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Gender, power and iron metallurgy in archives of African societies from the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region

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Steven Kotze

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements of Master of Arts.

Durban, 2018

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work unless otherwise acknowledged. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

Steven Kotze

15 July 2018

Abstract

This dissertation examines the social, cultural and economic significance of locally forged field-hoes, known as *amageja* in Zulu. A key question I have engaged in this study is whether gender-based divisions of labour in nineteenth-century African communities of this region, which largely consigned agricultural work to women, also affect attitudes towards the tools they used. I argue that examples of field-hoes held in eight museum collections form an important but neglected archive of "hoeculture", the form of subsistence crop cultivation based on the use of manual implements, within the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu geographic region that roughly approximates to the modern territory of KwaZulu-Natal. In response to observations made by Maggs (1991), namely that a disparity exists in the numbers of field-hoes collected by museums in comparison with weapons, I conducted research to establish the present numbers of amageja in these museums, relative to spears in the respective collections. The dissertation assesses the historical context that these metallurgical artefacts were produced in prior to the twentieth-century and documents views on iron production, spears and hoes or agriculture recorded in oral testimony from African sources, as well as Zulu-language idioms that make reference to hoes. I furthermore examine the collecting habits and policies of private individuals and museums in this region from the nineteenth-century onwards, and the manner in which hoes are used in displays, in order to provide recommendations on how this under-utilised category of material culture should be incorporated into future exhibitions.

Key words: field-hoe, *amageja*, gender, iron, power, museums, collections, Zulu.

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Kotze

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H16/08/49**
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DATE 26 August 2016 **CHAIRPERSON** J. Wright
(Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Professor A Nettleton

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10005, 10th Floor, Senate House, University.

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

Signature

27/08/2016
Date

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This dissertation was made possible by the kind assistance of friends and colleagues in the various museums and private collections that form part of the research study. The late Yvonne Winters was enthusiastic about the project when I first told her about it, and when Lulu Jakeni took over Yvonne's position at the Campbell Collections of University of KwaZulu-Natal she went out of her way to help me too. Sharon Crampton and Phumzile Nkosi at Phansi Museum endured more than one visit a few minutes before closing time, while Pam McFadden and Bornwell Masuku at Talana Museum pulled out dozens of boxes filled with newspaper cuttings unavailable anywhere else, in addition to giving me tours of their exhibitions. Returning to visit Nicky and Andrew Rattray at Fugitives' Drift Lodge is a pleasure I have enjoyed for almost twenty years, and I have found a new appreciation of the collection of artefacts assembled by Peter and David Rattray. My trips to Ondini and the KwaZulu Cultural Museum were made memorable by the irrepressible eagerness and dedication of Zameka Yamile, who has become a colleague of mine on the SA Museums Association committee in KZN, along with Regina van Vuuren. Slindokuhle Ngobese at the Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum and Mudzunga Munzhedzi at KwaZulu-Natal Museum assisted with giving me access to objects in display cases and very large collections of metallurgical artefacts respectively. My immediate colleagues at the Local History Museums, Mohau Qalaza and Thevan Harry, have given me their constant support & encouragement.

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1

Introduction

Despite an abundance of wild animals and plant species in southern Africa, for a variety of reasons, none are ultimately suitable for domestication as sources of food. Although there is evidence for multiple centres of domestication in the world, the earliest farming is generally situated in southwestern Asia during the Neolithic Revolution (Garrard 1999: 71), which marked the start of pronounced cultural and economic changes in human society beginning approximately fifteen to twenty thousand years ago (Watkins 2010: 621). Agriculture appeared in Africa relatively late compared with other continents as crops first cultivated in the Mediterranean climate of the northern hemisphere were not suited to a rapid or simple transfer from northern Africa through equatorial regions of the continent. As a result, farming was introduced south of the equator as a technological innovation, with iron tools used to cultivate species of African plants domesticated independently in western sub-Saharan Africa, in addition to animals domesticated in Asia (Diamond 1997: 394). It is also interesting to note that iron working is also considered to have developed independently in Africa as well (Ehret 2002: 161; Alpern 2005: 41-43), indicating that farming and metallurgy are linked. Among the earliest evidence of farming in South Africa was found a little north of Durban and dated to the fourth century CE (Maggs 1980a: 76; 87). Over the millennium that followed, agriculture enabled the emergence of substantial populations of settled communities wherever climatic conditions permitted in southern Africa. During that time, if previous social customs and labour division were analogous to modes of behaviour recorded during the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries, women in these societies undertook the greater part of crop cultivation using locally forged field-hoes wherever iron was smelted (Moffett 2017: 14-16).

Archaeological evidence in the form of hut floors, granary pits, grindstones and ceramics in homesteads, and signs of metallurgy rather than actual iron implements, has preserved mainly indirect proof of this vast amount of agricultural labour. Further proof is evident, arguably, in the numbers of contemporary African inhabitants of this region who speak Bantu languages – the living descendants of those hoe-wielding women who fed their families and populated all available corners of the land. Countless fields tended and harvests collected, along with meals prepared and

consumed, have essentially vanished, absorbed to varying degrees once more into the environment. Despite their central, in fact vital, role in local history, both the act of cultivation and the iron tools employed are either marginal or absent in many historical accounts of south-eastern Africa. This absence is even more notable in the face of extensive archaeological research undertaken on the theme of farming and its significance. Tim Maggs demonstrated a discrepancy in the way some agricultural metallurgical artefacts were treated, pointing to persistent colonial-era military obsessions that gave priority to edged weapons, notwithstanding "the emphasis of the industry […] on the ploughshare rather than the sword" (Maggs 1991: 131; 136), referring to field-hoes and spears respectively. In two closely related articles, Maggs (1991; 1992) provided the first detailed survey of metallurgical artefacts and their production in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region. Both publications highlighted the significance of these objects, noting that while ethnological collections tended to focus on spears, hoes were seemingly ignored even though most of the iron smelted locally was forged into the latter rather than the former (Maggs 1991: 136).

I first encountered this observation in 2003, and recalled how the display of Zulu weapons in the dining room of Fugitives' Drift Lodge (situated close to Rorke's Drift, and where I worked as a battlefield guide between 1999 and 2001) illustrates this point perfectly. As the focus of the hotel is tourist-oriented military history related to the British invasion of the Zulu kingdom in 1879, and the nearby battlefields (Guy 1998), it is not surprising that those spears, shields and the paraphernalia of war feature prominently in this quasi-museum setting focused on a particular conflict. The Rattray collection, however, documented in Chapter Four below, also contains a large number of locally forged field-hoes, for the most part stored away in drawers with limited contextual background or explanation of their function. I found the irony conspicuous, that hoes worn down almost into stubs while employed to feed generations of families were apparently not considered worthy of comment alongside symbols of warfare and destruction.

The two articles by Maggs encouraged my interest in the history of metallurgy in this region and raised a question of whether a link existed between the apparently secondary status of hoes in museums or private collections, and the fact they were primarily tools used by African women. An argument Jeff Guy advanced further informed this topic, namely that gendered divisions of labour entrenched in

nineteenth-century African homesteads of the Zulu kingdom and the British colony of Natal concealed a fundamental social divide he equated to an economic distinction of class (Guy 1987: 24). This suggested to me that if field-hoes represented the agricultural labour of African women, then the treatment of these objects in museums might reflect sexist or patriarchal outlooks towards the artefacts. An opportunity to investigate this hypothesis occurred in 2013, when I began work as an exhibition researcher at the Local History Museums of eThekwini Municipality. In this role I was tasked with preparing exhibits and sourcing artefacts from various museum collections for display. Part of my responsibilities was to assist with planning for new exhibitions at the Mkhumbane Museum, then under construction in Durban, and I participated in an informal survey of displays representing African history in a number of KwaZulu-Natal museums. What emerged from visits to museums in Durban, Empangeni, Eshowe, Ulundi, Dundee, Isandlwana, Rorke's Drift, Blood River-eNcome and Pietermaritzburg was a subjective impression that alterations and additions made to exhibitions and displays in almost twenty regional museums since the advent of democracy were generally static and shallow representations of African history limited to Zulu royal biographies and military tactics from the nineteenth-century (Wright & Mazel 1987: 306-307).

Although a small number of sites revealed notable exceptions to this generalisation, which are discussed further in Chapter Five below, these exceptions strengthened my original impressions and a formal subject for this research study emerged in discussion with Jeff Guy. Finally, Gavin Whitelaw's doctoral thesis underscored the correlation between a perceived bias against hoes in museum displays with his analysis that the constraints of the regional climatic conditions and simple tools did not allow the agricultural production of women to achieve a surplus of food (Whitelaw 2015: 31). This observation emphasised the fragile existence of African farming communities, particularly before the nineteenth-century, when food security could not be taken for granted and famines were a regular occurrence (Hannaford 2015: 71). Guy contended that centralised regulation of food production and access to grazing as a response to periods of famine played a role in the development of the Zulu kingdom (Guy 1980: 111). Considering the importance of agriculture and food security, particularly the significant amount of time African women devoted to cultivation in subsistence homesteads prior to the twentieth-century, both contextual

research for museum exhibits on this subject, as well as displays on agriculture, were neglected topics of inquiry. Specifically addressing the content of museum displays in KwaZulu-Natal, Wright and Mazel argued that “history is not a set of facts about the past; it is, rather, a set of ideas about the past held in the present” (1987: 301). As a medium of history, therefore, if museum exhibitions generally render the extensive agricultural and economic role of African women in homesteads invisible, then the main ideas about the past disseminated to viewers are that the male realms of cattle, warfare and chiefly authority form the principal social framework of rural life.

Not only the use of particular iron objects, but the production of iron itself, is associated with particular gender roles in pre-industrial African societies. Because metallurgy is a transformative process (Herbert 1993: 5), and the chemistry of reducing iron oxides in a furnace was not fully understood, the smelting of metals was considered susceptible to contamination by the ritual impurity of women (Childs & Killick 1993: 327; Schmidt 2009: 267). Making iron was essentially regarded as a supernatural, “male-dominated activity, identified with copulation, gestation and parturition, and represents male control over female procreation” (Calabrese 2000: 101). These spiritual beliefs, underpinning local African metallurgical techniques in the nineteenth-century, correlate with male appropriation of control over female productive and reproductive power (Guy 1987: 24). The gradual disappearance of indigenous smelting practices, along with their associated belief systems, coupled with urbanisation since the industrialised mineral discoveries of the late nineteenth-century, and the widespread prevalence of imported mass-produced iron implements has almost completely expunged awareness of the complex concepts of gender and power surrounding an object such as an iron field-hoe in contemporary society. Manual agricultural labour, especially using hoes, is perceived instead as demeaning (Swingler 2016: 9), a persuasive objection that compels careful consideration for any approaches taken to depict aspects of homestead subsistence cultivation in new museum displays. In this regard the symbolic value, or “cultural capital” embodied in the structural organisation of domestic space, or notion of “habitus” developed by Pierre Bourdieu, has particular relevance to ways that museum exhibitions might approach this issue (Bourdieu 1984: 209-29). Pearce argues that Bourdieu associated the built environment or types of objects a person owns and uses with their status or economic power in society (Pearce 1995: 10). Following this logic

demands that contextual information which accompanies any displays of hoes or representation of the agricultural work done by women must clearly state that these objects and their practical role also played an array of symbolic functions, derived both from processes that included providing nourishment, to the physical pain of arduous labour, as well as a manifestation of "qualified subordination" (Guy 1990: 46).

The fact that many current displays of metallurgical artefacts focused on weapons relegates the position of African women to an unwarranted subsidiary position: the research focus for this dissertation was developed accordingly. The public displays present only a small sub-set of the items contained in the total collections of locally forged iron artefacts in museum and private collections. These items both symbolise, and constitute a record or archive of, two discrete spheres of life in African families and social organisation, which are also framed by gender roles. A detailed assessment of both the inventory of weapons and implements, as well as the manner of their presentation, thus form distinct aspects of the research I have undertaken in order to answer the question: What can be determined of the reasons for the scarcity of traditional field-hoes (*amageja*) in the museum collections and archives of KwaZulu-Natal? The research underpinning this dissertation was undertaken in part to investigate how metallurgical processes and iron artefacts in African societies of this region have historically existed in tension with concepts of power and gender. While archaeologists and historians have explored these relationships extensively with regard to smelting and forging, it has not previously been determined how museums deal with and communicate this complex set of beliefs in public displays. Accordingly, I identified eight museums and private collections as research sites, namely the Local History and Phansi museums, together with the University of KwaZulu-Natal Campbell Collections in Durban, the Msunduzi-Voortrekker and KwaZulu-Natal museums in Pietermaritzburg, Talana Museum in Dundee, KwaZulu Cultural Museum at Ondini and the Rattray family private collection at Fugitives' Drift Lodge near Rorke's Drift. Collectively these collections represent a range of public heritage facilities, including municipal, provincial and national sites, also influenced by academic and private collectors' personal interests. Although the eight collections do not comprise a comprehensive survey of archaeological and ethnological metallurgical artefacts in KwaZulu-Natal,

they are representative of local metallurgical artefact collections and were selected for their accessibility.

The geographic area selected for this study is roughly contained within the current boundaries of South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province, and thus incorporates the former territories of Natal and KwaZulu in terms of the pre-1994 political dispensation, or colonial Natal and the Zulu Kingdom before that. While these spatial divisions are relevant to the establishment of museums and collections of artefacts I have included in this dissertation, the broader historical context of the artefacts extending into the nineteenth-century or even earlier. As a result, I made a decision to use the more neutral geographic references of rivers to define my study area, namely the Phongolo River in the north, from where it joins the Maputo River, up to its headwaters close to the towns of Wakkerstroom and Volksrust. From there, the study area is framed by the uKhahlamba (Drakensberg) escarpment to the west, down to the source of the Mzimkhulu River, and along its course to the Indian Ocean. Delineated in this way, the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region takes account of the physical environment that locally forged field-hoes were manufactured in, and also corresponds to contemporary political and geographic demarcations (Wright 1989: ix; Wright & Hamilton 1989:49).

2

Literature review and methodology

Sources I have consulted during the course of this study included primary archival research, in both official provincial repositories and the records of museums. Records of the Secretary for Native Affairs, in the provincial archives repository at Pietermaritzburg, were examined for references to hoe-agriculture and the implements employed during the colonial administration of Natal. In addition, I surveyed the colonial Blue Books for economic data on the imports of iron tools such as hoes and ploughs, as well as any recorded statistical evidence on the populations and agricultural production of African homesteads. The most important primary sources I consulted, though, related to the establishment of various museum collections. These sources were supported by newspaper reports and secondary materials, in the form of both books and academic papers. The survey of sources below is divided into two parts, which deal with, firstly, the textual sources I used to construct the social, economic and historical context of locally forged field-hoes (*amageja*) in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region that constitutes Chapter Three of the dissertation. A second set of sources I have considered below concerns evidence related to eight museums which provided the cases studies of collections and exhibitions. These publications are assessed on a case by case basis as they pertain to individual museums. Finally, although personal interviews were not originally planned as part of my research, I was made aware of the private collection belonging to Sihle Bobby Radebe during the early part of my investigations into hoes in KwaZulu-Natal. Ethical approval to interview Radebe was applied for and approved, and his comments on both the significance of these artefacts as well as what drove him to preserve those in his own collection constitutes a rare insight into the motivations of a collector (Appendix 1).

This dissertation comprises an examination of museum collections and exhibitions of iron artefacts related to African hoe-agriculture in KwaZulu-Natal among Late Iron Age communities, as well as conditions recorded by observers in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century homesteads. Many ideas informing a scholarly assessment of this subject developed as a result of debates within archaeological and academic history circles since the 1970s. This complex and important dialogue on the nature

and evolution of African society in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region has essentially focused on what is known, and can be known, of social change among local agricultural communities, particularly after the turn of the first millennium (Maggs & Whitelaw 1991: 19).

As indicated in the introduction, the published research of Tim Maggs provided a key impetus for this study, in the form of his article on the Zulu ferrous metalworking industry, which was "an attempt to reconstruct patterns of organisation in the precolonial ironworking industry of the Natal-KwaZulu region" (Maggs 1992: 65). This paper compared early published accounts of iron metallurgy in what is today KwaZulu-Natal, with evidence from the archaeological record as it stood in 1991. Maggs made reference to gender-based ritual observances surrounding both iron smelting and forging of objects such as spears and hoes, as well as distinctions of prestige between those who manufactured (male-oriented) spears and (largely female) hoes (Maggs 1993: 70). Combined with a discussion of Rev. H.F.O. Dedekind's 1929 interview with Hloma Mathonsi (Maggs 1986), those comments motivated a more in-depth investigation of both metallurgical artefacts in museum collections and the work of other writers on this topic, to form the basis of my dissertation. A number of other articles by Maggs furnished additional data and insights on archaeology and metallurgy relating to this topic.

