at the Cape a Hundred Years Ago, by A Lady, (C. Struik 1963), p.13.
  16. Wynberg Times, November 1898, Article signed by PAKEHA.
  17. Ibid. But not Lady Grey's. Their only child died in infancy.



British Kaffraria, coupled with his own inability to accept censure and setback, probably provided a much stronger incentive to leave the Colony.

The Governor's schemes for British Kaffraria had not been as successful as he had hoped. His plans depended on vast sums of money which were not forthcoming. The Imperial grant had been drastically reduced, and he was hard put to find alternative sources of revenue. Lung-sickness and the Cattle Killing had made deep inroads into the funds which could have been diverted towards developing British Kaffraria. The Cape Parliament contributed towards the Frontier Armed and Mounted Police, but was jealous of their use beyond the frontier, so Grey was criticized by some for using them to expel Sarhili from his Kei-Mbashe lands and for posting a small detachment near Idutywa.<sup>18</sup> Lt. Col. Jackson's retention of as many British troops as possible at the Cape also militated against the Governor's call for imperial funds.

Grey's plans for the civilization of the people of British

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18. A.E. du Toit, 'The Cape Frontier: A study of Native Policy with Special Reference to the Years 1847-1866', in Archives Year Book for S.A. History, I, 1954, p.121.

Kaffraria exceeded anything the Imperial Government had envisaged when creating it a separate province in the (non-promulgated) Letters Patent, and his call for the further extension of British authority across Independent Kaffraria to Natal was made at a time when the Colonial Office was advocating retrenchment and withdrawal. They refused to annex parts of the Transkeian territories which Grey had hopefully cleared for white settlement. In addition, plans for the federation of southern Africa had to be abandoned.

The German Military Settler scheme also threatened to become a costly failure, and further German immigration to British Kaffraria was being blocked by the Colonial Office. This seriously undermined Grey's plans for a buffer between black/white settlement on the frontier and his hope of 'civilization by cultural osmosis'.

Towards the end of his term Grey was, therefore, experiencing a fair amount of opposition for someone who could neither accept the criticism nor admit to being wrong. As a man of independent action, it is unlikely that he would willingly have accepted the restrictions

placed on him by the Colonial Office. The best way out of the dilemma facing him would have been to leave the Cape. He carefully prepared the way, both in the Colony itself, and at the Colonial Office, leaving his work on the Cape eastern frontier incomplete.

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The Cape eastern frontier, the 'meeting place' between Xhosa and white colonists, has been the focus of much South African historiography. In fact, frontiers as a whole have received more than their fair share of attention from historians of all traditions.

Frederick Jackson Turner in the United States was one of the first historians to produce a significant study of the influence of the frontier in history. His hypothesis was that the frontier experience shaped both the American character and American institutions. He claimed that the American frontier experience was unique and that American frontiersmen had largely gained their faith in the equality of men from it. What Turner and others after him failed to bring out fully was that frontier processes involve at least two societies.

Among the influential earlier works on the subject of the South African frontier were those of Eric Walker<sup>19</sup> and the psychologist I.D. MacCrone.<sup>20</sup> Both argued that South Africa's prevailing race attitudes had originated on the frontier and that the Great Trek was seminal in the spread of these attitudes into the South African interior. Broadly speaking, this Liberal thesis was that the frontiersmen, in isolation, developed a new way-of-life and this frontier tradition then left its mark upon the whole of South Africa. In due course the influence of the frontier, particularly on racial attitudes, resulted in the colour-bar in industry, urban segregation and opposition to the non-racial franchise in the Cape. The frontier was said to have bred individualism and anarchism and a suspicion of, and hostility to, government authority, which resulted in such anti-government action as the Rand Revolt of 1922. The frontier was also associated with land hunger and wasteful attitudes towards the land, which in their turn were accompanied by an indifference towards the

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19. E. Walker, The Frontier Tradition in South Africa, (Oxford 1930); The Great Trek, (A & C Black, Ltd, London, 1934).

20. I.D. MacCrone, Race Attitudes in South Africa, (O.U.P., 1937)

land-rights and land-needs of the African.

S.D. Neumark<sup>21</sup> in his studies on the economic influence of the frontier, has criticized a frequent suggestion that frontier expansion was caused because the whites needed more arable land or because they desired freedom and independence from the Dutch East India Company. He has argued instead that the trekboers in fact remained closely linked to colonial markets.

In general, Liberal historians felt not only that the frontier process resulted in the gradual subjugation of the African people and the absorption of their land, but also, for the most part, that it was the missionaries and officials who were opposed to the process of outright conquest. In short, the frontier stood for conservative reactionary ideas, while the Western Cape of the 18th Century and the input of enlightenment, rationalism and humanitarianism from the new 19th Century British metropole were seen as the source of Cape Liberalism. In these works the 'frontier tradition' thesis has imposed a dichotomy, at

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21. S.D. Neumark, Economic Influences on the South African Frontier 1652-1836, (Stanford, 1957).

times of missionaries and officials against colonists, at times of Afrikaner nationalists against their (largely British) opponents, and at times of Cape Liberalism against Republican frontiersmen.<sup>22</sup>

The classic frontier thesis as stated by Frederick Jackson Turner and as applied to the South African situation in considerably modified form by Liberal historians in this country, has been criticized by modern radical and revisionist historians, who have offered alternative interpretations of frontier. One of the first of these to do so was Martin Legassick, who argued that some of the least colour-conscious interaction between peoples of different societies occurred on the frontier and that for the origins of white racism one must look to ideas imported from Europe. Legassick criticized Turner for seeing the frontier in isolation, as the outer edge of the wave, and for treating it as a one-sided process. To Turner, the Indians were a savage obstacle rather than a constituent element in frontier society. Legassick further suggested that much closer attention had to be

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22. M. Legassick, 'The frontier tradition in South African Historiography', in S. Marks & A. Atmore (eds), Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa, (Longman, 1980) p.47.

paid to the frontier itself, and in doing so, important questions needed to be asked such as: 'What is the frontier?; What are its special influences?; And how does it perpetuate them, if it does at all?'<sup>23</sup>

Lamar and Thompson in The Frontier in History, define a frontier as a 'territory or zone of interpenetration between two previously distinct societies',<sup>24</sup> and offer three essential elements in a frontier situation:

1. territory
2. two or more initially distinct societies one of which is usually indigenous to the region
3. process by which the relations among the peoples begin, develop and eventually crystallize.

These elements were all part of the Cape eastern frontier situation in the mid-19th Century.

A frontier zone moves through various phases from an 'open' frontier to a 'closed' frontier, all stages displaying

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23. Ibid. passim.