Thomas Huffman (1970) made important early observations on both the dating and diffusion of agricultural sites in southeastern Africa and later developed an innovative settlement pattern model, based on interpretations by Adam Kuper, leading to the development of cognitive archaeology and the use of ethnography in this discipline (Whitelaw 2009: ii). The publication of two articles by Maggs on archaeological sites at Mzonjani (1980a) and Msuluzi (1980b) were similarly groundbreaking. Empirical evidence produced in these site specific studies was further supported by a discussion paper on the historical implications of the Iron Age sequence south of the Phongolo River (Maggs 1980c). Another significant contribution with direct reference to this topic were summaries of three decades of research in his chapter of the book *Natal and Zululand from earliest times to 1910* (Maggs 1989), as well as review articles on research pertaining to agriculturalist settlements in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region (Maggs & Whitelaw 1991; Maggs 1993). Finally, Maggs's survey and analysis of archaeological metallurgy collections in museums supported the

notion of such artefacts as an archive of evidence pertaining to cultivation among agricultural communities (Maggs 1991). These articles provided both empirical information on artefacts, as well as what is known of smiths, while additional important information, including contrasting views on the Iron Age, was also afforded by Huffman (1982; 2004; 2007) and Martin Hall (1984a; 1984c; 1987a), and crucially by the extensive work of Gavin Whitelaw on this subject.

In particular, Whitelaw contributed a valuable analysis on the locations and process of iron production in the region (1991), as well as settlement patterns of agriculturalist communities (1993; 1994; 1996), while his doctoral thesis addressed key aspects of debate concerning what may be determined of Iron Age social behaviour from the archaeological record (2015). As part of this PhD research, Whitelaw undertook a thorough review of aforementioned archaeological debates concerning both the nature of Early Iron Age society and the transition to the Late Iron Age. While the current dissertation is not primarily concerned with details of these deliberations, the work done in this regard by Whitelaw offered a useful guide to the sources used in the contextual overview provided by Chapter Three. As reviewed in greater detail in the following chapter, the substance of discussion on this topic relates to how much continuity or disjuncture can be detected in the transition between Early Iron Age and Later Iron Age, and what the nature of this shift may be. A pertinent issue is the significance of the manner, and the precise locations, in which iron ore was smelted in order to produce tools such as hoes and spears. Pollution prohibitions related to smelting, observed during the nineteenth-century, provide a contrast with widespread evidence of metallurgy within the physical boundaries of early agriculturalist homesteads, according to Maggs (1994: 176).

Maggs, along with Martin Hall, also questioned whether the first agriculturalists kept large herds of cattle and suggested instead that large areas of grassland were brought about by swidden cultivation, when farmers using fire and hand-held hoes cleared areas of coastal forest or riverine woodland and thereby created viable grazing for cattle (Hall 1987a: 12). Other writers, most notably Tom Huffman (1982) and Adam Kuper (1982), promoted a structuralist concept that consistent patterns of homestead layout over a very long period indicated an underlying belief system. Jeff Guy acknowledged the Central Cattle Pattern, as this model is known, as a useful

synthesis of evidence that allowed new analyses of social and economic organisation during the past two millennia (Guy 2014: 29), but cautioned that particular consideration must be paid to specific contexts in which such an analytical tool is applied. The same may be argued for the linguistic approach raised in the work of Carolan Ownby (1985: 91-94), which identified certain loan words within Nguni languages such as Zulu as derived from now extinct dialects within the Bantu language group more closely linked to Shona. Of particular interest in her work is the claim that both a word for field-hoe, namely *igeja*, as well as words associated with authority and the First Fruits ceremonies, *Nkosi* and *umkhosi* respectively, can be traced to the period of transition to the Late Iron Age (Ownby 1985: 129).

Moffett, Maggs and Van Schalkwyk (2017) recently published a thorough review of both the archaeological evidence of hoes and their symbolic significance. This study provided the most complete analysis of hoe production to date, as seen in the archaeological record, and included a typology of southern African hoes divided into six patterns (Moffett et al. 2017: 4). Although focused on a wider geographic area than this dissertation, the article examined sources for evidence of hoes, as objects *per se* within the African homestead economy of southern Africa. Research reflected what is known of where and how hoes were produced in the era immediately prior to European settlement, as well as methods used to procure them, including trade. Among the symbolic values assigned to hoes, considered in the article and directly relevant to this study, was the conventional association of hoes with women. Moffett et al. argue that it is incorrect to see these implements as singularly feminine artefacts, due to widespread evidence of men associated with hoes, including their manufacture and use in certain circumstances (Moffett et al. 2017: 16). Although such nuance is crucial to acknowledge, it is also widely accepted that women performed the vast bulk of agricultural production necessary to sustain life within homesteads (Gluckman 1935: 255; Bryant 1967: 297; Krige 1950: 189; Wright 1981: 82; Beall 1981: 37; Hamilton 1985; Guy 1987: 21; Huffman 2004: 82; Guy 2014: 25). The consistent paucity of recognition for this crucial role, which is generally reflected in the treatment of hoes in museum collections and exhibitions, may be regarded as an expression of how patriarchy undermined the contribution of women while strict control of their labour power was maintained at the same time.

In addition, the article by Moffett et al. provided an assessment of the degree to which “monetary value” may be ascribed to field-hoes (2017: 9-11) and how such values changed over time, as a unit of *ilobola* bridewealth exchange for instance (2017: 11-12). Evidence of hoes imported from abroad, or locally forged examples traded within the region specifically for use in marriage agreements, indicated the importance of these objects within southern African material culture, as well as the close links between field-hoes and the institution of marriage. Therefore, while artefacts in the form of iron implements are constructed as simple instruments of food production, it was also necessary to consider economic aspects of how women’s labour was organised and controlled in African homesteads. Over the course of more than two decades, Jeff Guy published a number of articles and books on this topic (1981; 1987; 2009; 2013; 2014). In these texts he developed and expanded his view that the homestead economy of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region was characterised by the accumulation and control of human productive and reproductive capacity, which he saw primarily in the form of women’s “labour power” (Guy 1987: 24).

Other writers have engaged with elements of this view of the homestead economy, notably John Wright (1981) and Carolyn Hamilton (1985), and raised criticism of it for being an ahistorical generalisation, while Whitelaw in turn argued this “history-making principle” gave social dynamism to Iron Age societies (Whitelaw 2015: 2). A collection of articles edited by Meghan Healy-Clancy and Jason Hickel (2014) presented an alternative focus on homesteads as sites of history in and of themselves, instead of as background to social contexts of political activity by men. Other texts considered in this regard provided additional insights on the links between patriarchy and agriculture in general, such as the essay and hypotheses of Barbara Smuts (1995). She identified six factors that have influenced the development of human gender inequality, which are weighed against the other contributions already mentioned. I also found a useful summary of the tensions between agriculture and asymmetrical gender roles in *Sapiens: A brief history of humankind* by Harari (2011: 152).

Primary source material related to both homestead hoe-agriculture, as well as the political functions of food production and distribution, and the economic role of women was found in the oral history testimony contained in six volumes of the

James Stuart Archive (Webb & Wright 1976-2014). Taking guidance from the more recent work of Wright (2016: 183-215), as well as Hamilton and Leibhammer (2016: 12-51), I undertook to use evidence from the Stuart archive with a critical approach to the historical context of the original interviews and statements made by the various interlocutors. John Wright strongly advised the importance of cross-referencing information found in the pages of the *James Stuart Archive* against other sources and noted the inherent dangers of "mining the archive" for information to support any particular hypothesis. He applied this criticism to his own earlier work on women's labour in the Zulu kingdom, which he regarded as more of a generalised description, rather than a historicised account (Wright pers. comm. 2016). To some extent the same view can be taken of Beall's examinations (1981; 1982) of the economic contribution made by women in nineteenth-century KwaZulu-Natal.

Recent doctoral research contained in the work of Matthew Hannaford (2015) constitutes an interesting and unconventional analysis of historical, biological and climatological evidence of food production, mainly in the Zulu kingdom, during the late eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries. In addition to evidence from the *James Stuart Archive*, principal sources for this study were found in reports of early settlers and travellers such as Henry Francis Fynn (1950) and Nathaniel Isaacs (1836), or missionaries like A.T. Bryant (1929; 1967).

The present dissertation thus draws together both historical records and the secondary research surveyed here to appraise annual cycles of the practical work that went into food production. In other words, which crops were known to be planted, as well as the manner and times in which these were tended and harvested in homesteads of the Zulu kingdom, as well as those south of the Mngeni River in what became the Colony of Natal. Some of this information is included among general historical overviews of the Zulu kingdom and the British invasion of 1879 described by John Laband (1992; 1995), which also give accounts of religious rites and ceremonies that pertained to agriculture.

Notwithstanding a critical approach necessary with regard to oral histories recorded in the *James Stuart Archive*, I examined statements by those interlocutors for evidence related to the institution and evolution of national harvest festivals during the Zulu kingdom. Known alternatively as the *inyatelo* and *umkhosi wokweshwama*,

the two First Fruits ceremonies were agricultural fertility rites originally performed to ensure bountiful crops. Over time, however, the *umkhosi* festival in particular was transformed into a national celebration of male-dominated militarism focused on the monarchy in the person of the Zulu king. The process of this transformation, and diminished importance of alternative hoe-culture rituals that honoured the Nomkhubulwane deity associated with women, was ascertained by comparative examination of evidence in the *James Stuart Archive* with secondary sources. While the works of A.T. Bryant (1929; 1967) are important on this subject, subtle differences in the way rituals were portrayed emerged in various early texts produced by Max Gluckman. In particular, the detailed descriptions provided of "hoecultural ritual" in his doctoral thesis (Gluckman 1936), and the articles it was based on (e.g. Gluckman 1935), are juxtaposed with the later published work, which emphasised how field fertility rites offered women annual occasions to express contained rebellion within socially accepted conventions (1938; 1963: 110-136). The enduring legacy of what Gluckman termed "hoecultural ritual" was preserved in an article by Harry Lugg (1929), who recorded that such ceremonies performed during the period of the Zulu kingdom were still performed by two *amakhosi* in the first decades of the twentieth-century.

Historical research drawn together by Sandra Klopper in her doctoral thesis (1992) remained a key source on the production and relative values of metallurgical objects in Zulu-speaking communities, and substantially endorsed archaeological analyses by Moffett et al. (2017). While the latter critically discussed the cultural and economic relevance of hoes, as functional tools in addition to being treated as *ilobola* bridewealth, Klopper assessed other examples of locally forged metallurgy as jewellery, ornaments and weapons. A factor which bore an impact on both the intrinsic economic value of hoes, as well as their symbolic importance, was the introduction of ox-drawn iron ploughs (Gluckman 1963: 171). Although only mentioned obliquely in sources (Gluckman 1942: 247; 1971: 381), these implements replaced hoes and ultimately altered their associations with fieldwork through the plough's connection with livestock, traditionally the realm of men. When ploughs and store-bought tools gradually assumed the place of locally forged hoes during the late nineteenth- and twentieth-century, it brought an end to the practical function of objects which had been essential to life for almost two millennia. Old hoes were

discarded, seemingly without value (Radebe pers. comm. 2017), while handmade spears retain high symbolic significance and continue to be manufactured as the vestigial relics of Iron Age metallurgy in KwaZulu-Natal. Whereas hoes were replaced with imported substitutes of modern design, functional spears (not tourist curios) are manufactured in considerable numbers today.

Ultimately in this dissertation I strive to problematise the symbolic status of hoes and spears, and engage the question of why one artefact type predominates in archives, as well as museum exhibitions and the popular imagination. I argue that the significance of spears is inherently linked to glorification of warfare and conquest, and that these objects are also directly connected to the value of cattle. These are notions that arise in, and are referenced in, works such as Huffman's discussions of the Central Cattle Pattern (2001; 2004; 2007), as well as other writers such as Hamilton (1998) and Wylie (2006). Linked concepts are set up in tension with each other, not only hoes and spears, but also fields and cattle byres; food production and cattle raiding; farmers and warriors. The entire concept of ethno-tourism, including an emphasis on battlefield tourism in KwaZulu-Natal, is based on this severely limited understanding of African history in the southeastern sub-continent. The historiography of Zulu military accomplishments, traced in the work of Guy (1981a; 1994; 2014), Hamilton (1985; 1998) and others (Hamilton & Wright 1993), contrasts with a general absence of discourse on the significance of food production and hoes among the African people of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, both before and during the permanent settlement of white colonists. By comparison, popular cultural symbolism of hoes is largely restricted to a handful of Zulu proverbs, many of which underline a perceived gender bias towards the object. A small number of helpful texts on idioms and idiomatic language include Sibusiso Nyembezi (1990), Mathonsi (2004) and particularly Mpungose (2015).

Although the historical and cultural context of locally forged field-hoes was an important consideration within the dissertation, arguably even more significant for my study was the empirical evaluation of these artefacts within museum collections and exhibitions. I derived an important theoretical framework for analysing ethnological collections of Late Iron Age metalwork from the work of Susan Pearce and James Clifford, who linked the endeavour of accumulating examples of African material culture with Eurocentric impulses to curate identity, both of the collector and for the

communities that produced the artefacts (Clifford 1988; Pearce 1995). Pearce asserts that collectors assemble groups of objects in relationship to one another, as part of wide-ranging strategies to catalogue and understand cultures the collectors do not belong to, according to a “rational purpose” that is defined by the collector and which may change over time (Pearce 1995: 23). While Maggs originally identified a potential “rational purpose” underlying ethnological collections of spears in the museums of KwaZulu-Natal, namely a colonial-era view of widespread warfare in African history and of Zulu military prowess in particular (Maggs 1991: 131), this interpretation does not entirely illuminate the relative lack of interest by institutional and private collectors in locally forged field-hoes.

The general bias against hoes that I have identified in eight ethnological collections surveyed in this study must be seen as problematic when considering Pearce’s notion that the value of objects may be derived from a collector’s sense of “conscious preservation” (Pearce 1995: 25). According to Steiner, the characteristic of authenticity is endowed upon material culture that represents a way of life supplanted by modernisation (Steiner 1994: 105). Yet hoes were not deemed valid as examples of African material culture even while being replaced by industrially produced, Western-imported substitutes. Pierre Bourdieu suggested that the value of an artefact, or category of artefacts, can only be established after investigation of the “history of the procedure of canonisation and hierarchisation” of the artefact (Bourdieu 1993: 177). Field-hoes lack the dramatic context of spears, with their obvious allusions to male-orientated histories of conflict and power, and are aesthetically modest in design and appearance. Considering that southern African wood carving and ceramics were initially not seen as “authentic” art (Nettleton 2009), the obstacles faced in this regard by often roughly made functional hoes were most likely insurmountable. In this way field-hoes were generally denied a place in the canon of African material culture created in ethnological collections and related exhibitions.

Anitra Nettleton identified a “mythology” surrounding wooden figurative sculpture misidentified as “Zulu” due to colonial attitudes that placed battlefield accomplishments on a higher tier than cultural practice (Nettleton 1988), and in this hierarchy agricultural practice seems also to have been relegated to a lower position. An aspect of this discussion was addressed in an interview with Bobby Radebe

(Appendix 1), a collector of metallurgical artefacts who acknowledged that the traditional implements were often discarded by former owners (Appendix 1: 134-135). Questioned regarding reasons for this, Radebe stated he did not believe there was any hierarchical element of disregard towards, or an "anti-canonisation" value for African material culture applied to hoes *within* African communities of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, but did not offer an explanation for such behaviour, either. Spears and sticks, as well as other examples of wood carving and possibly shields, have certain symbolic functions within contemporary African ritual that extend beyond original practical purpose, but such domestic or chiefly ceremonies no longer include hoes. This change appears to have occurred in relatively recent times, as field fertility rites incorporated "ancestral hoes" that belonged to chiefly families at the start of the twentieth-century (Lugg 1929: 359), but these are now seemingly extinct. The symbolic use and significance of hoes witnessed in hoeculture rituals of harvest festivals such as the *umkhosi wokweshwama* during the period of the Zulu kingdom (1816-1879), have instead been superseded by hyper-masculine cattle killing events reinstated during the early twenty-first century (Coan 2009; Mbanjwa 2007; 2009). The complexity of nineteenth-century rituals recorded in oral history testimony of the *James Stuart Archive* therefore adds a critical nuance to the concepts of canonisation and hierarchy as applied to African material culture and its relationship with elements of intangible cultural heritage.

Museum selection and chapter structure

A significant part of the stated aims in this dissertation have included gathering empirical data on collections of hoes and spears, together with accession registers in eight museums in KwaZulu-Natal. The museum collections selected are those of the Local History Museum of eThekwini Municipality, Durban; Fugitives' Drift Lodge, Rorke's Drift; Killie Campbell Africana Library, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban; KwaZulu Cultural Museum, Ondini (Ulundi); KwaZulu-Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg, Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum, Pietermaritzburg; Phansi Museum, Durban; Talana Museum, Dundee. Reasons for the selection of these specific museums and collections are reviewed in greater detail in Chapter Four, but in summary they represent a range of public and private institutions across a geographical area broad enough to include artefacts from a variety of cultural and linguistic groups in the history of the region. A further motivation for these particular

choices is that each museum collection also reflects a unique set of interests and opinions of collectors when the respective objects were brought together, at identifiable time periods ranging from the mid-nineteenth-century to the late-twentieth century. In subsequent chapters, I synthesise the history of each museum or collection, and associated exhibitions, from a wide body of primary sources secondary literature.

In a similar manner to articles by Maggs which guided the contextual research on metallurgy for this dissertation, a review of museum exhibitions in what is now KwaZulu-Natal by Wright and Mazel (1987) firmly established the notion of political and ideological imperatives in these displays. The original text was revised and republished in a series of related publications by Wright and Mazel during the 1990s, and also directly influenced the approach of other texts used in the present research, including MA theses by Dlamini (2001) and Dlamuka (2003). Almost two decades after Wright and Mazel identified museums as late-apartheid “bastions of ideology”, Dubin (2006) undertook a substantial survey of South African museums and their professional staff to assess the extent of transformation evident since the advent of democracy. Although this book did include a majority of the sites listed above, and mentions some of the relevant exhibitions, the research is too broad and superficial to have direct bearing on this dissertation. Other published research with a more limited focus on either a smaller number or individual museums offered better evaluations.

The collection of the Durban Local History Museum originally formed part of a Victorian-era natural science collection, an aspect of its history which has been subject to the critical analysis of two academic theses (Dlamini 2001; Dlamuka 2003). An institutional history (Quickelberge 1987) was compiled before the ethnographic artefacts were separated into the social history exhibitions that make up the museum today, while an article by one of the curators provides additional insight on the manner in which certain parts of the collections were assembled (Strutt 1975). The most notable text on Local History Museum’s exhibitions relevant to this dissertation was the catalogue of *Amagugu kaZulu / Zulu Treasures* (Local History Museums 1996), which also included reference to other sites in the study, particularly the KwaZulu Cultural Museum at Ulundi, Killie Campbell Africana Collection in Durban, and KwaZulu-Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg. The related

exhibition by the same name incorporated objects from five of the collections discussed in chapters below, and constituted an early example of efforts to present African material culture and its historical context in a manner more informed by critical research than was the case during previous decades.

It may also be argued that the *Zulu Treasures* exhibition and catalogue was a compromise between previous ideological expressions of Zulu nationalism identified by Wright and Mazel (1987), as well as others (Harries 1993; Dlamini 2001), and the drive towards more democratic content after 1994. This is evident in the subtitle of the exhibition, namely *Of Kings and Commoners*, and marks a pointed departure from a near exclusive focus on royal and military history that formed the genesis of the KwaZulu Cultural Museum at Ondini in 1983. In a process carefully documented by Dlamini (2001), and recorded both in a speech made by Mangosuthu Buthelezi (1983) at the official opening of the museum and in a published article on the approach of the KwaZulu government concerning heritage (Buthelezi 1986), museums and monuments are regarded as integral elements of a Zulu nationalist programme. The nature and context of that ideological agenda, underpinning the KwaZulu Bantustan (1971-1994), is spelled out in the work of Forsyth (1989) and Sithole (2006), and to a lesser extent Karis and Gerhardt (2013). Although more visible and transparent, a similar and parallel shift away from a narrow view of history determined by chauvinist nationalism was evident in the approach of the institution formerly known as the Voortrekker Museum in Pietermaritzburg. The development of this museum, initially within the Church of the Vow, was traced both through archival sources and political histories by Etherington (2001) and Giliomee (2003), while an institutional history by Guest (2012) traced the details of change brought about in the management and historical approach at what became known as the Msunduzi Museum (incorporating the Voortrekker Complex) in 2007 (Guest 2012: 177). This museum, generally called the Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum in the present study to reflect its origins, hosted the *Zulu Treasures* exhibition in 1997, and within three years established a process to expand the scope of its exhibitions to reflect the socio-cultural diversity of history in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, and Pietermaritzburg more expressly.

The challenges of transformation within heritage sites, specifically the Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum and KwaZulu-Natal Museum, were documented and analysed

in a doctoral thesis by Rodéhn (2008). Influenced by the work of theorists like Bourdieu (1977) and particularly Pearce (1995), she argued that public memory of events is moulded by museum displays that now include artefacts from a greater variety of cultures (Rodéhn 2008: 166). In comparing the respective methods undertaken by these two Pietermaritzburg museums, Rodéhn demonstrated particular examples of State oversight in how exhibition content was redressed. In the case of the KwaZulu-Natal Museum, Rodéhn illustrated how provincial Department of Arts and Culture officials insisted on new exhibitions of African culture from the region despite a series of existing, innovative displays on the Iron Age that demonstrated the antiquity of African populations. Documenting and probing this type of contemporary bureaucratic engagement in the work of heritage professionals and museums has served as an important example of the ongoing importance of these sites at a socio-political level. In addition to this evaluation of transformation, the institutional history of the KwaZulu-Natal Museum (formerly the Natal Museum) has been investigated in articles by Brooks (1988; 2005) and a book by Guest (2006).

Upon her death in 1965, Killie Campbell bequeathed an unparalleled library and archive to researchers of Natal and Zulu history, along with the ethnographic collection assembled by her brother William. Although new research is constantly being produced from sources held within the library and collections, only limited studies have been made on the history of this institution. As a result, background information was primarily obtained from library publicity material, a biography of Killie Campbell (Herd 1982) and an Honours thesis (Pim 1990), while an unpublished History and African Studies Seminar paper provided an outline of materials held in the various collections at the library (Buthelezi et al. 2011). Similarly, a scarcity of publications on the Phansi Museum enforced reliance on a small number of sources, which included reports in community newspapers such as *Berea Mail*, brochures published by the gallery and scattered references in books (e.g. Mikula 2004) or articles (e.g. Mikula 2011). An Architecture department Masters in Architecture dissertation (Sanders 2003) charted the design influence and contribution of the Building Design Group Architects, a professional practice that gallery founder Paul Mikula belonged to, and afforded some well-researched historical context on the establishment of Phansi Museum.

Sources on the final two collections are linked closely to the military history of northern KwaZulu-Natal, particularly the 1879 British invasion of the Zulu kingdom. Forming an integral part of the Dundee local tourism industry, Talana Museum occupies part of an 1899 South African War battlefield. A single historical article chronicled the late nineteenth-century founding of the town (Henderson 1982), and two unpublished histories of Talana Museum written by staff members (McFadden 1986; Leveridge 2016) are held in the museum archive together with *Northern Natal Courier* newspaper reports of the museum's development and openings of various exhibitions. The museum website contained additional information pertaining to its institutional history and exhibits, which pointed to the increased importance of digital media for smaller regional sites of this nature (Talana Museum: online). The same is also true of contextual information regarding a private collection of Africana books, militaria and artefacts in the possession of the Rattray family at Fugitives' Drift Lodge near Rorke's Drift. The website and blog linked to commercial operations of the family-owned hotel provides much of the published information available on the establishment, and described links the Rattray family has with the area (Fugitives' Drift Lodge: online). Family members published two sources associated with the hotel, the first a natural history of the farm (Rattray 1980), and the second a collection of artwork by a British officer in 1879 (Rattray 2007). Military history formed the crucial background of this collection. Accounts in battlefield guidebooks (Knight 1998; 2008), as well as a major synthesis of the Zulu kingdom's history (Laband 1995), and an important piece of analysis (Guy 1998) informed the summary I produced.

The final section of Chapter Five in this dissertation includes the synopsis of a proposed exhibition on the transformation of African family life in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, particularly how people moved from rural homesteads to the city. This proposal constitutes one part in a series of planned exhibitions I am responsible for planning at a major new heritage site for eThekwini Municipality, namely Mkhumbane Museum. Completed in 2017, the site forms part of Durban Local History Museums and is intended to commemorate the community of Mkhumbane, also known as Cato Manor. Evidence related to the creation of the museum is located in the Local History Museum archive (Cato Manor Development Association 1998); articles in the *Umlando* journal published by the Local History Museums and

the original concept design (Mashabane Rose Associates 2004). As the overall intention of the museum is to honour the anti-apartheid activism led by women of that community during the 1950s, and subsequent forced removal of all families living at Mkhumbane by 1964, my dissertation also draws on academic research pertaining to urban segregation techniques known as the “Durban System” (Swanson 1964; La Hausse 1982; Edwards 1989; 1994). Both the museum and its anticipated exhibitions are relevant to this dissertation topic due to themes suggested for one part of the exhibition, focused on an informed portrayal of social and economic conditions within African homesteads prior to urbanisation. In addition to reflecting the important contributions of women as documented by historians such as Guy (1981; 1987; 2009; 2013; 2014), in planning documents I have drafted, I propose that this exhibition presents an opportunity to depict a diversity of African livelihoods without resorting to typical displays of military themes related to conflict.

Methodology

Although the collections described above do not represent a comprehensive survey of archaeological and ethnological metallurgical artefacts in KwaZulu-Natal, the museums were selected partly for accessibility to conduct the necessary empirical research. Empirical research took the form of an initial visit to each museum in order to count the total number of spears and hoes in the collection, and to establish what documentary sources might be available or for the artefacts. In this way one of the outputs of my research is an index of iron artefacts in the eight collections (Appendix 2: 154-168). While this may be seen as a large number of museums to be surveyed for a dissertation of this nature, it was anticipated that the number of hoes within each collection would comprise a small set of artefacts, as suggested from the KwaZulu-Natal Museum example referenced by Maggs (1991: 136). I therefore opted for a larger group of case studies to gain a more comprehensive overview of the material. During the research visits to each site, related exhibitions of metallurgical objects were documented too, in order for the content of these displays to be evaluated in comparison with the artefact collections. In the case of all eight museums described in the dissertation, once the first draft of a section was completed, a second visit was made to each museum to verify the details furnished in the written accounts and ensure that all relevant content was included in the survey.

3

The social and economic context of hoeculture food production in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region

African farmers have lived in parts of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region for approximately two thousand years (Maggs 1980c: 3; Huffman 2006b: 98-105). Even in the first decades of the twenty-first century, in deep rural areas, peri-urban townships and informal settlements, inhabitants still tend gardens and fields of crops, and families keep livestock where they can. The foundations for this way of life stretch back to the dawn of the Iron Age in South Africa. During the course of these two millennia though, local African society has also gone through many changes. Jeff Guy identified a key challenge historians face, namely "how to distinguish between what has changed – but appears to be the same – and what has remained the same – but appears to have changed" (Guy 2014: 29). Understanding both how continuity persists, and the extent to which it persists, or does not, within certain key social and economic practices such as homestead agriculture, forms a relevant subject for consideration in exhibition design for museums. This point forms a particularly important consideration in the context of KwaZulu-Natal museums where largely one-dimensional portrayals of African culture and history still predominate. As discussed in detail below (Chapter 5), starting in the mid-1990s some efforts to expand displays from the previous narrow focus on white history have lead to the incorporation of colonial-era interpretations of a static African past defined by military conquest and conflict (Wright & Mazel 1987: 303). Examples of this tendency include exhibitions at Fugitives' Drift Lodge, Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum, Pinetown Museum and Talana Museum. The KwaZulu-Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg and KwaZulu Cultural Museum in Ulundi, for their part, made greater efforts to demonstrate the ongoing process of historical change in African society over the course of many centuries.

Technologies such as the planting of crops and raising of livestock, as well as the smelting of iron and manufacture of metal tools and ceramic pottery, relate to one of the most important transformations in African history. These innovations were introduced to southern Africa by pioneers of the Iron Age, at some point early in the first millennium, as revealed by the archaeological record (Maggs 1980c: 3). Over

time, the coastal hills were occupied by people who interacted with the natural world and refined techniques of hoeculture farming suited to the sub-tropical climate and conditions (Maggs 1980a: 91). Iron hoes consequently represent one of the most significant artefacts of agriculture, but are generally only included in museum displays as an example of Iron Age metallurgical products. The manufacture, use and symbolic value of hoes throughout the past two millennia, including gender roles associated with these objects, serves as contextual background for an examination of hoes in contemporary museum exhibitions in KwaZulu-Natal.

Agriculture is key to the narrative of locally forged field-hoes for two reasons. First, that hoes were used in crop cultivation and, second, that they were made of iron. The arrival of Bantu-speaking agriculturalists south of the Limpopo River introduced both of these artefacts to the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region during the early centuries of the first millennium (Maggs 1989: 28). Ceramics of the Matola style indicate the earliest Iron Age phase in the region, and occur from the fourth-century (Maggs 1980a: 76). Most of these sites are located in a narrow coastal belt within six kilometres of the ocean, as well as in close proximity to iron ore deposits, suggesting that mineral resources were as important as suitable agricultural sites for the first farmers (Whitelaw 2015: 5). Matola ceramics, named after a site in southern Mozambique, indicate these pioneers formed part of the Kwale branch of the Urewe tradition (Huffman 2007: 336), and reached the subcontinent via a route down the eastern seaboard (Maggs 1980a: 93).

The earliest evidence of agriculture in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region is at Mzonjani, an archaeological site on a ridge south of the Ohlanga River dated to the fifth-century CE, which comprised a village of several hectares. Iron smelting practised within the site is confirmed by tuyère fragments and pieces of slag, and, although there is no direct evidence of agriculture, food production is suggested by the size of the settlement (Maggs 1980a: 87). It is almost impossible to determine any specific details of social relations among people in farming settlements of this type in that era, including any possible gendered division of labour. As the distribution of Iron Age sites south of the equator roughly coincides with the historic distribution of Bantu languages, many researchers equate Iron Age ways of life with elements of culture historically transmitted by Bantu speakers. Yet the gender divisions that are known from later expressions of farming communities in the region

cannot be discerned within the archaeological remnants of the Mzonjani phase agriculturalists.

The relationship between nature and culture in this region is complex. It is believed that the mosaic of vegetation observed later, containing coastal forest, *Acacia* bush and modified forms of grassland along the coast were an historic relic of the early farming practices used by the first agriculturalists (Guy 1980: 103). Typically poor soil quality in this area, as well as its tendency to leach nutrients, indicates that any initial open spaces first cultivated were later extended through slashing and burning clearance (Maggs 1980a: 91; Maggs 1980c: 6). Combined with the use of wood for fuel, construction and charcoal used in smelting, Iron Age farmers steadily burned away coastal forests and allowed the development of anthropogenic grasslands more beneficial to the keeping of cattle. Population density, based on archaeological research of the small number of Mzonjani phase sites, all of which occur north of the Mzimkhulu River, was estimated by Maggs (1989: 31) to have been low.

The majority of Early Iron Age (EIA) settlements in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region are part of a second phase of settlement that took place between roughly 650CE – 750CE, which was characterised by a wider geographic range much further inland and distinctive pottery styles (Huffman 2007: 305). Known as Msuluzi, the ceramic facies associated with this second phase of settlement is part of the Kalundu tradition, showing that these later farming communities arrived in the region from a north-western direction (Maggs and Whitelaw 1991: 14). It is speculated that changes in climatic conditions resulted in increased rainfall during the seventh-century, making it possible for farmers to expand into formerly arid areas, as well as further south than they had previously (Whitelaw 2015: 5).

Early Iron Age farmers of the Msuluzi phase practised mixed agriculture, which required stable water supplies and access to both arable soils for cultivation with iron hoes and year-round grazing (Huffman 2007: 3). These inland settlement sites are normally larger than earlier Matola sites on the coast, and demonstrate a preference for valley river banks with deep colluvial soil for the fields planted close to their settlements (Van Schalkwyk 1994: 187). Wood for building houses, and to fuel cooking fires or furnaces, as well as sufficient iron ore were additional requirements of the surrounding environment (Maggs 1980c: 7). Production of both crops and iron

tools occurred within the social and spatial context of homesteads, which were spaces undoubtedly filled with layers of meaning (Whitelaw 2013: 211). The organisation of homesteads at this time, particularly the manner and location in which iron smelting took place, is however the source of considerable debate among archaeologists and historians.