24. H. Lamar & L. Thompson (eds), The Frontier in History North America and Southern Africa compared, (Yale University, 1981), p.7.

different characteristics. Within this frontier process Hermann Giliomee has distinguished three classic types of white frontiersmen: the first was the trans-colonial frontiersmen such as the traders (and, perhaps, the missionaries); the second was the pioneer frontier society which coexisted on a frontier zone with other ethnic groups competing for the land and its resources (here, there were three or four decades of intensive Afrikaner/Xhosa contact on the Cape eastern frontier in the later 18th Century); and the third, the settled frontier society living on what could be called the closing frontier.<sup>25</sup>

Frontier expansion, or the moving frontier, is a dynamic from which it has been possible to generate contradictory hypotheses. Neumark's theory that the frontiersmen were largely self-sufficient (though responsive to market opportunities) and thus, that any expansion of white settlement was largely a response to the demand for the produce of the interior, has been criticized by Robert Ross, who feels that Neumark does

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25. Hermann Giliomee, 'Processes in Development of the Southern African Frontier', in Lamar and Thompson, The Frontier in History, p.77 ff.



not sufficiently explain the rapid spread of colonial structures in Southern Africa.<sup>26</sup>

Ross maintains that an explanation of frontier expansion must be an attempt to analyze individual decisions to move out, and he identifies several motives for expansion in southern Africa. One reason behind early expansion at the Cape was the Roman-Dutch law of inheritance introduced into the colony. On the death of a father or husband, the estate would be divided among the heirs who would then cease to operate as any form of economic unit. Pastoral farming was more conducive to expansion than other types of farming, as sons, by moving on, did not have to wait till the father's death to become independent. However, there were also those who moved out to the frontier because of the material advantages it offered, and after 1836, those who moved deeper inland for political reasons.

The frontier experience in southern Africa was different for white and black. From the white point of view, settlement carried with it ideas of occupation of the

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26. R. Ross, 'Economics of the Southern African Frontier', in Lamar & Thompson, The Frontier in History, p.217 ff.

land and control of its resources, of conquest and incorporation of indigenous peoples.<sup>27</sup> For Africans, as Martin Legassick has pointed out, the frontier was the first stage of a process in which their political power was eroded and in which their material and social bases were transformed as they were drawn into a capitalist market economy linked with Europe.

Each stage of the frontier process showed different characteristics. On the pioneering frontier (or opening frontier) there was a relative freedom of action. A power vacuum led to endemic conflict with local commandos attempting to maintain control. There was an abundance of land and the farmers lived mostly on a subsistence level. According to Lamar and Thompson, this apparent availability of land led to an aggressive expansion into indigenous areas and perpetuated hierarchical concepts of society and fostered forced labour systems.<sup>28</sup> On the extreme frontier, however, white and black frontiersmen shared similar lifestyles and white frontiersmen sought co-operation

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27. H. Giliomee, 'The Southern African Frontier', p.78.

28. H. Lamar & L. Thompson, The Frontier in History, p.30.

and aid from the Xhosa.<sup>29</sup> Thus, the early frontiersman did not view the African solely as an enemy or a servant.

In the open phase of the frontier there was a rough political balance between black and white: it was the 'closing' of the frontier that was to bring white domination. This was essentially a process of multiple closing on an economic, social and political level. The economic closure manifested itself in a growing scarcity of land and resources, a shift from subsistence to commercial farming, and increasing control of the means of production of a specific class.<sup>30</sup> In the southern African context, the frontier closed when control over the so-called 'means of production' passed definitely to the colonists.<sup>31</sup> The closing of the frontier was a time fraught with insecurity for the white colonists as they tried to adapt to the new economic imperatives. The Cape eastern frontier began to close rapidly after 1780 as further expansion in the

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29. M. Legassick, 'The frontier tradition in South African historiography', p.66.

30. H. Giliomee, 'The Southern African Frontier', p.79.

31. R. Ross, 'Economics of the Southern African Frontier', p.223.

early 19th Century was resisted by the stronger control of the British government.

The closing frontier also brought with it a growing social stratification as a plural society emerged with a given set of caste or class relationships.<sup>32</sup>

Legassick insists that class structures did not begin on the frontier, but that the essential matrix of ideas from which racism grew already existed in Europe, especially Protestant Anglo-Saxon Europe. He feels that the essence of the race attitudes were to be found in existing class relations rather than race relations.<sup>33</sup>

This was in part the result of the new industrial society in Britain. In his study of Victorian England, G.M. Young pointed out that industrialization in that country resulted in the visible splitting of British society into possessors and proletariat, and the widening of the gap between classes.<sup>34</sup> According to Legassick, these attitudes tended to harden in overseas societies generated by expansion, being there transformed into racist ideologies. Thus, class

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32. H. Giliomee, 'The Southern African Frontier', p.79.

33. M. Legassick, 'The frontier tradition', p.49.

34. G.M. Young, Portrait of an Age, (London, O.U.P., 1966), pp.24 & 25.

attitudes became race attitudes. Although this was a phenomenon largely associated with industrialization, at the Cape the development of peasant farming, particularly in the 1850s, brought with it new forms of social and economic stratification. By the end of the 1850s, especially after the Cattle Killing, there was a significant number of landless Africans, and this, together with the increasing social stratification, meant that the traditional economy was no longer viable. This in turn, added to the process whereby the African was forced onto the labour market.

The political closing of the frontier was characterised by the imposition of a single authority over the whole area.<sup>35</sup> This was accompanied by the decline of regional strife as the central government took over local administration. For the African this was accompanied by subordination to white colonial rule and economic incorporation into the capitalist system.

In the frontier process, R. Elphick has drawn parallels between the stages of transition from 'opening' to

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35. H. Giliomee, 'The Southern African Frontier', p.79.

'closure' and the stages of the African response to missionaries. From the early 19th Century missionaries were an important component of frontier society and thus much interaction on the frontier was of necessity labelled 'religious'. Mission stations usually experienced all three main phases of frontier development: the open frontier; the closing frontier; and the closed frontier with its unambiguous white rule.<sup>36</sup> Elphick has analysed the African response to each of these phases.

In phase one, the chiefs allowed, even encouraged, the setting up of mission stations. They hoped that the missionaries would bring western goods (guns and foodstuffs) and introduce new technologies, but, above all, would provide invaluable political and military intelligence upon which they could base their decisions for survival. Missionaries could also act as advisers, interpreters and plenipotentiaries in dealing with colonial authorities. In this early phase, African rulers suspected mission-

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36. R. Elphick, 'Africans and the Christian Campaign in Southern Africa', in Lamar and Thompson, The Frontier in History, p.270 ff.

aries of having privileged access to the power of the High God and hoped that they would thus be able to protect them from attacks from both black African and white enemies alike. Missionaries were patronised as though they were traditional prophets, rainmakers or healers. When accepting a missionary, the chief was more interested in the links of the missionary with Western civilization than in Christianity.