This debate is relevant to a discussion of hoes, agricultural production based on gendered labour division and resultant power relations, because it establishes, and seeks to answer, fundamental questions of continuity and change in the African societies of this region. Several decades of scholarship have been dedicated to discovering what is known, and what can be known, of variations in social behaviour among local agricultural societies, particularly at the turn of the first millennium (Maggs & Whitelaw 1991: 19). Discussion of evidence relating to the roles and function of women in these societies is central to the published work on this topic. Based on documented historical observations of pre-conquest homesteads from the nineteenth-century, various scholars have drawn links between social behaviour and spatial organisation in communities that speak languages belonging to the southern Nguni sub-group of the Bantu languages (Hunter 1961; Mason 1968; Maggs 1976).

Essentially, the way in which individual houses of a homestead were arranged relative to one another, or to grain pits and socially significant spaces such as cattle byres, represented a manifestation of the roles of men and women within the family and its attendant spiritual realm (Huffman 2007: 457). It was a physical expression of a gender- and age-based social hierarchy that regulated both unequal access to resources and interactions among extended family members. Additionally, during the historical period when the last iron ore was smelted in KwaZulu-Natal, strict pollution beliefs required that the smelting process took place in seclusion, specifically excluding women from this process, whereas forging was done in public and often in homesteads (Whitelaw 2013: 2011). But Tim Maggs argued that evidence from early agriculturist sites in this region indicated that both smelting and forging was widespread and took place within inhabited locations (Maggs 1994: 176). It is a central point in his position that ore was smelted in nearly every single Early Iron Age site that has been identified (Maggs 1980c: 12; 1992: 66; 1994: 176).

Similar to the position taken by Martin Hall (1987a: 11), Maggs also contested that cattle were as definitively and centrally important in Early Iron Age communities as they later became (1980c: 5). Hall, in particular, has argued that EIA farmers did not keep large herds of cattle, but that hoe-agriculture cleared areas of forest and riverine woodland, which made grazing increasingly viable for cattle (Hall 1987a: 12). The alternate view, literally placing cattle herds at the centre of African homesteads from the earliest times right through to the period of the Zulu kingdom, is termed the Central Cattle Pattern (CCP). Guy illustrated that the origins of this structuralist concept can be traced to the research of Melville Herskovits (Herskovits 1926: 230-272; Guy 2014: 34), and the idea was later adapted by Adam Kuper (1982), while Tom Huffman developed and advocated it more fully (1982: 133-150). A key feature of the CCP settlement pattern, the application of which remains disputed by some archaeologists, is the view that historical power relations identified with African homesteads during the nineteenth-century may be extrapolated beyond the turn of the first millennium and into the Early Iron Age. The main critique of the CCP is that it fosters a static or ahistorical interpretation of the past, particularly as many facets of life recorded more recently may not have been in place more than a thousand years ago (Hall 1987a; Maggs & Whitelaw 1991: 18-19).

Because later, historically documented homesteads were strictly patriarchal and food production in the form of hoe-agriculture was largely controlled by married homestead heads (*abanumzane*), but performed by women, the related archaeological debate regarding the persistence of particular social behaviour such as labour division for crop cultivation needs to be acknowledged in the context of examining the significance of hoes in nineteenth-century African society. The spatial organisation of homesteads documented in the historical period was formed around cattle byres (*izibaya*), with the individual living spaces of wives situated according to precedence, and access to ceremonial areas determined by gender (Whitelaw 2013: 211). Guy summarised the importance of the Central Cattle Pattern as,

> a useful concept for considering the home in southern African history. It synthesises and opens for analysis a huge range of evidence about the way in which farmers lived and organised their lives and built their houses and homes. Above all it points to the key role that cattle played not just in supporting but structuring people's lives (2014: 29).

At the same time though, Guy recommends careful attention to specific contexts in order to determine the significant examples of change within the broad continuity of the CCP, both to avoid ahistorical generalisations and to address the key issue of how distinct societies are ordered differently at various times even though they occupy the same geographical area (Guy 2014: 30-31).

This is particularly relevant for the extremely long period that is claimed for this form of social organisation, extending from the Early Iron Age to the Zulu kingdom to the present day. Guy stressed that, when considering homestead agriculture and the domestic power relations it engendered over such a protracted time span, while certain superficial aspects remain similar, change was nonetheless profound (Guy 2014: 29). Therefore, although the CCP remains a useful tool and framework, especially during the Later Iron Age in the second millennium, it is still not certain what specific aspects of social relations observed and documented over the course of the last three centuries were in place when agriculture was first introduced to the region (Hall 1987a; Maggs & Whitelaw 1991: 18-19). Although labour division based on gender was also observed in hunter-gatherer communities, where women often took a major role in collecting plant-foods. This suggests a degree of continuity in such roles at a broader scale. More fundamental than irrefutable ancient evidence for the CCP though, is that farming took root here (Maggs 1980c: 5-6; 1992: 67), and in order for that to happen an enormous amount of iron was smelted from ore, then forged primarily into tools that included hoes used in agricultural production (Maggs 1991: 136).

Taking into account the vast amount of iron that would have needed to be produced in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region from the start of the Iron Age until the nineteenth-century, when imported metal implements became more widely available (Shooter 1857: 17; Maggs 1992: 85), evidence of mining for iron ore is not as common as might be expected. Even well known smelting localities, such as sites associated with the Shezi chiefdom near Nkandla have not revealed extensive mining operations. The quality of ores mined and exploited also reveals substantial variation, from high grade magnetite to laterite, derived from sediments found in two geological formations of the Ecca Group (Whitelaw 1991: 32). Ore from good quality deposits found in the Vryheid Formation was used at smelting sites in the Thukela River basin (Maggs 1982: 126), as well as coastal sites north of the Mhlatuze River

(Whitelaw 1991: 33). Outcrops of Pietermaritzburg Shale Formation are more common towards the south, occurring regularly along the coast as far as the Mngeni River, and as bands of limonite and magnetite further inland (Lindstrom 1987). Carbonaceous ores of the Pietermaritzburg Formation commonly used in smelting across the southern parts of this region (Maggs 1992: 72) are readily identified in the landscape by a range of grey mudstone laminates and shales which become a lighter yellow colour during exposure to weathering (Whitelaw 1991: 33). The most generally used source of iron in this region, haematite, typically originated from what has been described as “snuff-box shale” weathered out of Ecca Group sediments (King & Maud 1964), often located on higher-lying outcrops of Pietermaritzburg Formation (Whitelaw 1991: 33).

As discussed above, there was a distinction between smelting and forging, with furnaces established for the former process usually better preserved (Maggs 1992: 66). The basic function of smelting furnaces was to break down ore at temperatures between 1100°C and 1300°C, which did not cause the iron to melt, but rather allowed the metal to coalesce in a spongy mass known as a “bloom” (Herbert 1993: 9). Then the remaining impurities were removed from this piece through forging on an anvil, and an iron ingot was formed. The variety of ore composition described above resulted in a wide range of smelting techniques. Iron produced locally by smelters in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region is largely low-carbon bloomery iron, created by direct reduction of iron oxides, in the form of ores, and by solid carbon in the form of charcoal. Most often the furnace was built with thick clay walls, surmounted by a low superstructure to form a chimney, with air introduced to the base through clay tuyère pipes (Maggs 1992: 67). Smelting was a complex and delicate undertaking. Vast amounts of charcoal were also consumed in the course of smelting, roughly 180kg to fire a single furnace (Huffman 2007: 81), while extensive effort was required to operate leather bellows to keep the furnace at a consistently high enough temperature to be effective (Avery & Schmidt 1979). Smelting sites ranged from single furnaces constructed close to necessary resources (Whitelaw 1991: 33) to large arrays of potentially linked, multiple furnaces operated on small-scale industrial levels (Hall 1980: 174; Maggs 1982; 1992: 72).

As a result of the varied technical challenges posed, iron smelting was governed by ritual observances that sought to protect a process seen as particularly susceptible

to ritual contamination or pollution (Whitelaw 2013: 208-209). In addition, the role of smelter was accorded a particular social status which became associated with an "outsider" Lala identity in the Later Iron Age and particular African communities immediately prior to colonial conquest, and which is discussed further below. This is regarded as representative of concerns over the smelter's aptitude to control the technology of iron production (Maggs 1992: 70; Hamilton & Wright 2017: 13). Linguistic analysis also forms part of this discussion in the Iron Age literature. Carolan Ownby identified an extinct Nguni dialect of the Bantu languages that provides some insights to the transition from the EIA and origins of Nguni culture (Ownby 1985: 91-94). Ownby named this language "Sala" and maintains that it was linked to a form of ancestral Shona, thereby giving important clues to Nguni geneses. Significantly, however, Ownby has identified that one of the Zulu words for "field-hoe", *igeja*, is possibly borrowed from the Sala dialect. Whitelaw interpreted this, linked with the previously mentioned marginalisation of iron producers, as an indication of the need for in-depth examination of how Early Iron Age sites are distributed relative to Later Iron Age sites and the respective iron ore deposits in KwaZulu-Natal (Whitelaw 2015: 134), as this data would provide further clarity on links between iron resources and food production. A correlation exists between the distribution of the earlier sites, all located within six kilometres of the coast (Whitelaw 2015: 5), and the dependence of Sala -speakers on marine resources (Ownby 1985: 92).

After 1100CE a significant break in ceramic styles has been interpreted as signifying the arrival of a new culture in KwaZulu-Natal, widely considered to be identified with Nguni-speaking peoples; this discontinuity in the archaeological record is also associated with the start of the Late Iron Age in South Africa (Huffman 2006b: 108; Whitelaw & Hall 2016: 157). Seen alongside evidence such as the argument made by Ownby about loan words from the conjectured extinct "Sala" language, the ceramic disjuncture has been construed as an indication of migrations into KwaZulu-Natal and other parts of southern Africa by new population groups (Huffman 2006b: 105-106). Other scholars, including Martin Hall, have expressed doubt about the migration thesis, rather emphasising continuity in the development of material culture between the Early Iron Age and the Late Iron Age (Greenfield & Miller 2004: 1531; Hall 2003: 11).

Establishing the nature of transition between the Early Iron Age and Later Iron Age is therefore another component of the wider ongoing archaeological discussion, which includes reference to the relationship between social identity, the production of iron and manufacture of metallurgical artefacts such as field-hoes. The discussion includes the origins of the distinctions claimed to exist between people who regarded themselves as having “Nguni” origins, which was seen as a socially superior class, compared with people of lower social status. According to both Lunguza kaMpukane, who was interviewed by James Stuart in 1909, and Mpatshana kaSodondo, interviewed in 1912, one entire category of low-status subjects were known as Lala, which is also a term associated with iron workers who either smelted ore or forged tools in service of the Zulu kings (Evidence of Lunguza, *JSA1* 1976: 318; Evidence of Mpatshana, *JSA3* 1982: 317). Mabonsa kaSidhlayi, interviewed at roughly the same time as Lunguza, as well as Maziyana kaMahlabeni and Mbovu kaMtshumayeli, who were both interviewed a few years earlier, spoke about the distinctions between Lala and Ntungwa identities during the nineteenth-century (Evidence of Mabonsa, *JSA2* 1979: 12, 28; Evidence of Maziyana, *JSA2* 1979: 276; Evidence of Mbovu, *JSA3* 1982: 42). Hamilton and Wright have, however, pointed out that it is difficult to extricate political identities which formed during the creation of the Zulu kingdom from those of earlier periods (2017: 14).

The significance of the Lala designation has been the focus of a number of academic texts, particularly by Ownby (1985), Wright and Hamilton (1990; 2017) Whitelaw (2015) as well as Whitelaw and Hall (2016). While this name, which was regarded as derogatory, was widely applied to many people who were not engaged in iron work, it is noteworthy that a degree of social control or marginalisation was associated with iron metallurgy, as well as perceptions of people accomplished in this highly technical craft. Some writers have stressed the degree of social exclusion imposed on Lala iron workers could be a social artefact of changes experienced in the second millennium. Specifically, Ownby suggested the arrival of Nguni-speakers and spread of their dialects over languages used by existing populations could be the origin of the Lala classification and discrimination associated with that language group (Ownby 1985: 139). Whitelaw and Hall contend that EIA agriculturalists’ knowledge of iron-ore deposits and long-established interactions with hunter-gatherers might be regarded as powerful threats, which in turn caused prejudice towards them (2016:

158; 165-168). However, eyewitness records and direct oral evidence documented during the nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century depict more complex and nuanced circumstances.

Maggs demonstrated the contrast between the only eyewitness account of smelting by Africans in this region, that of Adulphe Delegorgue in April 1842 (Delegorgue 1997: 16-18), and accounts of iron production in the upper Mhlatuze River valley during the same period (Maggs 1992: 69-70; 74-83). The precise location where Delegorgue observed the smelting is not known, but he was travelling north along the Mona River towards the Mkhuze (Delegorgue 1997: 15), and his route traversed the former territory of the Ndwandwe *Nkosi* Zwide kaLanga (Maggs 1992: 70). The French naturalist gave a brief account of the conflict that had engulfed the region a generation earlier and described the smelters as poverty stricken and without cattle, and observed that they received payment in grain cereals for the work they did (Delegorgue 1997: 17). Despite his description of iron production as an extensive enterprise, with rows of furnaces run simultaneously, no other accounts exist of this near-industrial production of iron. While the location described above has not been identified, Hall excavated a similar type of site in the Hluhluwe Game Reserve, which verified this type of metallurgical process in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth-century (Hall 1980: 173), if not the social dynamics recorded by Delegorgue.

By comparison, Maggs relates how the Cube people were acknowledged as expert metalworkers in oral sources at the turn of the nineteenth-century, and Nkandla was well known as a site of smelting (Maggs 1992: 74). Both Sigananda kaZokufa and his father Zokufa kaMvakela were *amakhosi* of the Cube as well as renowned smiths in their own rights, and had close relations with the Zulu elite (Maggs 1992: 77). Even though the Cube observed unusual conventions to prevent ritual pollution, and were not permitted to serve as warriors in regimental *amabutho* (Maggs 1992: 71), this did not prevent the marriage of Mvakela to a sister of Nandi, which made Zokufa a maternal first cousin of King Shaka kaSenzangakhona (Maggs 1992: 77). This complexity in the different ways that metal workers were assigned status or denied it indicates how the manufacture of iron and forging of tools was freighted with powerful political meaning, and it is ultimately significant that the metal was mostly made into hoes. It is also important to recognise that the metal production industry within the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region changed during the Late Iron Age as

settlement patterns of homesteads changed, and that metal production was undertaken in different ways during the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries (Maggs 1992: 67).

As mentioned in Chapter 2, a recent study considered the typology and distribution of hoe blades in various South African museums and reviewed criteria that may be used to differentiate hoe types across the southern African region (Moffett et al. 2017: 5). Based on physical characteristics including the shape and length of tangs, form of the blade and design of the tang-blade junction, overall lengths as well as weights of approximately sixty-three hoe blades held in several museum collections, six distinct types were distinguished. Among the most numerous of these, represented by a total of sixteen examples, is the type most widely distributed in KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State (Moffett et al. 2017: 7). This type of hoe is described as having

> a relatively simple shape often with quite a long, narrow tang, the blade being ellipsoidal or in some cases ovate, and becoming wider towards the working edge. The hoe is made of relatively thick metal, the blade being thickest along the centre line, tapering towards the sides, but without the pronounced ridge of Type 7 (Fig. 4:4). Examples are typically 25 to 55 cm long and usually weigh 1-2 kg (Moffett et al. 2017: 7).

Hoe blades of this kind, named as Type 4 in the article, constituted an indispensable tool in the domestic production of crops for homesteads within the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region from the seventeenth- to early nineteenth-century (Moffett et al. 2017: 7), until European traders later introduced facsimile examples. However, it took time for the industrially produced items to supplant locally forged ones. During the mid-nineteenth-century African consumers of trade goods were not yet willing to purchase socketed hoes sold by certain traders (Shooter 1857: 17).

According to at least two sources namely Mpatshana kaSodondo and Ndukwana kaMbengwana, who were interviewed around the turn of the twentieth century on customs observed in the Zulu kingdom during the nineteenth-century (i.e. before the introduction of imported ironware) the smiths who forged spears were considered of higher status than those who made hoes (Evidence of Mpatshana, *JSA3* 1982: 317; Evidence of Ndukwana, *JSA4* 1986: 297). This perceived difference in the value of the two types of artefact has continued into the twenty-first century, when substantial numbers of discarded traditional hoes were sold as scrap metal in Empangeni during

a period between 2008 and 2012 (Radebe pers. comm. 2017: 8; 24). Bobby Radebe, a local collector, purchased at least 40 *amageja* from several different scrap dealers over that period, but never encountered a spear or spear blade at those merchants. He also disputed the idea that spears could ever be disposed of in such a perfunctory manner, and related how most of the hoes in his collection were found lying around homesteads or discarded near old fields (Radebe pers. comm. 2017: 2-3).

Indirectly, these two sets of oral evidence separated by a century suggest that hoes have continued to be seen merely as utilitarian tools, and were not imbued with the same iconic or prestigious status as spears in either pre-conquest African communities of the region or contemporary society. During the nineteenth-century hoes nonetheless had a cost, usually calculated in livestock (Moffett et al. 2017: 14), which, according to Mabonsa kaSidhlayi and Ndukwana kaMbengwana, ranged from five hoes in exchange for a covered heifer to a single large hoe for a sheep (Evidence of Mabonsa, *JSA1* 1979: 30; Evidence of Ndukwana, *JSA4* 1986: 296). It is also noteworthy that hoes were widely accepted as part of bridewealth exchanges, or *ilobola*, as items of value in their own right or as substitutes for livestock within the Zulu kingdom and as far away as Mashonaland (Evidence of C.H. Gilson, *JSA1* 1976: 155; Evidence of Mabonsa, *JSA2* 1979: 7; Maggs 1991: 135; Moffett et al. 2017: 12-13).

Whatever intrinsic worth hoes held prior to the introduction of mass-produced imported examples, it was not only those involved in the process of their manufacture that were accorded lower status but seemingly the agricultural labour with which they were embroiled as well. Although not an absolute rule, there was a generally acknowledged division of labour in nineteenth-century homesteads that allotted cultivation of crops to women (Gluckman 1935: 255; Bryant 1967: 297; Krige 1950: 189; Wright 1981: 82; Beall 1981: 37; Hamilton 1985; Guy 1987: 21; Huffman 2004: 82; Guy 2014: 25). This formed part of a larger cultural dichotomy in southeast Africa between pastoralism and agriculture, in which the masculine world of cattle dominated to an exaggerated degree (Huffman 2004: 82; Guy 2014: 30-31). The warrior-pastoralist was a heroic stereotype of this patriarchal world, while cultivation brought no equivalent dignity to those who performed such labour, a view encapsulated by Gluckman's concise observation that "to have and herd cattle is an

honour before the whole community. It is for cattle, and not grain, that wars are waged" (1935: 262). Reinforcing the idea of separate regimes of labour with difference kinds of significance in society, Ndukwana kaMbengwana suggested the annual sequence of the calendar, which was largely focused on the cycle of crop production, was more significant to women than men (Evidence of Ndukwana, *JSA4* 1986: 335).

Among pre-conquest farming people of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region the year was divided into two principal seasons, a wet and rainy half devoted to cultivation, named *uNyaka*, and a dry half named *ubuSika* (Alcock 2014: 159). Around the turn of the twentieth century, Mkando kaDhlova and Ndukwana kaMbengwana both recollected that lunar months were previously named after a mixture of agricultural and environmental conditions prevailing at different times of the year, and interpretations of what signified the start of the year varied (Evidence of Mkando, *JSA3* 1982: 167; Evidence of Ndukwana, *JSA4* 1986: 363; Alcock 2014: 154). The onset of plant growth, particularly fresh grazing, occurred in the month of *uNcwaba* which was considered the first month of the year cycle (Alcock 2014: 155). Interviewed by James Stuart together in the spring of 1902 in Durban, Ndukwana felt the proper signs that winter was over and cultivation could commence included the appearance of migratory raptors such as *uKolo* (yellow-billed kite, *Milvus aegyptius*), while Mkando kaDhlovu thought the rising of the constellation Pleiades, in particular its first star *uCwazibe* (known according to international astronomical standards as Aldebaran) was the correct indication (Evidence of Mkando, *JSA3* 1982: 167; Evidence of Ndukwana, *JSA4* 1986: 363). The name of the constellation in Zulu, *isiLimela*, denotes its close connection with cultivation while the name of the second month, *uMandulo*, is the *hlonipha* form of a verb meaning "to disturb the soil" (Alcock 2014: 150). Other months were given names to mark the sprouting of seed, or the harvest bounty, but according to Ndukwana kaMbengwana, "those who were in the habit of growing crops, hoeing etc., knew the names of the months far better than those who did not cultivate" (Evidence of Ndukwana, *JSA4* 1986: 335). Presumably by this he meant that the finer details of the agricultural calendar were only of interest to the women who, on the whole, performed this type of work.

Despite the extensive effort required to feed families by means of subsistence agriculture, famine was a constant threat. The Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region falls

within the Summer Rainfall Zone, meaning that approximately two thirds of precipitation occurs between October and March (Hannaford 2015: 22), which coincides with the *uNyaka* cultivation season. For six months of the year a mixture of cereals and vegetables was produced in the gardens that were attached to the households of each wife within a polygynous homestead (Beall 1981: 37). Early Iron Age archaeological sites in the region contain direct evidence of agriculture or crops in the form of seeds (Davies 1975: 348-350; Greenfield et al. 2005: 308), including bulrush millet (*Pennisetum typhoides* or *Pennisetum glaucum*) and finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*), along with sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor*) (Maggs 1980c: 5; Maggs & Ward 1984: 127; Greenfield et al. 2005: 310), which were the principal crops and important food sources during that period (Huffman 2007: 97), while cucurbits such as the Tsamma melon (*Citrullus lanatus*) and legumes like cow peas (*Vigna unguiculata*) also formed part of Iron Age diets in this region (Hannaford 2015: 70).

Various observers during the course of the nineteenth-century, including Joseph Shooter who depicted an African woman in Natal with a hoe (Shooter 1857: 17; Figure 1), confirmed that crops in this period consisted mainly of sorghum, millet, maize, exotic tubers such as sweet potatoes (*Ipomoea batatas*) and *amadumbe* (*Colocasia esculenta* L. Schott) and cucurbits in the form of melons and calabash gourds (*Lagenaria siceraria*) (Fynn 1950: 304-306; Shooter 1857: 16; Bryant 1967: 271-273). Maize (*Zea mays*) was grown from the seventeenth-century onwards, after it was introduced from Latin America by way of the Portuguese at Delagoa Bay (Huffman 2007: 41), but evidence for its early cultivation is fragmentary and it is difficult to evaluate the distribution of this crop with certainty until the end of the eighteenth-century. Although the increased yields of maize, particularly compared with millet and sorghum, are associated with a population increase during the Late Iron Age period immediately prior to colonial settlement (Huffman 2007: 41), the sensitivity of maize to water deprivation also altered the way drought affected communities that adopted it as a staple (Hannaford 2015: 70). A further problem is that maize could only be stored underground for a maximum of two years before the risk of spoiling increased dramatically (Isaacs 1836b: 292).



Figure 1: Originally captioned “PLATE II (facing p. 17) is a married woman going to work in the garden” (Shooter 1857), depicting a locally forged hoe in the British colony of Natal during the mid-nineteenth-century.

It has been argued that the effects of climate variability on food production formed a contributing factor in social upheavals which took place in the region between the 1760s and 1830s (Hall 1976; Guy 1980; Eldredge 1992; Hannaford 2015). Famine as a cause of disruption is certainly a recurring theme among several interlocutors in the *James Stuart Archive*, including Jantshi kaNongila, Lunguza kaMpukane, Mahungane kaNkomuza, Mtshapi kaNoradu and Mtshayankomo kaMagolwana, who were all interviewed over an extensive period of time from late 1900 until early 1922 (Evidence of Jantshi, *JSA1* 1976: 201; Evidence of Lunguza, *JSA1* 1976: 342; Evidence of Mahungane, *JSA2* 1979: 152; Evidence of Mtshapi, *JSA4* 1986: 81; Evidence of Mtshayankomo, *JSA4* 1986: 138). From these accounts, it is hard to isolate the named *mahlatule* famine that occurred a generation before the establishment of the Zulu kingdom, and at least a century before the interviews conducted by Stuart, as a direct cause of political and military centralisation.

It is perhaps more useful to consider ways in which control of food production was affected by the development of the *ibutho* system of tribute in labour, often characterised as a form of military conscription. Hannaford argued that petty kingdoms with a greater degree of centralisation, such as the Mthethwa, allowed an aristocratic elite to both concentrate political power and strengthen food security by means of support from lower-ranked families who supplied both men and tribute (Hannaford 2015: 231). When the Zulu kingdom extended this system over a larger area, centralised control over food production was consolidated in several ways. The testimony of three interlocutors in the Stuart Archive - namely Mpatshana kaSodondo and Nsuze kaMfelafuti who recalled circumstances in the 1870s, and Ndukwana kaMbengwana who commented on the situation during the respective reigns of Dingane, Mpande and Cetshwayo - record that families were required to feed their sons serving in regimental *amabutho* (Evidence of Mpatshana, *JSA3* 1982: 300; Evidence of Ndukwana, *JSA4* 1986: 273, 335, 372, 379; Evidence of Nsuze, *JSA5* 2001: 175), which effectively extracted the labour of women from domestic homesteads in the form of food tribute.

Observers such as Isaacs, a resident during the 1820s of a homestead near the eMakhosini named Ndabambi kaSikakana, recorded that while *amabutho* were stationed at royal barracks known as *amakhanda*, men routinely cultivated crops for the king and other members of the Zulu ruling elite as part of regimental duties

(Isaacs 1836b: 291; Hamilton 1985; Evidence of Ndabambi, *JSA4* 1986: 177). Furthermore, at least one chiefdom supplied stores of grain directly to the personal household of the king, namely *Nkosi* Jobe Sithole. According to Lunguza kaMpukane,

> Jobe used to grow white *amabele* (not a single red grain) [using the Zulu name for sorghum], red mealies and white mealies [using the Afrikaans word for maize] for the *isigodhlo's* consumption, and these cereals had to be carried to uMgungundhlovu. The white *amabele* would be pure white. The *amabele* were grown in ordinary gardens. (Evidence of Lunguza, *JSA1* 1976: 330).

Centralised control over food production in the Zulu kingdom was also maintained through ritual, specifically the two types of First Fruits ceremonies, known respectively as *inyatelo* and *umkhosi*. These harvest rites were observed at two separate times in the year, and apparently pre-dated the kingdom as a means of regulating consumption of produce. Long-held custom demanded that the subjects of neither pre-Shakan kingdoms nor those later incorporated under Zulu rule could pick or eat crops from their own gardens until authorised to do so, evidently under pain of death (Isaacs 1836a: 46; Hannaford 2015: 233). The spiritual purpose of this ritual was supposed to shield the ruler from contamination caused by subjects who consumed crops before this purification was performed (Gluckman 1938: 25-26). While the *inyatelo* had a practical function, to delay early harvesting in an effort to stabilise food consumption in the kingdom, it was more importantly an expression of economic control held by the Zulu monarch and other *amakhosi*.

Lunguza kaMpukane and Mtshayankomo kaMagolwana described the format of this *inyatelo* or *umkhosi omcane* ("little *umkhosi*") during the reigns of Dingane kaSenzangakhona and Mpande kaSenzangakhona respectively. The *inyatelo* was observed around the time of the summer solstice in the month of *uZibandlela*, when fresh vegetables such as pumpkin and calabash shoots were first ready to eat, but before the maize flowered (Evidence of Lunguza *JSA1* 1976: 325; Evidence of Mtshayankomo *JSA4* 1986: 115). It was a small event, usually only witnessed by limited detachments of selected *amabutho* at the royal residence, and descriptions of what occurred vary. Lasting two days, it commenced with the barehanded killing of a bull, the consumption of its flesh by unmarried boys, and the cremation of the remaining carcass. The principal ceremony took place at dawn on the full moon

when the king ritually consumed special medicines, which he squirted at the sun, and bit the fresh shoots of vegetables. This act officially ended the prohibition on picking vegetables; prayers for rain and sacrifices of cattle were offered at royal graves in the eMakhosini, after which the men dispersed home (Laband 1995: 63).

From the reign of Shaka kaSenzangakhona until 1879, a second set of ceremonies was extensively elaborated and their central significance altered from largely agricultural observances into functions of the Zulu military system embodied by the *amabutho* (Gluckman 1938: 31; Ownby 1985, 129; Hannaford 2015: 234). It has been argued that the political rationale underlying the “national *umkhosi*” celebrations that took place later in summer, as the crops ripened in the month of *Masingana*, was appropriated from field fertility rituals originally the preserve of women, and which were observed as “rituals of rebellion" (Gluckman 1963: 112). This arrogation facilitated endeavours by the monarchy to publicly honour the ancestors of the ruling dynasty and foster a sense of national identity (Gluckman 1935: 268-269). Mbokodo kaSikulekile stated that the purpose of the *umkhosi* was for the king to “gather his people together to be seen” (Evidence of Mbokodo, JSA3 1982: 20), and that this was done in great style. From the time of *nyatelo*, families arranged their finery and made preparations for travel to the king’s residence at the full moon, while Nudukwana kaMbengwana confirmed that royal *izinyanga* procured a selection of crops from fields across the kingdom, as well as a number of bitter wild gourds or melons used in the ceremony (Gluckman 1938: 27; Evidence of Ndukwana, *JSA4* 1986: 271). At the height of growing season, as the crops ripened, subjects of the Zulu king assembled in his presence to perform rituals collectively, receive medicines of purification and hear laws proclaimed (Laband 1995: 65).

As with the *inyatelo*, the youngest *ibutho* present was required to kill a bull secretly stolen from the herds of a rival king, using only brute force to break its neck or suffocate it. Meanwhile the king was treated in seclusion with various potent medicines, believed to be lethal to the general populace (Lugg 1929: 365), in preparation for the climax of the ceremonies. Before dawn the next morning, dressed in a special costume of plaited *umhlale* grass and other vegetation including sorghum stalks, with only his head and legs visible, the king emerged but was almost unrecognisable due to the potent medicines that gave him a “terrible aspect”, according to the description of events in the latter half of the nineteenth-century

provided by Ndukwana kaMbengwana in 1900 (Evidence of Ndukwana, *JSA4* 1986: 272). As the sun rose, he smashed an *uselwa* gourd to pieces on the ground while others were later hurled against the shields of the nearest warriors (Gluckman 1938: 28). Still clothed in outlandish vegetation, the king then emerged before the greatest annual assembly of his subjects, greeted by the unlikely acclaim of “They hate him, they hate the king.” Another section of the crowds answered with, “They hate him, they hate Punga and Mageba,” naming prominent royal ancestors (Gluckman 1938: 28). A slightly different account of the chant given by Madikane kaMlomowetole in 1905 recorded the following words: “He bewitched him. Everyone hates him! Everyone hates him! Acknowledge, acknowledge him as the only chief” (Evidence of Madikane, *JSA2* 1979: 53).

Following this ceremony, the king retired from the assembly to be cleansed, but all members of the *amabutho* present were treated in sequence with emetics and ritually vomited into pits (Laband 1995: 64), after which an enormous feast was celebrated. At this point in the festivities a variety of substances were gathered to be incorporated into the *inkatha yesizwe*, the great grass coil regarded as a physical manifestation of national unity (Gluckman 1938: 28). Articles included grass the *amabutho* had slept on, dust from the parade ground, thatch from above hut doors and the *inkatha* was also smeared with a stick which had been used to stir the pit of vomit (Laband 1995: 64). Later in the day, royal officials announced public decrees including new laws, creation of an *ibutho* or granting of permission for an existing *ibutho* to sew on headrings and marry (Gluckman 1938: 29; Laband 1995: 64). Delegorgue observed extreme freedom of speech at this point on the occasion he witnessed the *umkhosi*, even expressions of contempt for King Mpande kaSenzangakhona by individual commoners present (Delegorgue 1990: 199), which Lugg (1929: 365) and Gluckman (1938: 31; 36) contend specifically demonstrate links between these “national unity” aspects of this ceremony, the field fertility cult of Nomkhubulwane and agricultural labour performed by women. Nomkhubulwane was the feminine deity with whom three distinct phases of ceremony were observed in honour of agriculture (Gluckman 1935: 256).

In contrast to the First Fruits harvest rituals performed by high-ranking males at central sites associated with royal authority, ordinary women practiced customs associated with Nomkhubulwane practised locally throughout the nineteenth-, and

into the twentieth-century (Lugg 1929: 256, Bryant 1967: 665). As documented by various missionaries, colonial officials and anthropologists, during the spring planting season, unmarried women used unspoken code to request small quantities of sorghum from their neighbours, which was used to brew beer. When the beer was ready, the young women dressed in their brothers' clothing and collectively herded the neighbourhood cattle together for the day (Samuelson 1929: 303). Meanwhile their mothers met in the open veld and used hoes to dig over a small patch of ground planting a token field of sorghum dedicated to the *Nkosazana* (Princess) Nomkhubulwane, on to which the previously brewed beer was poured (Bryant 1967: 665). Later in the season, the young women went around the fields of grain planted in the various family gardens to gently strike the young plants, pleading for a good harvest. Finally, when the harvest was almost ripe the same young women passed through the fields and removed any diseased crops, which were buried or thrown in rivers. After this the women bathed in the river, sang bawdy songs and returned home, whereupon they often verbally abused any males they encountered on the way (Gluckman 1935: 258).