The African response to the closing frontier was one of participation in the life of the mission station. A small number settled on the station and a larger number came regularly for instruction. Some Africans came to the stations to learn to read and write, but when the initial fascination wore off, attendance figures declined. As illustrated by the Xhosa response and corroborated by Norman Etherington's research among the Zulu,<sup>37</sup> the majority of Africans distrusted the schools as agents of evangelization. Most of the converts and those attending schools were

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37. N. Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa in Southeast Africa: African Christian Communities in Natal, Pondoland and Zululand, 1835-1888', (PhD, Yale University, 1971).

outcasts from Nguni society or children of mission people. It would not be until the full closure of the frontier that education would be seen to have any general relevance. The merely 'closing' frontier ensured that Africans would associate missionaries and Christianity with the colonial authorities, who were increasingly their enemies, and this therefore encouraged an indifference to missions which often turned to positive hostility. In many cases stations survived only because of the chief's dependence on the missionaries as links with the colonial officials with whom he had by that stage to interact.

In these circumstances the closing frontier often threw the more traditionally-minded Africans back on their own indigenous religion in search for forms of knowledge and power that could counter the white threat. The Cape eastern frontier was in the process of closing during the 1850s. In an attempt to restore the old world-order in the face of colonial pressures, the Xhosa turned to such traditional remedies. Seen in this light, the Cattle Killing assumes an added dimension as a phenomenon of a closing frontier.



Elphick has suggested that just after a frontier has closed definitively, one might expect a period, however brief, when the indigenous peoples would be attracted to mission stations because of their identification with Western civilization.<sup>38</sup> As an example he suggests the positive response of the Xhosa to the missionaries in the 1860s after the Cattle Killing. However, the research carried out for this thesis has shown that the idea of a positive response in the 1860s is fallacious and that the 1860s were, rather, years of increased antagonism towards the missionaries. This hostility seems to suggest that the frontier was still in the process of closing, and that the true closure and the period of acceptance would be better placed in the 1870s and 1880s. It was in these later years that the Xhosa came to accept the benefits of education as a means of competing in the altered circumstances produced by the mineral revolution.

Though the overall turning-point in the process of the closing of the frontiers was reached at the end of the 1870s, forces at work on the Cape eastern frontier

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38. R. Elphick, 'Africans and the Christian Campaign', p.295.

during the era of Sir George Grey indicate that the act of incorporating reached what was probably its point of critical acceleration at that stage.

Christopher Saunders has further suggested that the subtle process of the substitution of magisterial for chiefly authority provides the best evidence that the frontier was speeding up into its final stages of closing. This was also part of the extension of 'British protection' which, as earlier suggested, was hardly to the advantage of the African people.

If Saunders is correct, then Grey certainly had a major part to play in imparting an uncontrollable momentum to the closing of the frontier. He settled the population of British Kaffraria under a system of resident magistrates and introduced white settlers onto land previously occupied by the Xhosa. He maintained a military presence in the area and modernised the 'police force' under Currie to make it into the formidable Frontier Armed and Mounted Police. Taxes were then imposed on the newly settled Xhosa to draw them into the colonial labour market and economic system. Thus, Grey's actions markedly intensified those forms of white dominance over the indigenous

people which especially characterize the 'closing' phase of the frontier process.

Grey's determination to extend British influence over the Cis- and Transkeian territories would have been considered by sociologist Max Weber to have been part of a natural process of state expansion. Weber believed that every powerful political community had a natural urge to expand and increase its sway over others, largely because its rulers and military leaders could best enhance their prestige and prosecute their own careers by aggressive expansion of state territory.

Within the state structure, Weber was also concerned with the subtleties of domination and the authoritarian power of command. Unlike the Marxists who were far more aware of the role of coercion and compliance within some states, Weber felt that only 'willing' obedience legitimised the domination of the leader. However, both the Marxist and Weberian notions of domination could be said to be relevant to the South African situation in the mid-19th Century. In the interaction between the missionaries and the Governor, the former offered more or less willing obedience to Grey, both to the man and to his official position. The Xhosa would have been far more

aware of the threat of force (or coercion) in the process of their incorporation within the ambit of British domination and, ultimately, control. This is not to say that Weber did not recognize the role that force had to play in the varieties of social action, even where order and harmony apparently prevailed. What was notable to him was that the state (in this case it would have been Grey as the representative of the state) claimed a monopoly over the legitimate use of violence - the sole right to use force upon anyone and everyone living within its territorial jurisdiction.

Although Grey used this 'legitimate force' against Sarhili in Kaffraria Proper, it had not been necessary in British Kaffraria - the Cattle Killing had made coercion superfluous. In any case, Grey had hoped that the extension of religion and education with the help of the missionary bodies would begin to produce 'willing co-operation' from the Xhosa. It has earlier been suggested that the missionaries genuinely believed that Christianity was vital to the salvation of the heathen and were therefore willing to become partners, even if minor ones, in Grey's plans for the extension of 'civilization' in British Kaffraria. Grey's aims for the use of religion and education differed from those of the

missionaries, and would again find an explanation in Weberian, and, indeed, Marxist, thought. Grey hoped to use religion as a weapon of 'ideological control and pacification'. Thus, according to Weber, religion had become a tool in the hands of the beaurocratic classes to bring about mass domestication.

Marxist historians would see the processes of coercion and domination attendant upon Xhosa incorporation within the colonial sphere as further examples of the general process of the exploitation of one class by another. In fact, one of the results of the closing frontier which has attracted much attention from social historians was the proletarianization of Africans and their incorporation into the colonial labour market. Land and labour were major forces in the relationship between black and white on the South African frontiers. The arrival of the British settlers in the Zuurveld area intensified the labour demands, already acute, and the colony began to lend an increasingly institutionalized support to the techniques by which labour could be controlled. While the Xhosa still retained a viable alternative, they were reluctant to become wage-labourers in a situation which would be to their disadvantage. In fact, Landdrost Stockenström was

prophetic when he maintained in the 1820s that only the Xhosa driven into the colony by starvation would become useful servants.<sup>39</sup> While the proletarianization of black labour in southern Africa is generally regarded as the result of the mineral revolution, it was also partially a pre-industrial process. Grey himself was very concerned about the colony's 'labour problem', and he certainly hoped to create a labour supply to fulfil its demands. To this end, the colonial parliament tightened up on the control which masters could exercise over their labour in 1856.<sup>40</sup> Not only Grey's relief measures after the Cattle Killing, but also an aspect of his village system, were directed towards forcing a supply of labour into the colony.