During the period of the Zulu kingdom, celebrations in honour of Nomkhubulwane, were a spiritual element of the agricultural work performed by women, distinct from the displays of royal authority performed at the First Fruits ceremonies. According to Gluckman, though, the common element is that both contain "rituals of rebellion" (1963: 112). Key to this view are the aspects of Nomkhubulwane veneration that require the inversion of socially acceptable behaviour: women switched clothing, herded and milked cattle, planted a field away from their homesteads and then neglected it, they sang lewd songs and insulting conduct was directed against men of the community (Gluckman 1963: 113). By comparison, at the national *umkhosi* event the king suffered undignified attitudes and comments from commoners who asserted licence, which is argued to have the same source: public release of social tensions stemming from subordination (Gluckman 1963: 112). This implies, according to Gluckman, that after the Zulu kingdom was founded, it was necessary to allow subjugated or incorporated chiefdoms a fleeting chance at disrupting the accepted norms of deference before the monarch, in the same way that women did with respect to Nomkhubulwane rituals.

Nguni-language words for both political authority, and different terms for First Fruits, Ownby argued, cannot be reconstructed for proto-Nguni and thus indicated a shared common origin with loan words from the extinct Bantu-language "Sala" dialect (1985: 90-91; 129). Using linguistic evidence, she speculated further that both the stratagem of an agricultural harvest ritual that celebrated chiefly power held within a discrete patriarchal lineage, as well as the substantive principles of social and economic organisation expressed by the notion of "chiefdom", were ultimately traced to the Late Iron Age disjuncture observed in the archaeological record around 1060CE. She claimed, however, that the "development of the ideology of chiefly power was still not complete, it would seem, at the proto-Nguni period" (Ownby 1985: 129), and that power associated with a dominant patriarchal lineage steadily became more closely linked to the annual harvest rites whereby the leader symbolically controlled the essential source of food and the survival of people under his authority (Ownby 1985: 129).

Whatever the origins may have been, these ceremonies were understood as tremendous representations of military prestige and power by the British imperial government, whose representatives banned the *umkhosi* after the invasion of 1879 and brought Zulu royal authority to an end (Laband 1992: 250). Thirty years earlier in colonial Natal though, the same authorities grasped the singular importance of agricultural production performed by women in the homestead economy, from which they also extracted surplus value in the form of taxation (Guy 2014: 38). The surplus produced by means of hoe-agriculture in African homesteads was not required only as the basis of taxation however, as the actual crops also formed the basis of food requirements for European settlers (Guy 2013: 91; 370). The system devised by Theophilus Shepstone, which contained African agriculture in the Reserves, was consequently essential for both colonial revenue and feeding the emerging urban settlements, as well as the inhabitants of homesteads themselves. It was for this reason that Shepstone accommodated African demands for land, as a source of food and direct taxation (Guy 2013: 341). After the mineral discoveries of the late nineteenth-century and industrialisation that ensued, the unpaid agricultural labour of rural women continued to sustain homesteads and became a cornerstone in a system of migrant labour that paid a "bachelor wage" to men working in the cities (Wolpe 1972: 434; Healy-Clancy & Hickel 2014: 11). In this way, manual labour of

women using simple iron field-hoes in their domestic gardens and farmland remained an important factor in maintaining rural households despite the mechanisation of industry during the twentieth century.

Another source for understanding particular dynamics in society are proverbs and idiomatic language. These are seen as an educational element of oral literature in the Zulu language, which offer directives on day-to-day life (Mathonsi 2004: 46), and have been described as ordinary statements, accepted as clever expressions of reality (Nyembezi 1990: xi). As language plays a crucial role in the construction of identity, proverbs are internalised and reinforce structured elements of everyday life, and gender roles in particular. Used in regular speech, “the manner in which values are presented leaves no room for negotiations or approval. Even doubters are coerced into silence for fear of being accused of immorality” (Magwaza 2004: 39). This is achieved both through frequent repetition and by means of “poetic structural techniques such as alliteration, parallelism, vowel elision and rhythm” (Canonici 1994: 39). During the nineteenth-century, it was observed that these linguistic devices were more commonly used by older men, and women or children only employed them when permission was specifically granted (Okpewho 1992: 230).

Patriarchal social structures were thus partially perpetuated through proverbs and idiomatic speech, especially as those that focused on domestic life were primarily concerned with the expected behaviour of women, in particular within marriage (Mpungose 2010: 8). Simone de Beauvoir pointed out, “one is not born, but rather becomes a woman” (de Beauvoir 1949: 249), and language is central to social conditioning. Magwaza argues that proverbs play a significant role in “instilling and maintaining” the social and moral institutions practised by humans (2004: 25), and are oral expressions of “culture, life, attitudes, ideals and hopes of people” (2004: 37). Although research has been conducted to establish contemporary attitudes to proverbs relating to marriage and *ukuhlonipha*, or customary respect among urban Zulu-speaking people in Durban (Mpungose 2010), my dissertation makes use of proverbs for the light they shed on personal relationships, particularly in gendered contexts. Although idiom can be used to illustrate the formative social role of proverbs in the Zulu language, Nyembezi states it can articulate “homely truths expressed in a concise and terse manner” (Nyembezi 1990: ix). This is particularly evident with reference to certain expressions that relate to hoes.

Nyembezi (1990) documented at least six proverbs based on hoes, which mostly allude to hardships or uncertainty, while three were based on the gendered agricultural function of *amageja*. Most significant among these was *igeja lishis' emhlane* (the hoe burns on the back), for which Nyembezi offered two possible interpretations (1990: 113). In his view the heat referred to resulted from a habit of hoes being carried with the blade resting on a woman's shoulder, or from muscles burning through the sheer exertion of wielding the implement for an extended period, which seems far more likely. One thing is made clear though, whatever the origin of the sensation, it is associated with the physical labour of women in particular: "I say women because all agricultural work was done by them in old Zulu society. When one was tired after a day's hard toil, the hoe might be a big burden on the back" (Nyembezi 1990: 113). The meaning provided for this saying is noteworthy, as the phrase indicates an onerous obligation, "when one feels that the responsibility is too great, that it weighs too heavily on his [*sic*] shoulders" (Nyembezi 1990: 113), although such chores were an unavoidable part of the annual cycle of women's work.

Another proverb that links women and the implement they were associated with, states *igeja lithengwa ngokubona* (the hoe is bought after being seen), and seemingly references common-sense advice that a valuable object such as a hoe should be inspected before purchase. In other words, "[o]ne must not buy a pig in a poke", but a further explanation suggests that "hoe" in this sense could also specifically mean a woman, too, because "when a man wants to marry […] he has to satisfy himself by seeing the woman first" (Nyembezi 1990: 194). In the same way, *amagej' alingen' abalimi* (the hoes are sufficient for the cultivators) is taken to have a dual meaning. Firstly that a task being undertaken will proceed smoothly because there are enough people present, but a second interpretation states "it is common, for instance, to hear men use this expression when they see women who are the same in number as themselves, meaning that each man will have a woman to keep him occupied" (Nyembezi 1990: 127), which also implies that *amageja* symbolically denote women in a social setting.

Other sayings though, do not contain such disparaging attitudes towards women, such as *akugeja laswel' umlimi* (there is no hoe that ever lacks for one to use it), evidence of the universally acknowledged importance of hoes, used here as a

substitute for any useful item (Nyembezi 1990: 208). The proverb *udlala ngegeja kuliziwe* (he or she plays with a hoe at a time of abstinence), that indicates the importance of proper decorum such as observing ritual abstinence during times of bereavement or burial rites when agricultural work was strictly forbidden (Nyembezi 1990: 63). Alternatively, *uhlezi phezu kwegeja lishisa* (he or she is seated on a hot hoe) denoted either a person living in misery (Nyembezi 1990: 113) or someone who found themselves in a very uncomfortable surroundings, with the heated hoe a representation of what caused people misery or discomfort (Doke & Vilikazi 1964: 241).). As field-hoes are commonly associated with women, it could also be argued that a “hot hoe” represents a “difficult woman" as the cause of discomfort, as opposed to the more literal interpretation suggested by Doke and Vilikazi.

Humour was used in the saying *igeja lipham’ impangele* (the hoe has puzzled the guinea-fowl), which represented a buffoon, foolishly ignorant of the role others have played in a success they claimed for themselves, just as the guinea-fowl (supposedly a clever bird) was outwitted by a simple piece iron used to cover up the seed it feeds on (Nyembezi 1990: 159). Such playful use of the hoe in idiomatic language, though, did not dilute the powerful expression of patriarchy contained in aphorisms such as *igeja lishis’ emhlane* (the hoe burns on the back), *igeja lithengwa ngokubona* (the hoe is bought after being seen) or *amagej’ alingen’ abalimi* (the hoes are sufficient for the cultivators). The association of field-hoes and onerous agricultural labour with women is clear in the majority of the idioms above, many of which also include pejorative meanings. This is consistent with the idea that the contribution of women in the subsistence economy of homesteads in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region during the nineteenth century was not openly acknowledged, and in some cases even disparaged.

The manner in which patriarchal authority has been expressed in African families, as well as African communities more generally, specifically those that occur within the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, has been the frequent focus of academic writing since the late 1970s. It is important to state, though, that the observation and analysis provided by these texts must be seen as distinct from ethnographic descriptions written earlier in the twentieth century that tend to portray and represent African people of the region as inhabiting a timeless culture resistant to change (Gluckman 1936; Krige 1950). Instead, many social, cultural and political changes characterised

a period which began with formation of more centralised chiefly power, which eventually gave rise to the Zulu kingdom in the early decades of the nineteenth-century. Colonial rule, military conquest and industrialisation marked the turn of the twentieth century, followed by the steady flow of families from rural homesteads to urban centres over the past one hundred years. Instead, if written accounts of domestic agricultural production are understood in the context of direct observation by a number of commentators at various points in time and space during the period summarised above, they can be seen as historical sources that inform our understanding of the social and economic evaluations offered by various writers.

In particular, the considerations described below are based on information gleaned from first-hand reports by traders such as Henry Francis Fynn (*The Diary of Henry Francis Fynn*, 1950) or Nathaniel Isaacs (*Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa*, 1836), missionaries like Joseph Shooter (*The Kafirs of Natal and the Zulu Country*, 1857) or A.T. Bryant (*A description of native foodstuffs and their preparation*, 1907; *The Zulu people as they were before the white man came*, 1967), as well as officials such as Harry Lugg *(Agricultural ceremonies in Natal and Zululand*, 1927) and S.O. Samuelson (*Long, long ago*, 1929). The period under discussion has a long duration, roughly a century from the arrival of Fynn and Isaacs at Port Natal to the time of observations made by Bryant and Lugg, and includes widespread geographic locations from the Mhlatuze valley in the central parts of the Zulu kingdom to as far south as the Mngeni and Mzimkhulu valleys, which perhaps makes it possible to construct certain limited general points about what has been described as the qualified subordination of women within a patriarchal economy during that era (Guy 1990: 46).

One of the most visible expressions of this “qualified subordination” was that a fairly “rigid sexual division of labour resulted and through ideological reinforcement and conditioning, via social institutions and taboos, the activities of men were accorded greater social, economic and political significance that [*sic*] [than?] the role part played by women in reproduction and subsistence production” (Beall 1981: 44-45). At least, under circumstances witnessed during the nineteenth-century, although women performed the bulk of labour in the fields of a homestead, the male homestead head allocated the tools and sites of such labour, and re-arrogated the produce that resulted, (Wright 1981: 89; Guy 1987: 24). A crucial piece of analysis

mentioned above is that cultivation of crops within domestic homesteads, largely by women, was not able to produce a surplus, given the constraints of the regional environment and climate or the tools available (Whitelaw 2015: 31). One result of this fragile subsistence agricultural economy, suggested also by Guy (1987: 24), is that it gave rise not only to gender-based divisions of labour, but an entrenched larger-scale social division based on gender as well.

Thus, while the agricultural fieldwork performed by women and children of a homestead provided the practical foundation for survival, the food produced was eaten during the course of a year and yielded no accumulation. In contrast, the pastoral world of cattle herds provided the principal form of wealth accumulation (Whitelaw 2015: 31). Owing to the fact that women were not permitted to own cattle, the basic division of tasks within the family social structure has also been interpreted as evidence of a more fundamental gulf, but not only because food grown by women was appropriated and controlled by the heads of homesteads. Guy stated further that, because the productive and reproductive capacity of women formed the economic basis of patriarchal power in African homesteads, "[i]t is here that we can locate the fundamental division in southern African pre-capitalist societies – a social cleavage so deep that it can usefully be called one of class. A dominant class can be seen as a social group which appropriates the surplus labour of another subordinate one" (1987: 24). Evidence supporting this, he maintained, could be found in a nineteenth-century convention that decreased the quantity of *ilobola* cattle promised to the wife's family if a married woman failed to make adequate contributions to the agricultural needs of her husband's homestead. Moreover, Guy argued that "the transfer of cattle between homesteads was in fact a transfer of labour power: the labour power of the wife herself in the homestead and the land attached to the homestead" (Guy 1987: 22).

These concepts were later adapted into a view of the patriarchal pre-capitalist subsistence economy described as being based on the production of people rather than things (Guy 2013: 526), in contrast with the social and economic system of industrial urban capitalism that radically transformed the lives of African people in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region during the twentieth-century. In none of his writings though, did Guy seek to offer an explanation for why such divisions occurred in the first place. Similarly, Wright starts his 1981 article "Control of Women's Labour in the

Zulu Kingdom", with a statement that, although patriarchy in the region is "well-attested in the historical and ethnographic literature, [i]ts origins lie far back in the history of Africa, and can probably never be accounted for except in very broad terms" (Wright 1981: 82). Considering almost four decades of feminist research and writing that has passed since then, it is remarkable that no significant advances have been made in explaining the ultimate cause of the general social bias against women, although it has become apparent that "since the Agricultural Revolution, most human societies have been patriarchal societies that valued men more highly than women" (Harari 2015: 152). Following the Neolithic Revolution and the spread of agriculture during the past 6000 years, settlements such as African homesteads were eventually established in the south-eastern region of the continent, and the homes and fields they contained became templates that reproduced not only families but patriarchal cultural values (Bourdieu 1977: 72), which included the "qualified subordination" of women.

The central and longstanding role of African women in subsistence agricultural production was recognised in artwork adopted as part of South Africa's democratic parliamentary regalia in 2004. Although Westminster-style legislative rituals were generally retained from the previous dispensation, the democratically elected representatives requested new ceremonial objects, in line with other national symbols adopted after 1994 (Johnson, Armitage & Spary 2014: 253). One element of this regalia is the mace, symbol of the Speaker's authority carried into the National Assembly (as the lower house of Parliament is known) by the Serjeant-at-Arms. Essentially an over-sized sceptre which also carries references to Sotho-Venda type *ngoma* drums as well as an *iwisa* or "knobkerrie", above platinum rings reminiscent of geometric Ndebele patterns and rock art figures, the new mace's drum-shaped head is inscribed with a frieze containing symbols that represent concepts of community and dialogue, among which is an African woman with a hoe (Stephens 2017: 48; Figure 2). According to the designer of the mace, the image of the woman and hoe was included during the consultative process with the then Speaker, Dr Frene Ginwala, and Deputy Speaker, Baleka Mbete, as a specific indication of the efforts by women to feed their families (Schrieber pers. comm. 2018).

The view of a field-hoe in the hands of women as a pre-eminent motif of African nation building is not universally shared, though. Commenting on the still widespread



Figure 2: Detail of South Africa's parliamentary mace, including a woman with a field-hoe on the left. (Schreiber Media: Jac De Villiers 2004)

use of such implements in rural areas, former Chair of the African Union Commission, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, stated that hoes represent a harsh regime of manual labour, as well as a failure to empower women, and these implements should be replaced in museum displays with more technologically advanced tools within the field of agriculture (Swingler 2016: 9).

In this chapter I have established a contextual background for field-hoes over the past two thousand years in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region. Largely in the hands of African women, these simple implements were used as the main method of food production, which is an under-represented aspect of social and economic history.

Although a substantial body of academic texts has acknowledged both the rigid division of labour and “qualified subordination” of women within a patriarchal social structure observed during the nineteenth-century, museum exhibitions have largely ignored these facets of life in the past. Although this will be discussed and analysed in greater depth in Chapter 5 of the dissertation, a central finding of this research is that, while all the museums in this study have adequate numbers of hoes, they are rarely exhibited in displays that explain their purpose. Instead, hoes are either presented without comment on their use, or as examples of locally metallurgy. With few exceptions, African history in museums of this region is depicted with a military focus on conquest and conflict in which the rise of the Zulu kingdom features prominently. The following two chapters will examine eight museum collections and exhibitions in KwaZulu-Natal to assess how the numbers of hoes documented might be drawn up in order to create new displays or adapt existing ones in order to reflect the social and economic role of women in a more nuanced and inclusive manner.