However, Grey was not solely interested in the supply and repression of labour. Part of the motivation behind the issue of land titles to the Xhosa was the creation of a peasant class among the Africans to

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39. Susan Newton-King, 'The Labour Market of the Cape Colony, 1807-28', in Marks and Atmore, Economy and Society, p.194.

40. H. Giliomee, 'The Southern African Frontier', p.106.

act as a buffer alongside his German settlers on the frontier. This was also in the interests of the missionaries who gave their support to the measures. The amount of land was the key to Grey's plans. He felt that, if given too much land, the African would be prevented from acquiring 'habits of industry' and from entering into service.<sup>41</sup> However, the Governor's insistence on such habits of industry must also be seen and considered against a wider context than just that of the exigencies of the frontier.

The Victorians had an almost universal faith in progress.<sup>42</sup> Both Grey and the missionaries reflected the thinking of their age and must, thus, be seen against a background of the Evangelical theology which permeated the Victorian era. This rested on a profound belief that those not in a State of Grace were in a fearful position. Given the strength of their religious convictions and the narrow interpretation of Grace held by many contemporary Christians, the ideas and actions of the missionaries may perhaps become a little more understandable. But neither they, nor Grey, should be judged solely against a religious background either of Evangelical theology or

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41. D. Welsh, Roots of Segregation, (1845-1910), (O.U.P., 1971), p.26.

42. G.M. Young, Portrait of an Age, p.1.

Weberian paradigms, for there were yet further factors that determined their way-of-life and, therefore, their political behaviour.

The mid-Victorian years were those of the Manchester School of thought or, in other words, the Free Trade era of Cobden and Bright. The Free Trade League was founded in 1839. By the 1840s several members of the government itself subscribed to their ideals, and by the later Victorian era the new theories of political-economy had become a habit of mind.<sup>43</sup> There was an accelerating interest in the economic and other sciences in the mid-19 Century, and in the midst of expanding industry and commerce, 'laws' were being discovered by the 'new science'. These seemed to govern capital and labour, profits and wages, the relations between states and between employers and employees, the use of land, the development of manufactures, the functions of government and the role of the individual.<sup>44</sup> Fundamental to these emerging political-economical theories was the idea that trade needed to be as free as possible and government interference as small as possible - in other words, an attitude of laissez-faire.

A major belief of the Free Traders was that the opening

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43. Ibid. p.47.

44. D. Read, Cobden and Bright A Victorian Political Partnership, (Edward Arnold, London, 1967), p.3.



of wider markets would not only benefit British manufacturers, but would also improve the position of the workers and, most important, that international Free Trade would herald a new era of international fellowship and harmony. In other words, the spread of commerce would establish world peace. Peace, of course, in a local context, was what was anxiously sought in Southern Africa in the 1850s.

But it was not just colonial administrators who would have been imbued with the ideas of the Free Traders. There was a strong Christian element in the Free Trade vision. As Cobden put it, Free Trade was the international law of the Almighty.<sup>45</sup> In August 1841 Cobden visibly linked the Anti-Corn Law League (the institutional embodiment of the Free Trade philosophy) to religion by organising a conference of 600 ministers in an attempt to prove that there was a link between Christianity and the repeal of the Corn Laws.

The missionaries, and, indeed Grey, in addition to a belief in Free Trade, would also have subscribed to the Protestant 'work ethic'. The other great Free Trade exponent, Bright, who was a Quaker, succinctly

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45. Ibid. p.33.

summed up this belief in 'industry' in a speech to parliament in April 1849:

'... we shall discover ... that industry, hopeful and remunerated - industry, free and inviolate, is the only sure foundation on which can be reared the enduring edifice of union and of peace.'<sup>46</sup>

It was firmly believed that work shaped the mind. Although this 'Economic Evangelism' was no longer a dominant philosophy in the 1850s, it had become a middle-class point-of-view.<sup>47</sup> As such, it was undoubtedly part of the thinking of the missionaries and of many colonial administrators. According to Weber, this Protestant ethic not only gave rise to the spirit of capitalism, but also to a distinctive 'spirit of labour'.<sup>48</sup> For the first time labour was performed as if it were an end in itself, a 'calling', which offered the employer 'sober, conscientious, and unusually industrious workmen, who clung to their work as to a life purpose willed by God'.<sup>49</sup> Such a 'work force for God' would clearly result in stability on the frontier. Although Weber has overestimated the impact of Calvinism in this sphere, the missionaries

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46. Ibid. p.88.

47. G.M. Young, Portrait of an Age, p.87.

48. Frank Parkin, Max Weber, (Ellis Horwood Ltd., 1982), p.51.

49. Ibid.

certainly held a genuine belief in the 'dignity of labour'.

The expanding British commerce and its demand for markets was reflected in Grey's concern for the creation of local markets. At the same time, this aspect of his administration has offered Radical historians the ammunition with which to attack him. It is an inescapable fact - and one which was decried by Cobden - that the 'Free Trade' as practised by the Victorians not only encompassed the willing and peaceful exchange of goods, but also the use of force to open and retain markets to the disadvantage of the indigenous peoples.

As far as the desire for peace and stability on the frontier was concerned, Grey and the missionaries spoke as one man, and sought to attain such goals by similar means. Both were influenced by the Christian-based Free Trade ideas of Cobden and Bright and both encouraged the creation of a class of market-orientated peasants centred around mission stations. A side-effect of this was the encouragement of processes of stratification in African society. Missionaries made

a further contribution to this development. Around the stations, the 'red'/'school' division among the Cape Nguni was an early manifestation of developing class formation (other than the traditional division of society). In later years, mission education united an emerging petty bourgeoisie and helped to organise them around the movement of individuals between mission centres such as Lovedale and Adams College (Natal) and the urban centres. At this more advanced stage, mission institutions also contributed much to the formation of working-class patterns of social organisation and cultural expression. <sup>50</sup>

Certainly, then, the emphasis laid by the missionaries on individualism and the dignity of work (which Atmore and Westlake have suggested meant only cheap labour) contributed to the expanding Cape economy. But the 1850s were still largely the period of the pre-industrial economy, and the labour demanded was, thus, mainly for the agricultural community. Bundy has pointed out that the missionaries did offer a viable

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50. David Coplan, 'The emergence of an African working-class culture', in S. Marks and R. Rathbone (eds), Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa, (Longman, 1982), p.358 ff.

and positive alternative to cheap wage labour in the Cape Colony in the shape of a developing peasant farming sector. Predictably, mission-educated Africans proved more ready to take up the challenges of a new system of agriculture as they would later be more capable of adapting to the new industrial society. In this sphere, then, the missionaries made a positive contribution to a changing situation which was ultimately beyond both their, and the Africans', control.

A further aspect of Grey's own attempts to supply a labour force was the urgent need to make the Cape Colony pay its way. Part of the Free Trade ethos was the general demand for retrenchment and the cutting down of colonial expenditure. Grey had to deal with increasingly parsimonious Chancellors of the Exchequer, who had been only too glad to pounce on his early forecast of diminishing Imperial expenditure in British Kaffraria in order to halve the amount available to him immediately after the Cattle Killing - when it was possibly needed the most. For men like Gladstone, economy was akin to religion. It was therefore imperative that Grey should find ways to make the Cape Colony as self-sufficient as possible. And he was more or less sure

that the Xhosa could be a means of expanding the colonial economy and of contributing thereby to this self-sufficiency in the long run.

The missionaries' role in the frontier processes, especially in the closing of the frontier, has been called into question. Certainly, the extension of the 'missionary' frontier at times coincided with that of the 'merchant' and 'trader', who have all been classified as 'intruders' in the frontier zone by Lamar and Thompson.<sup>51</sup> These authors have suggested that the process of eroding traditional society was directly related to the number and category of intruders. However, one can not be too simplistic about the causes of the undermining of traditional society, and the importance attributed to missionaries in this process has perhaps been overrated.

The same has to be said about the claim that the Cattle Killing opened the way for a virtual mass conversion of the Xhosa to Christianity. Mission figures in the

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51. L. Thompson and H. Lamar, 'Comparative Frontier History', in Lamar & Thompson, The Frontier in History, p.9.

1860s and missionary writings show clearly the antagonism towards Christianity and a reversion to 'nativism' and 'heathenish' ways. The detailed examination of missionary records of this period has also confirmed a similar suggestion made by Donovan Williams in his biography of Tiyo Soga. A simple judgement of the missionaries as the vanguard of colonial advance or as the 'fifth column of imperialism' just cannot be that easily made.

The reputations of missionaries and colonial officials have fared variously in South African Historiography. Dr. George McCall Theal and Sir George Cory were both critical of missionaries and of the British government in London. Later Liberal historians have sought to rescue them - as well as local officials - from the onslaughts of Theal and Cory. In this Liberal view, missionaries and officials were the only committed opposition to the gradual colonial encroachment on African lands. These historians have also suggested that British rule at the Cape fostered among at least some Cape citizens a moderate or liberal approach to racial questions and politics in general. More recently the phrase 'Cape Liberalism' has come to be

associated with the Western Cape, or more specifically, with Cape Town itself. What part did missionaries and officials on the distant eastern frontier have to play in it?

There has been considerable debate recently about the nature of the 'Cape Liberal tradition'. Phyllis Lewsen, in an article 'The Cape Liberal Tradition - Myth or Reality' has argued that by the early 20th Century a somewhat conservative form of Liberalism had taken root at the Cape, and while she has admitted some defects in it, has been able to conclude that 'the Cape did partially acclimatize a liberal system from abroad and develop ... a viable liberal tradition'.<sup>52</sup>

Since then revisionist historians, notably Stanley Trapido, Colin Bundy and Martin Legassick, have questioned whether the conventional definition of Liberalism could be applied to conditions at the Cape, especially as these affected blacks. Trapido has maintained that it is misleading to write of 'Cape liberalism' and that 'liberalism in the Cape' would be more accurate.<sup>53</sup>

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52. P. Lewsen, 'Cape Liberal Tradition - Myth or Reality?', in Race, XIII, 1(1971), pp.78-9.

53. S. Trapido, 'The Friends of the Natives', in Marks & Atmore, Economy and Society, p.247.



Liberalism in the Cape is best known for its non-racial, qualified franchise. When British Kaffraria was annexed to the Cape, many mission-educated people qualified for this franchise.

Stanley Trapido has in fact identified two liberal traditions at the Cape, the 'great' tradition and the 'small' tradition. Missionaries had a contribution to make to both. After 1860, the major missionary contribution to the great tradition (which included leading financial and commercial enterprises and certain administrators) came from the Scottish missionaries at Lovedale. The small tradition evolved in constituencies where a combination of peasant and 'town' voters could hold one of the two seats in the two-member constituencies.<sup>54</sup> Such a constituency was King William's Town in British Kaffraria, where the merchants and missionaries combined to determine the outcome of the 1873 election in that constituency. Thus, missionaries and converts were able to exert a certain influence in Cape elections.

Liberalism at the Cape, however, showed little real

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54. Ibid. p.259.

altruism. Revisionists have argued that it was closely aligned with the needs of a developing capitalist economy. In the districts of the small tradition (essentially the area of the Eastern Cape annexed between 1847 and 1865, i.e. the frontier districts) where prosperity depended to a great extent on the surplus produced by black cultivators, attacks on the rights of Africans were regarded as attacks on the peasant sector. This meant that defending the peasant sector came to involve defending the rights of Africans as a whole. In this way, those who had interests in a healthy peasant community (who were the missionaries, merchants and administrators) were the ones who came also to be identified with the small tradition of liberalism. Thus it becomes clear that not merely ideology lay at the root of the colour-blind franchise and the creed of civic equality.

Trapido has described this support given by missionaries, merchants and officials to a black peasantry as 'a strategy developed by colonial administrators and settler politicians for the political incorporation of a part of the African population' in response to economic imperatives.

The 1850s was a period of stalemate for Christian missions. Society was pre-capitalist, so Africans were able to some extent to maintain a degree of social cohesion. Peasant cultivators were responding to market incentives, although at the same time increasing numbers of Africans were in the process of being forced onto the wage labour market. The 1860s brought little improvement for missionary fortunes; indeed there were times of definite setback. It was not until the mineral revolution in the latter part of the 19th Century that the situation changed appreciably for them. The frontiers closed rapidly, and the demand for cheap labour intensified. This was accompanied by rising white resentment of black peasant cultivators who were opting out of the labour market. Thus began the systematic closing of options for blacks for a free participation in the capitalist economy.

The new economic system demanded a new response from the missionaries. With the upsurge of migrant labour and urbanisation of Africans, the old-style mission station was no longer viable. Africans began demanding education, and so it was that the missionary

breakthrough, said to have taken place in the 1860s, in fact came only with the substantial proletarianization of Africans.<sup>55</sup> The new skills and needs of the rural Christians made the move to urban areas more attractive to them than to non-Christians. Mission churches were established on the mines and missionaries were forced to abandon their rigid approach and adapt to the new situation and emerging cultures. Africans, for their part, were now more willing to accept Christianity as part of the new society, which, perhaps, corroborates Trollope's observation, made earlier, that industrialisation would bring more people to Christianity than missionary labour in the field. J.C. Warner had been convinced in 1856 that civilization and religion would never progress among the Xhosa until their traditional culture had been destroyed.<sup>56</sup> Industrialisation was to do this far more effectively than the missionaries could ever have done. Substantiating this fact is J.K. Galbraith's argument that the very process of labour migration is in itself a powerfully corrosive force upon traditionalism.<sup>57</sup>

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55. David Coplan, 'The emergence of an African working-class culture', p.367.