4

Hidden in plain sight:

Collections of locally forged hoes as evidence of contributions by women to the agricultural economy of Natal and the Zulu kingdom

The primary aim of this study is the documentation of an empirical base of the number of spears and hoes, along with associated archival materials such as accession registers and provenance records held in the archaeological and ethnological collections of eight museums in KwaZulu-Natal. While the previous chapter introduced the social, economic and historical context of field-hoes, the present chapter represents an evaluation of hoes in the eight museum collections to determine if reasons can be established for disparities in numbers of hoes compared with spears. The selected institutions represent a diverse range of public and private collections across a geographical area that includes territory of the former Zulu kingdom and Colony of Natal. While most of the hoes examined in these collections are undated, it is assumed the majority were forged during the nineteenth-century and within the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region (Moffett et al. 2017: 17). This period of manufacture roughly coincides with the sovereign authority of the Zulu kingdom (1816-1879), and the Colony of Natal (1843-1910), whereas the geographic range stretches from the northern borders of the kingdom along the Phongolo River, across the Thukela River catchment to the southern boundary of the British colony on the Mzimkhulu River [Figure 3: Map of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region]. The public collections in the survey fall under both local municipal authorities (Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Dundee), and provincial government control (KwaZulu-Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg and KwaZulu Cultural Museum, Ondini). The Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum is administered by the national government administration as an agency of the Department of Arts and Culture, and these institutions thus represent an equally diverse range of government archival jurisdictions.

The Local History Museum, Msunduzi-Voortrekker and KwaZulu-Natal Museum collections originate largely in private donations that reflect British and Afrikaner settler interests starting in the nineteenth-century. The KwaZulu Cultural Museum collections, however, originate in the establishment of the KwaZulu Government as part of apartheid-era bantustan policies. The original collections policy therefore

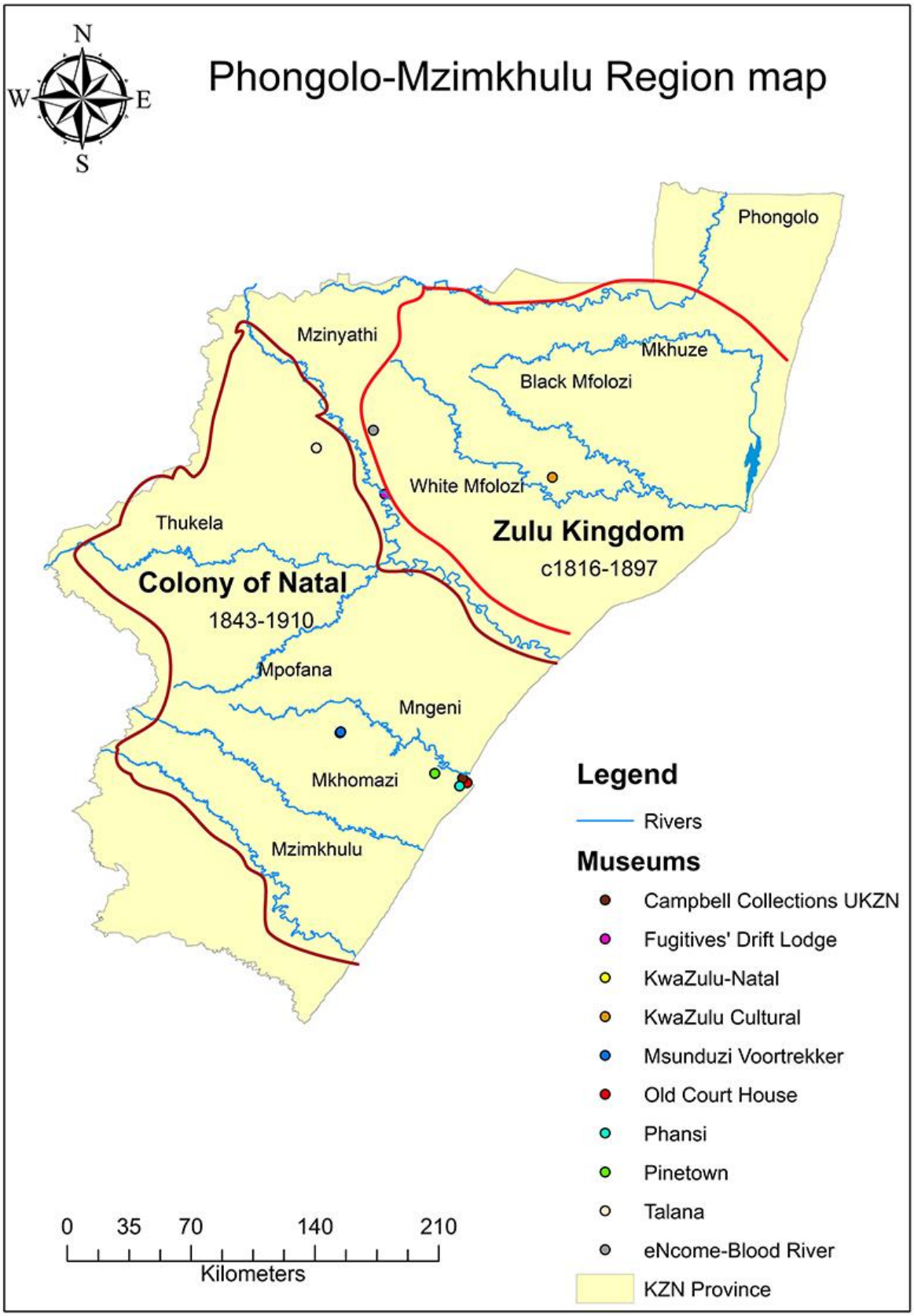


Figure 3: Map showing political entities within the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region during the nineteenth-century and locations of eight museums in the present study.

reflected the aim of preserving Zulu heritage stated from a particular ideological perspective. Archaeologists and anthropologists employed by both the KwaZulu-Natal Museum and KwaZulu Cultural Museum conducted extensive archaeological work and their respective collections thus include metallurgical artefacts that originate as part of that research process. Alongside these government institutions are three private collections that hold items from different time periods, ranging from the start of the twentieth- century (Killie Campbell Africana Library) to the second half of the twentieth-century (Phansi Museum and Fugitives' Drift Lodge).

Although the collections described in detail below do not represent a comprehensive survey of archaeological and ethnological metallurgical artefacts in KwaZulu-Natal, the museums were selected partly for their relative accessibility to conduct the necessary empirical research, but are also distributed across this area. Beyond the metallurgical items identified below, the collections and exhibitions that make up this study also include extensive other categories of artefacts unrelated to this research[1]. The collections are largely either in Durban or Pietermaritzburg, except for those in Ulundi and Dundee. I conducted empirical research by physically counting and individually photographing the total number of spears and hoes in each collection, as well as documenting any proof of provenance that might exist for each artefact. The research has thus produced an index of iron artefacts in the eight collections, which is attached as an appendix. What follows below are brief historical accounts of how each museum came into existence, to provide the basic context of sites in which the various metallurgical collections are held, along with a synopsis of locally forged hoes held by the different museums.

Durban Local History Museums

The Durban Local History Museums currently consist of seven sites, namely the Old Court House Museum, Old House Museum, KwaMuhle Museum, Port Natal Maritime Museum, Bergtheil Museum, Pinetown Museum and Cato Manor Heritage Centre. The archives and artefact collection are stored at the Old Court House Museum (S 29°51′30.09″, E 31°1'38.91″). These institutions collectively trace their origins to the foundation of the Durban Museum, which was opened on 23 July 1887

[1] During the course of research the private collection of Sihle Bobby Radebe was identified. This set of more than seventy hoes represents one of the largest assemblies of such artefacts in either official or private collections and warrants further investigation and documentation. (See Appendix 1: 137; 142; 146).

(Quickelberge 1987: 20). While it was established primarily as a scientific institution, the collection included ethnological artefacts, which were displayed alongside natural history specimens until nearly the end of the twentieth century (Wright & Mazel 1991: 63). A newspaper report of the official opening described locally forged spears and carved wooden objects presented adjacent to taxidermies of antelope heads, evoking a mutual status as trophies. The article noted with pride, that the "late King Cetywayo's[2] [*sic*] original amass[3] [*sic*] pots and meat dishes, presented by John Dunn" were exhibited on top of a display case (*Natal Mercury*: 26 July 1887).

Housed in the Town Hall for thirty-two years from 1887 until 1909, the ethnological collection was relocated when Durban Museum was moved into the newly completed City Hall building. The accession register for ethnological artefacts was started in 1910, and included all items donated until then (Wood 1996: 7). Over the next decade, as Durban approached its centenary, a large number of artefacts "relating to local history" were added to the museum collection by descendants of early white settler families (Dlamuka 2003a: 3). These included militaria relating to the region, particularly the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 (Dlamuka 2003a: 3), and presumably incorporated a large number of the spears now held in the collection. Due to over-crowding of displays, and ethnological objects scattered at random throughout the collection, in 1920 a curator's office was converted into a dedicated historical exhibition known as the Old Durban Room (Quickelberge 1987: 97). At this time, however, all ethnological artefacts in the collection were exhibited in this space, regardless of provenance, and none was kept in storage.

Ultimately the limited space in the Durban Room also became inadequate for the museum's collection of ethnological artefacts, and an entirely new site dedicated to colonial settler history was created in 1954, when the Old House Museum was opened at 1 Diakonia Avenue (formerly St Andrews Street). Only artefacts specifically related to settler history were moved to the Old House Museum, however, and the remaining African artefacts were left as part of the Natural History displays in the City Hall until the original Durban Museum was refurbished in early 1987, when it became the Natural Science Museum (Quickelberge 1987: 99). Only at that point in 1987 were the ethnological artefacts of African origin transferred to

[2] A contemporary transliteration of the king's name, which is now spelled Cetshwayo.
[3] Meaning *amasi*, or curdled milk.

the storage space in the Local History Museum, which was located in the restored Victorian-era court-house building and had been opened more than 20 years before on 24 June 1966 (Strutt 1975: 234-237).

In 2016 the ethnological collection of the Durban Local History Museums was still kept in the same location, now known as the Old Court House Museum. The museum's holdings comprise approximately 500 000 ethnological, archaeological and historico-cultural artefacts from the southern African region. Parts of the collections that relate directly to certain regional topics are extensive, such as the photographic archive and Durban newspaper cuttings, and are considered key to historical scholarship on the city and its inhabitants. The Local History Museum's ethnological collections housed at the Old Court House Museum are used for both research and exhibitions. Roughly 10 000 examples of material culture represent the artistic and craft work of nineteenth- and twentieth-century communities in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, and include ceramics, basketry, wood carving and metallurgical artefacts in Store Six of the archive.

Metallurgical artefacts in this collection comprise a large number of locally forged weapons and tools, as well as weapons from other parts of Africa. The locally forged weapons are made up of forty spears with wooden hafts attached, including three barbed spears, and eight separate iron spear blades without hafts, of which two are barbed. Among these weapons are two spears from the royal homestead of King Dingane kaSenzangakhona at Mgungundlovu (accession numbers NN 95.1521.1; NN 95.1521.2), which were brought to Durban by Rev Francis Owen and donated to the museum in 1939 (Roodt 1996: 101). In addition to the forty-eight spears and blades, other metallurgical objects of local origin include ten war axes (*izizenze*), one of which was brought from Mgungundlovu by Rev Owen; three adzes (*izimbazo*); a locally forged double-edged sword blade; a "tree felling axe", and a rare example of a blacksmith's hammer.

In contrast with the forty-eight locally forged spears and many other iron weapons or tools associated with the work of men, the Local History Museums collection includes six hoes, among which are four locally forged *amageja*. Three of these hoes were uncovered underground, although not from formally recognised archaeological sites, and all three show extensive rust damage. Conservation efforts, in the form of

varnish, were applied to the example with the least rust (NN 89.146) while the other two (NN 89.144; NN 89.1348) were left in the condition of their discovery. These two rusted hoes were found just more than 10km apart on the north coast of KwaZulu-Natal, one ploughed out of a sugar cane field on the Hulett farm ‘Redwoods’ in 1969 (NN 89.144), and the other picked up on Tinley Manor beach (NN 89.1348), presented to the museum by J.H. Charter.



Figure 4: Two hoes from Durban Local History Museums collection accessioned NN 89.147, dimensions of hoe on the left are L 440mm, W 170mm; on the right L 395mm, W 195mm. (S. Kotze personal photographs 2016)

The Local History Museums collection contains three intact *amageja*, among which is an example from Dargle in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands, showing signs of use on the lip of blade (NN 89.144). This hoe shares an accession number with the rusted example described above, and was donated by E.N. Griffin. The remaining two hoes are a pair of exceptional, unused *amageja* that demonstrate the considerable skill of

the blacksmith who forged them. These artefacts share an accession number (NN 89.147; Figure 4) and resemble each other very closely, made in a striking leaf-shaped pattern with a clear ridge running from the tang along the entire length of the blade, and this obvious likeness suggests simultaneous manufacture in the same forge.[4] The only difference between these two hoes is a slight variation in proportions, with one being a little shorter and wider than the other. The two hoes are useful examples of agricultural implements in their original state, before use, as well as representing the high levels of skill, craft and aesthetic considerations sometimes employed in the production of utilitarian tools. These are possibly rare Type 7-style hoes (Moffett 2017: 7), which originate from the region of the Limpopo River, as they do not conform to the typical pattern of locally forged blades.

Msunduzi Museum, Pietermaritzburg

The Msunduzi Museum, incorporating the Voortrekker Complex, in Langalibalele Street (formerly Longmarket Street), Pietermaritzburg (S 29°35'58.1", E 30°23'1.1"), is closely linked to the historical significance of the adjacent Church of the Vow, as well as the battle of Blood River-eNcome further afield, 30km east of Dundee. The museum was first established in a small church originally built to honour a religious vow made by the *Voortrekkers* before the 1838 clash on the banks of the Ncome River, between forces led by Andries Pretorius and Zulu *amabutho* commanded by Ndlela kaSompisi. During much of its history, the site of this museum, and its close links to state-sponsored Afrikaner nationalist history of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, resulted in a narrow acquisitions policy with respect to artefacts. Despite subsequent efforts to adapt the limited focus and exhibition content of the museum after the democratic transition began in South Africa (Guest 2012: 144-145), metallurgical artefacts of African origin largely reflect the earliest history of the institution.

More than other museums in KwaZulu-Natal, prior to 1995, the Voortrekker Museum promoted and justified the history of territorial expansion by Afrikaans-speaking farmers during the nineteenth-century. While the museum was not first created with this particularly narrow historical perspective, during the second half of the twentieth-

[4] The marked similarities in style include that the patina and overall shape of both blades, as well as the respective tangs, are comparable while the central ridges on the hammered upper surfaces share the same profile.

century it reflected a view of the past prevalent among Afrikaner nationalist ideologues (Dubin 2006: 179). As Norman Etherington has argued, though, the passage of frontier farmers from the Eastern Cape beyond the Gariep River was by no means the only large-scale migration that occurred at that time, neither was it the largest (Etherington 2001: 243-272). But the bloody engagement at eNcome on 16 December 1838 became central to Afrikaner nationalist claims of hegemony over the land and lives of black South Africans. Integral to mythology surrounding the battle was a collective religious oath proposed by Sarel Cilliers, and made by the *trekkers* prior to Blood River, to commemorate the anticipated victory annually in prayer, as well as the construction of a church as a permanent memorial of this promise (Giliomee 2003: 165, 234).

Situated on the northern edge of Pietermaritzburg's market square, construction of the Church of the Vow was completed in April 1840 in fulfilment of that undertaking (Guest 2012: 20). This simple structure was later replaced by a more elaborate church, with a spire, in 1861, after which the original building was occupied for a variety of purposes until a committee established to create the Voortrekker Museum in 1908 raised funds for its purchase (Guest 2012: 27). In contrast with the Natal Museum, founded five years earlier with an emphasis on natural history collections, the Voortrekker Museum was intended to preserve the artefacts and cultural heritage of white colonial-era Natal (Voortrekker Museum Archive 1912). After the old church was bought in early 1910, and then restored, the committee appealed for donations of artefacts, and the Voortrekker Museum was opened on 16 December 1912 (Guest 2012: 34).