56. See p. 68.

57. J.K. Galbraith, The Nature of Mass Poverty, (Harvard University Press, 1979).

Christianity in urban areas reflected the new ideas and values and bolstered the increasing stratification of society. Archie Mafeje, in a survey carried out in Langa, found that religion and education were related to class differentiation.<sup>58</sup> Those who had acquired white Christian culture and education were perceived as being something apart from, and above, the pagans. Interestingly enough, Mafeje found that while this was true of urban areas, it did not apply to the rural areas where terms of reference were intrinsically African rather than European, and pagans were not necessarily poorer or politically less powerful than Christians.<sup>59</sup>

Trollope's observations, together with Mafeje's survey, to some extent reinforce the observations on religion of Max Weber himself. His main field of investigation was in modern industrial societies, where he was primarily interested in the way in which different types of social experience were related to different modes of religious expression and belief.

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58. Archie Mafeje, 'Religion, class and ideology in South Africa', in M.G. Whisson & M. West (eds), Religion and Social Change in Southern Africa, (David Philip, C.T. 1975), p. 168.

59. Ibid. p.177.

He believed that religion rationalized culture<sup>60</sup> and that a certain set of religious precepts would inspire a predictable type of social action.<sup>61</sup> Weber linked Puritanism with the development of modern capitalism and maintained that Calvinist ethics served to dignify the accumulation of wealth. In the South African context, Christianity became, for the black African, part and parcel of a new social standing in an urban society. Christianity became the means of adapting to the new social system within an industrial framework and provided an entry into a changing world.

But most of these developments lay in the future, not in the 1850s, and it would be wrong to read them back too far. Thus, if one is looking for a 'fifth column of imperialism' in the 1850s it is probably to be found in both the personality and the convictions of the Governor at the time, Sir George Grey. These were both idiosyncratic and related more generally to the cultural assumptions he shared with the intellectuals and imperial administrators of his day. Grey, rather than the missionaries, was the essential cutting-edge creating

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60. M. Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, (George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1976).

61. F. Parkin, Max Weber, p.55.

opportunities for the missionaries which they were unable to exploit effectively until the two processes of final frontier closure and large-scale tribal metamorphosis took place with the mineral revolution.

In the course of the interaction between the missionaries of the Cape eastern frontier and the colonial authorities, which is the theme of this dissertation, it is therefore clear that Grey had assumed very much the role of senior partner. Given his forceful, if somewhat erratic, personality and with the resources of the colonial state at his disposal, this is not altogether surprising. He was Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Cape Colony on one side of the frontier and High Commissioner for relations with the chiefdoms on the other side. Such cis- and trans-frontier powers could therefore be used to channel the forces of European civilisation upon the set of targets in traditional society, not least the chiefly authority, which he had identified as inimical to various sets of interests within the colony. The main conduits along which these intrusive forces passed were those belonging to both colony and metropole - their magistrates, frontier agents, regular soldiers and policemen. These,

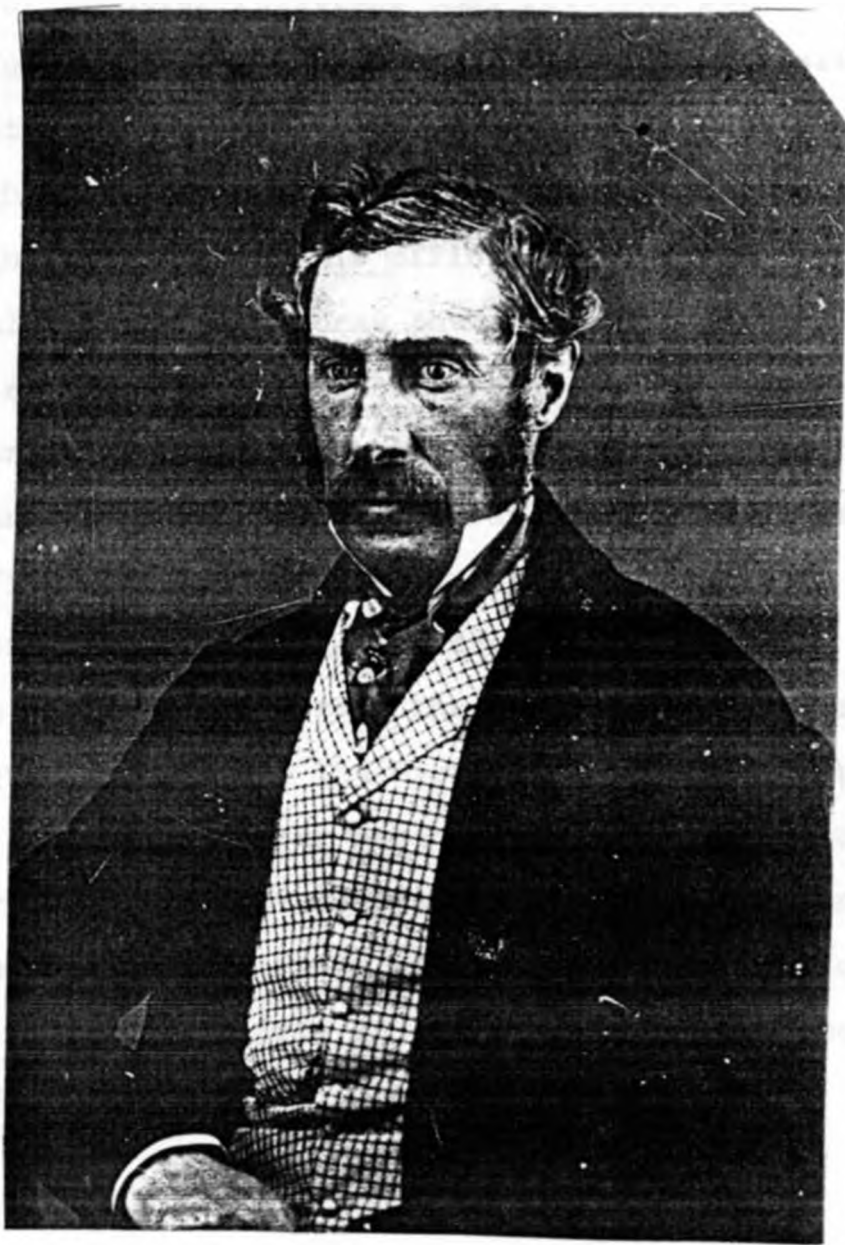
in turn, provided a system of reticulating-points that nourished the growth of the new European society that was growing up around them, on and beyond the Cape eastern frontier in its 'closing' phase.

Unavoidably, the missionaries found themselves obliged to live and work within this system. But that they were senior or even major partners in the symbiosis is to be questioned. Evidence of their impact in material if not spiritual terms reveals that they played an adventitious rather than a central role even after the Cattle Killing. This is at variance with the thesis which sees the missionaries as the main undermining force of indigenous Xhosa life.

The erosion of traditional Xhosa society had begun well before Grey's time. It is of course true that the cumulative set of sociological processes that were at work did reach, as we have seen, a climax in the Cattle Killing during his Governorship. No doubt missionary teaching played a part here, but, again, it was not as crucial as, for example, successive defeats in war and the land-deprivation that went with these. What is really significant was Grey's capacity to influence



SIR GEORGE GREY - CIVILIAN



(Cape Archives - AG 13027)

the scale of social catastrophe consequent on the Cattle Killing and his ability to control the new nexus of frontier relations that followed it. But this formidable dual influence, it must be stressed, was not deployed mainly, or with overwhelming advantage, through the missionaries. Even after an interaction with the Governor and his officials which had been carefully designed to draw them more into line with the frontier plans of the colonial state, the missionaries' further interaction with the indigenous peoples in pursuance of this strategy can at best be called a qualified and limited success when looked at even from the most favourable angle. Ironically, in their main chosen field of converting the heathen, it remains an open question whether the missionaries gained intrinsically from their closer association and interaction (after 1854) with the agents and agencies of colonial government and especially with the most powerful of these - Sir George Grey in his capacity as Governor and High Commissioner.

APPENDIX A

List of principal mission stations on the frontier in the 1850s:

Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society

Fort Beaufort  
Healdtown  
Queenstown  
D'Urban  
Peddie  
Mount Coke  
Wesleyville  
Annshaw  
Kamastone  
Lesseyton  
Butterworth  
Clarkebury  
Morley  
Shawbury  
Buntingville

Church of Scotland

Lovedale  
Pirie  
Burnshill  
Mgwali  
Macfarlan  
Ely

Church of England (after 1854)

St. Matthews  
St. Marks  
St. Lukes  
St. Johns

London Missionary Society

Peelton (The Rev. R. Birt)

APPENDIX B

Wesleyan Methodist and Church of Scotland missionaries  
on the frontier in the 1850s and 1860s:

Methodist

| <u>Missionary</u> | <u>Station</u>                             |
|-------------------|--|
| J. Allsopp        | Palmerton                                  |
| J.W. Appleyard    | Mount Coke                                 |
| J. Ayliff         | Healdtown                                  |
| E. J. Barret      | Wodehouse Forests (after 1868)             |
| W.B. Boyce        | Kamastone                                  |
| A. Briggs         | Healdtown                                  |
| G. Chapman        | Queenstown                                 |
| E. Gedye          | Shawbury/Clarkebury/Morley/<br>Butterworth |
| P. Hargreaves     | Clarkebury                                 |
| W. Holden         | Fort Beaufort/King William's<br>Town       |
| W. Holford        | Mount Coke                                 |
| W. Impey          | Superintendent                             |
| T. Jenkins        | Palmerton                                  |
| J. Longden        | Butterworth/Buntingville                   |
| T. Sargeant       | King William's Town/Annshaw                |
| W. Shaw           | Albany                                     |
| T. Wakeford       | Tyopos                                     |
| J.C. Warner       | Thembu                                     |

Church of Scotland

| <u>Missionary</u>    | <u>Station</u> |
|----------------------|----------------|
| W. Chalmers          | Lovedale       |
| W. Govan             | Lovedale       |
| J. Laing             | Burnshill      |
| A. McDiarmid (Elder) | Macfarlan      |
| B. Ross              | Lovedale       |
| J. Ross              | Pirie          |
| R. Ross              | Lovedale       |
| Tiyo Soga            | Mgwali         |
| J. Cumming           |                |

APPENDIX C

List of magistrates and chiefs

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Col. John Maclean | Chief Commissioner at Fort<br>Murray         |
| J. Ayliff         | Superintendent of the Crown<br>Reserve/Toise |
| C. Brownlee       | Sandile                                      |
| J.C. Gawler       | Mhala  |
| H. Lucas          | Maqoma                                       |
| F. Reeve          | Kama   |
| R. Robertson      | Anta   |
| R. Taylor         | Resident Magistrate, Kind<br>William's Town  |
| H. Vigne          | Phato  |
| J.C. Warner       | Thembu Agent                                 |
| M.B. Shaw         | British Resident, Transkei                   |

APPENDIX D

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

ANTA, Chief, brother of Chief Sandile

ARMSTRONG, Bishop John (1813-56). Became first Bishop of Grahamstown in 1854.

AYLIFF, John (1797-1862), missionary. Came to the Cape with the 1820 Settlers and became a missionary in 1827. Worked first with William Shaw in Grahamstown and then Salem and Somerset East before working in the frontier regions. Established Healdtown.

BROWNLEE, Charles (1827-90). Son of the missionary the Rev. J. Brownlee. Considered an expert on Xhosa customs, traditions and languages. Appointed Ngqika commissioner in 1854 and resided at Döhne. When the Cape gained responsible government, he was Secretary for Native Affairs.

BROWNLEE, John (1791-1871). L.M.S. missionary. Settled at Tyumie Valley as missionary and government agent in 1820. 1825 resumed service with the L.M.S. and established a station with Ian Tshatshu on eastern banks of the Buffalo River. 1838 became a member of the Glasgow Missionary Society.

CALDERWOOD, Henry (1808?-1865). L.M.S. missionary, became a government agent 1846/7. 1848 Supervised the settlement of Mfengu between Ockraal and Kamastone. Wrote 'Caffres and Caffre Missions'.

COLLEY, General Sir George Pomeroy (1835-81). Supervised the settlement in territory formerly belonging to Sarhili. Later became Chief of Staff to Lord Chelmsford on the outbreak of the Zulu War, and Major General in 1880. Killed at Majuba.

CURRIE, Walter (later Sir) (1819-72). An 1820 Settler. He became commandant of the Albany Burghers in the Eighth Frontier War, and of the Frontier Armed and Mounted Police. Led the expedition against Sarhili.

GAWLER, J.C. Appointed resident magistrate with Chief Mhala.

GRAY, Bishop Robert (1809-1872). Appointed first Bishop of Cape Town in 1848. With the financial help of Sir George Grey he established four mission stations beyond the colonial border in the mid-1850s.

IMPEY, William (1818-1896), missionary. In 1856 he was superintendent of Wesleyan Missions in southern Africa. He was chairman of a Native Affairs Commission in 1865, and from 1866 he was principal of Healdtown. In 1875 he resigned from the Methodist Church for doctrinal reasons.

JACKSON, Lt. Gen. Sir James. In charge of colonial troops in the 1850s. Cory said of him that he 'seems always to have been quaking with fear and expecting immediate disaster'. (The Rise of S.A., vol.5, p.7.)

KAMA, Gqunukhwebe Chief - became the first Christian chief though he did not encourage his people to follow his example.

LUNG SICKNESS Pleuro-pneumonia, a highly infectious disease of cattle and horses.

MACLEAN, John (1810-74). Soldier, administrator and ethnologist. Appointed Chief Commissioner of British Kaffraria in 1852. His Compendium of Kafir Laws and customs, drawn up in 1858 for the guidance of special magistrates, was the first attempt at the systematic study of African law.

MAQOMA (1798-1873) The greatest of the Xhosa warriors and leaders. Eldest son of Ngikqa and in 1829 regent for the young Sandile. He was exiled to Robben Island after the Cattle Killing, allowed to return in 1869, and sent back in November 1871. In 1873 he died in prison.

MFENGU (Fingo). Scattered remnants of various Nguni groups broken up and disrupted by the Mfecane. The Gcaleka Xhosa gave them large herds of cattle to look after. John Ayliff, Wesleyan Methodist Missionary, led them into the colony in 1835. They were settled east of the Fish River as a buffer between the colonists and the Xhosa.

MHALA Chief. Son and successor of Ndlambe and the leader of the Ndlambe clan, rivals of the Ngqika.

MLANJENI A young diviner who gained a following among the Xhosa by his prophecies of war.

MOSHOESHOE Sotho Chief (ca. 1786-1870). Successfully held his followers together during the Mfecane. He exploited the flat-topped mountains east of the Caledon especially that known as Thaba Bosiu. Accused by Grey of instigating the Cattle Killing together with Sarhili.

NGUNI A group of southeast Bantu languages spoken by Africans of the coastal belt from Zululand to the Ciskei. Divided into the Cape Nguni or Xhosa-speaking people, and the Northern or Natal Nguni.

NTSIKANA (died 1876) Early convert to Christianity in the Eastern Cape. He acquired a considerable following and began to compose religious songs, some of which are still sung. He was a visionary and prophet and opposed the prophecies of his contemporary, Nxele.

NXELE (Lynx) A prophet with Chief Ndlambe. His prophecies contributed to the attack on Grahamstown in 1819.

PHATO A Gqunukhwebe chief.

PORTER, William. Attorney-general of the Cape. He was highly esteemed and of great integrity. Porter opposed the court verdict on Chief Mhala after the Cattle Killing.

ROYAL RESERVE This comprised the country from which the Ngqika were expelled after the Eighth Frontier War. It was occupied by white settlers and by Africans who had proved their 'loyalty' and industry. No squatters were allowed or cattle herds not belonging to settled communities.

SANDILE (1820-78) Son of Ngqika and his great wife and thus heir to the Ngqika paramountcy. Indecisive by temperament, he was persuaded to participate in the Seventh and Eighth Frontier wars. This resulted in a considerable loss of territory by Sandile. After some hesitation, he joined the Cattle Killing movement. He was killed in 1878.

SARHILI (Kreli). He was paramount chief of the Gcaleka and traditionally paramount chief of all the Xhosa. He was accused by Grey of instigating the Cattle Killing and was expelled from a portion of his territory to beyond the Mbashe River.

TROLLOPE, Anthony (1815-82) British author and civil servant. He toured South Africa in 1878 as an unofficial adviser on the question of federation.

WARNER, Joseph (1806-1871) Son of an 1820 Settler. He was ordained in 1833 and served as a missionary at Imvani, south of Queenstown with the Thembu. In 1852 he became resident Native Commissioner with the Thembu at Glen Grey. Contributed a chapter to Maclean's Compendium.



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    - 1.1.2    Church of Scotland
    - 1.1.3    Missionaries - general
  - 1.2    Sir George Grey
  - 1.3    Unpublished Official Papers
2.    Official Printed Sources
3.    Unofficial Contemporary Printed Sources
  - 3.1    General
  - 3.2    Autobiographical
  - 3.3    Newspapers, pamphlets, etc.
4.    Bibliographies, Guides, Atlases.
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| 367        | " " " "   | "    |
| 368        | " " " "   | "    |
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| 378        | Cape of Good Hope - Offices, except war.                  |      |
| 379        | Cape of Good Hope - War Department A-Z                    |      |
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| 381        | " " " "   | "    |
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| 384        | " " " "   | "    |
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| 387        | Cape of Good Hope - Individual                            |      |
| 388        | Cape of Good Hope   | 1858 |
| 389        | " " " "   | "    |
| 390        | " " " "   | "    |
| 391        | Cape of Good Hope - Offices, except war, emigra-<br>tion. |      |
| 392        | Miscellaneous and Individual                              |      |
| 393        | Cape of Good Hope   | 1859 |
| 394        | " " " "   | "    |
| 395        | " " " "   | "    |
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| 397        | " " " "   | "    |
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| 399        | Cape of Good Hope - Individual                            |      |
| 400        | Cape of Good Hope   |      |
| 401        | Cape of Good Hope - Lt. Gov. Wynyard                      | 1860 |
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| 403        | Cape of Good Hope   | 1860 |
| 404        | " " " "   | "    |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
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| 406        | Cape of Good Hope - War office and individual    |
| 407        | Cape of Good Hope 1861                           |
| 408        | " " " " "  |
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|      | 7,8     | Colonial Secretary 1852-1862         |
|      | 10      | Letters to Lt. Governor 1852-64      |
|      | 11      | Letters from Lt. Governor 1856-63    |
|      | 14      | 1856-60                              |
|      | 15      | Judge for British Kaffraria          |
|      | 69 - 72 | Magistrates with chiefs              |
|      | 79      | Tambookie                            |
|      | 80      | Sewani                               |
|      | 90 - 92 | Missions 1848-1866                   |
|      | 100,101 | Native Hospitals                     |
|      | 109     | Government Notices                   |
|      | 113     | Kaffir Depredations                  |
|      | 114     | Circulars and replies                |
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|      | 373     | Letters to High Commissioner 1854-63 |
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| 2902 | S     |
| 2903 | U - W |

|           |                               |
|-----------|-------------------------------|
| 2904-2909 | Resident Magistrates 1854     |
| 2910-2915 | Civil Commissioners 1855      |
| 2916-2920 | Resident Magistrates 1855     |
| 2923-2928 | Civil Commissioners 1856      |
| 2929-2933 | Resident Magistrates 1856     |
| 2936-2940 | Civil Commissioners 1857      |
| 2941-2947 | Resident Magistrates 1857     |
| 2952-2962 | Civil Commissioners 1858      |
| 2963-2967 | Resident Magistrates 1858     |
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