Significant numbers of African artefacts, including items purportedly from the Zulu royal household, became part of the Voortrekker Museum collections (Guest 2012: 42). The source of these acquisitions, in many cases as plunder of war, emphasized a narrative of military conquest over local African political groups above the intrinsic value of any of the artefacts held. By the mid-1930s, a rise in Afrikaner nationalism occurred after the "purified" National Party established itself in 1935 (Davenport 1991: 292; Giliomee 2003: 352), and became associated with the centenary festivities, or "*Eufees*", of "The Great Trek". In 1936 the government formally took ownership of the Voortrekker Museum, and on 27 April 1937 the Church of the Vow was proclaimed as a national monument (Guest 2012: 52). From this time forward

the museum acquisition policy also concentrated more directly on *trekker*-related artefacts (Voortrekker Museum Archive 1944), although King Dingane kaSenzangakhona's *isicamelo* (headrest) was received as a donation in 1953 (Voortrekker Museum Archive 1954), again indicating that personal effects of the defeated monarch were sought after. A similar interest was reflected when new exhibition displays were commissioned in 1959, and King Dingane was the topic of a diorama (Guest 2012: 65).

Following the 50th anniversary of the Voortrekker Museum in 1962, which coincided with more strident Afrikaner nationalism after South Africa was declared a republic the previous year, the government grant received by the museum was enlarged substantially (Guest 2012: 79). For the next three decades the museum increased its focus on *trek*-related Afrikaner history (Pols 1983), in particular surrounding the 150th anniversary celebrations, in which the Church of the Vow featured heavily in the media (Anonymous 1988: 1). The end of apartheid followed shortly thereafter, and a new era of the Voortrekker Museum began in the mid-1990s. By that stage the buildings occupied by the museum had been augmented extensively over the years, taking the form of a complex that included the former Longmarket Girls' School. Additional satellite sites were also added over the years, including the western bank of the battle site at Blood River-eNcome, and attempts were made to reorganise the approach taken at the Voortrekker Museum to include a broader view of South African culture, which was termed "Multi-Cultural Transformation" (Dubin 2006: 179-180).

As part of this process the Voortrekker Museum was renamed, and a series of new exhibitions on the history of Pietermaritzburg was installed between 2006 and 2012 (Guest 2012: 179). Largely as a result of the historical and cultural context that gave rise to the Msunduzi Museum and its satellites, this institution, among those that form part of the present survey, has one of the smallest collections of locally produced metallurgical artefacts. Including items held and exhibited at both the Pietermaritzburg and eNcome sites of the Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum, there are six examples of locally forged field-hoes compared with twelve spears (*imikhonto*) and one war-axe (*isizenze*). Four of the hoes are part of museum displays, two in Pietermaritzburg (52.1910; 51. 1912) and the other two at eNcome-Blood River Museum (both have the same accession number: 055 131/055/4629).

While no further accession information is available concerning the two hoes at eNcome battlefield, the two artefacts exhibited in Pietermaritzburg are among the earliest donations to the Voortrekker Museum. In 1910 Mr F.F. Tredoux of Pietermaritzburg provided a large hoe of 403mm in length, with a damaged lip, which is now part of the permanent exhibition in the Church of the Vow (52. 1910). Two years later Mr W.J.J. Botes, also of Pietermaritzburg, offered a slightly smaller example of 292mm in length (52. 1912), which is currently part of a display entitled *A River Runs Through It* on the history of Pietermaritzburg in the old school building. Finally, the remaining two hoes (DSS/129; DSS 227) are held in the collections storage facility of the museum, housed in the 'Pastorie' building, but no further information is available on these two items in the accession register either.



Figure 5: Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum hoe 51.1912, showing accession number. Dimensions are L 292mm, W 138mm. (S. Kotze personal photograph 2017)



Figure 6: "Iron Age" display case in *A River Runs Through It* exhibition, Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum, showing hoe 51.1912. (S. Kotze personal photograph 2017)

Talana Museum, Dundee

Spread across a large heritage precinct on the periphery of Dundee in northern KwaZulu-Natal, Talana Museum (S 28°9'22.0", E 30°15'36.4") partly occupies the site of an early engagement of the South African War, the battle of Talana fought on 20 October 1899. The origins of the museum are, however, more closely linked with centenary commemorations of the British invasion of the Zulu kingdom in 1879. Local interest in military history therefore led the Dundee District Museum and Historical Society to begin preparations for the centenary of the conflict in 1977 (Anonymous 1977a).

At this time, the local Member of Parliament, Dr Louw Steenkamp, proposed a temporary display of historic artefacts in order to raise awareness of history in Dundee District, as well as to assess the viability of a permanent museum in the town (Anonymous 1977b). Exhibited at the Endumeni / Isandlwana M.O.T.H. Memorial Hall from 3 March 1977, the display included militaria from the M.O.T.H. Shellhole members as well as private collections, memorabilia loaned from the Mines Department and domestic artefacts reflecting the family life of settlers from both the white and Indian communities (Leveridge 2016). Based on public support for this initiative, and backing from the Natal Provincial Museum Advisory Board, a decision was made to create a local history museum in Dundee (Anonymous 1979a).

Over the course of two years a permanent museum collection was formed created by appeals to the public for donations, a process supervised by Sheila Henderson who was appointed to take over following Dr Steenkamp's death (Leveridge 2016). Housed in two classrooms of the former Junior School, the opening of Dundee Museum on 24 May 1979 was attended by more than four hundred people. The two principal exhibits related to the 1879 conflict between British imperial forces and the Zulu kingdom, and the cultural heritage of Zulu people (Anonymous 1979b). Despite an absence of documentary evidence on the precise content of the displays, it is noteworthy that these included a portrayal of African life in a region that historically fell between the boundary of the Zulu and neighbouring kingdoms. This suggests that an interest in colonial warfare is the primary historical context of the very earliest Dundee exhibition referencing local African domestic artefacts.

Shortly after the museum opened, a donation of geological samples, mining memorabilia and related items, as well as some African artefacts was made by Dennis Harland Bowden, the Inspector of Mines based in Dundee, on behalf of the Mines Department (Leveridge 2016). These objects were never included in any displays at Dundee Museum, as its location in the school proved a short-lived phase in the history of the institution. Within a year of its opening, a civilian reserve unit of the South African Defence Force requisitioned the former Junior School premises, forcing the museum to relocate (Leveridge 2016). Various new sites were considered, before Talana Hill was selected as an appropriate permanent home for Dundee Museum (McFadden 1986).

Following two years of fund-raising and renovations to the original home of Peter Smith, a Scottish-born settler whose farm “Dundee” became the site on which the town was located (Henderson 1982: 16), the cottage opened as a museum on 22 May 1982, as part of Dundee’s centenary (Anonymous 1982). Shortly thereafter, the formerly derelict property was declared a National Monument, while a previous pledge by the Chamber of Mines of R80 000 towards the construction of a new building to house intended exhibitions on mining and industry, as well as the museum administration, assured plans for expansion (McFadden 1986). Pam McFadden was appointed as curator of the museum in January 1983, and together a small staff was tasked with completing the restoration of all historic structures in the precinct, construction of a new building and the creation of all exhibits across the site (McFadden pers. comm. 2016).

Within a few months the remaining museum items were removed from the former Junior School and in July 1983 the sprawling eight-hectare site was renamed Talana Museum (Anonymous 1983). After refurbishing Smith Cottage, the museum’s next accomplishment was the opening of Talana House on 20 October 1984 (Leveridge 2016). Originally a farm dwelling on the site, it was dedicated to both displays of African artefacts and the numerous colonial-era conflicts which occurred in the vicinity of Dundee, again associating an ahistorical view of indigenous cultural objects with wars of conquest. The untitled display of domestic utensils associated with an African homestead are an example of this approach in Talana House. Arranged inside a thatched wall representing an interior view of an *iqhugwane* (bee-hive hut), a large number of articles used in the daily life and rituals of local communities during the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries are displayed, but not clearly identified. The impression created, Wright and Mazel (1987: 306) have argued (1987: 306), is that African social history was largely the backdrop of colonial conquest.

The Talana Museum collection of locally forged field-hoes consists of twelve examples, all formerly part of the Mines Department artefact collection, which were donated on two separate occasions when the museum was first being established. The hoes thus form part of an interest in the history of mining in northern KwaZulu-Natal, set within the context of indigenous mining and metallurgy. Two of the *amageja* (04/121 and 04/122) were presented in July 1979 and appear to have been

part of displays in the original Dundee Museum “Zulu Room”, having, in addition, fairly extensive and detailed information on the dimensions, origins and use of the items recorded in the accession register. Nine of the remaining *amageja* were received in February 1983 when the institution was in the process of moving to the new site on Talana Hill. Accession information for these hoes (04/1843-1 to 04/1843-9) is limited to the same single line, identical for all the objects, mainly indicating that the hoes were all intended for display in Talana House. While a few of the artefacts show significant signs of wear on the blades from use, or are cracked, three examples are very finely forged, evidently unused, *amageja* with extremely thin round or oval blades. It is likely that four of the hoes in this collection are either examples of imported tools or made by local commercial blacksmiths and sold as trade goods, and largely conform to Type 2 Imported hoes (Moffett 2017: 7). As a result these have not been included among the number of locally forged examples in the Talana Museum collection.



Figure 7: 04/1843-4; L 457mm, W 210mm (S. Kotze personal photograph 2016)



Figure 8: Detail of tang 04/1843-4 (S. Kotze personal photograph 2016)

One of these is an exceptionally fine example; not only does it have a blade uniformly beaten to a thickness of three millimetres across its 210mm circumference, but also includes a small ornate piece of decoration added to the ridge extending into the blade from the hoe tang (04/1843-4). The painstaking craft employed in the manufacture of this implement belies the prosaic nature of its function, demonstrating how individual blacksmiths used a wide variety of methods and designs in their work.

KwaZulu-Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg

The KwaZulu-Natal Museum in Jabu Ndlovu Street (formerly Loop Street), Pietermaritzburg (S 29°36’15.9”, E 30°22’49.5”), is the oldest institution of its kind in

the province due to its position as successor of the Natal Society Museum (Brooks 1988: 64). Originally established in May 1851 to promote emigration to the recently established colony, the Natal Society soon took over responsibility for the small public library in Pietermaritzburg (Judd 1972: 30). As early as September 1851 the Natal Society council appointed a committee responsible for founding a museum (Brooks 1988: 59), although it would take more than two decades before the first makeshift exhibition was assembled, and even longer for the greater ambitions of the society to be realised in the form of a government-funded public museum.

In spite of the museum committee being appointed in 1851, the first serious endeavour to collect specimens of any kind in the Colony of Natal was prompted by an opportunity to display "suitable material" at the Paris Exhibition of 1855 (Natal Society Archives 1854). While participation in that event was ultimately impractical, a government subsidy of £50 had been provided to the Natal Society for this purpose, and ultimately used for a small temporary display of natural history in the library (Natal Society Archives 1857). Only when the Natal Society formed a new Museum Department in 1879 were sufficient funds finally raised to purchase display cases, and donations of material were requested from the public in order to mount an exhibition in the Committee Room of the society (Brooks 1988: 63). While most of the public donations to the collections at this time were examples of natural history, contributions of ethnological artefacts and items relating to local history were also documented. Among donations listed in 1879 and 1880, Mr Buntin presented an assortment of "Native Assegais and Picks", of which the latter category may have been field-hoes, while the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Henry Bulwer, offered "A Wheelbarrow and Spade" used at the official opening of the first government railway line (Natal Society Archives 1880). The amateur efforts of Natal Society members were hampered by their lack of expertise, however, and no further attempts were made to expand the museum, although public donations to the collections grew steadily, entirely filling the Committee Room by 1885 when additional space was hired in order to exhibit more material (Brooks 1988: 64).

The conversion of the Natal Society Museum into a government institution finally gained momentum in 1893 when a site behind the library was selected for a dedicated building for the collection. The Secretary of the Museum Committee, Morton Green, supervised construction while serving in the post of "Acting Honorary

Curator" as well (Natal Society Archives 1893). In March 1896, F.W. FitzSimons was appointed curator and undertook the development of displays that drew large numbers of visitors. As a result of the evident public demand for a museum, and the inadequate state of the existing Natal Society facilities, a process was finally initiated whereby the colonial government took over responsibility for the collection in 1901 (Brooks 2005: 8) while a new museum building was constructed at 237 Loop Street, legislation to regulate the organisation was passed in the form of the Natal Museum Act No. 11 of 1903.

Dr Ernest Warren, the zoologist appointed as director of the new museum, arrived in Pietermaritzburg in 1903 (Brooks 2005: 1). He spent thirty-one years in this post, and focused his energies mainly on the natural history collections of the museum, even discarding artefacts pertaining to local history, such as Bulwer's wheelbarrow and spade (*Natal Witness*: 6 December 1904). In early twentieth-century ,classificatory systems though, African ethnological artefacts were generally considered part of natural history and Warren made arrangements to procure further "Native objects" for the museum during his 1903 expedition to Zululand (Warren 1906: 14). Warren's principal source of ethnological artefacts was, in fact, the same as his main source of natural history specimens, Charles Saunders, the chief magistrate of Zululand and Native Lands Delimitation Commissioner (Brooks 2005: 16). As Shirley Brooks has argued, while Warren articulated serious misgivings about the devastating socio-cultural impact of colonial intervention on the lives of African people, his ability to use Saunders' staff and the authority of his office "to obtain such items at local prices for the museum" was a direct consequence of the British conquest of the Zulu kingdom (Brooks 2005: 18).

It is also notable that there were no hoes among the ethnological "specimens of native workmanship" Warren sought to preserve in the face of what he regarded as modernity's onslaught at the turn of the previous century (Warren 1906: 14). While significant numbers of other craft forms such as wood-carving, ceramics and basketry were added to the KwaZulu-Natal Museum ethnological collection during the course of the twentieth-century, the only locally forged metallurgical artefacts acquired were weapons such as spears and war-axes. It appears that Warren considered field-hoes as merely functional objects and thus less culturally significant, a category: Bulwer's wheelbarrow and spade would then also have been relegated

to this category. Apart from a single *igeja* in the ethnological collection, all other examples are from hoards uncovered by archaeologists since 1975 (Maggs 1991: 136). The introduction of hoes to the KwaZulu-Natal Museum collection therefore dates to the period following Tim Maggs's appointment in the first permanent archaeological post in January 1972 (Maggs 1993: 72). This collection currently contains a total of thirty-four locally forged hoes, including hoe fragments and tangs, the largest number of locally forged hoes in all the museums considered in this survey. There are also an additional eighteen tanged hoes from outside the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, and therefore not included in the total number for this collection, relevant for my study. The number of hoes is however still relatively small when considered alongside the spears, of which the KwaZulu-Natal Museum archaeological and ethnological collections hold ninety-two exemplars, including both hafted spears and spear blades, as well as seven *izizenze* and eight swords.

There is considerable variation among the thirty-four *amageja*, from seemingly unused hoes made in at least three discernible patterns, to worn out fragments in which only the thickest parts of the hoe remains. Four mainly intact hoes recovered from an archaeological site at the Somta factory in 1975 represent good examples of a style of hoe with narrower, oval-shaped blades, which also have heavier tangs up to 17mm thick (Cat. No. 75/62) and are considered typical of this region. By comparison, a hoe discovered in the Greytown area in 1980 also shows little wear on a diamond-shaped Type 6 blade (Moffett 2017: 4), formed from a relatively thin piece of iron almost uniformly 5mm thick (Cat. No. 80/36) and originally from the northeastern Lowveld region (Moffett 2017: 6). While most of the KwaZulu-Natal Museum hoes are either fragments and difficult to determine in relation to the original type, or match up with the type associated with this region (Moffett et al. 2017: 5), two examples are noteworthy. The first, thought to come from the Colenso area (Cat. No. 80/37; Figure 9), was made with a sharp and narrow tapering tang, which is square at the join with the blade. In turn, the blade is among the widest in this collection (189mm), formed from very thin metal in the profile of a tear-drop. The blade lip of this hoe has a distinct flatness, at right angles to the flat surfaces, indicating it was most likely never used as an agricultural tool. Finally, the KwaZulu-Natal Museum also contains a well-preserved example of a round-bladed hoe used as a trade item in the nineteenth-century (Moffett et al. 2017: 7-8). Although the



Figure 9: Cat. No. 80/37-3 KwaZulu-Natal Museum; L 455mm, W 189mm. A Type 4 locally forged hoe (Moffett 2017: 4). (S. Kotze personal photograph 2016)



Figure 10: Cat. No. 82/43 KwaZulu-Natal Museum; L 429mm, W 231mm. A Type 2 Imported hoe (Moffett 2017: 7). (S. Kotze personal photograph 2016)

precise origin of this *igeja* is unknown, it was accessioned in 1982 and is 429mm long with a blade 231mm wide (Cat. No. 82/43; Figure 10). Both the blade and tang were carefully made; the blade is perfectly round and has an even thickness of 5mm all over, except where it thickens to meet the tang, which is a square-sided spike that ends with an unusual pyramid point at the tip.

KwaZulu Cultural Museum, Ulundi

Physical proximity to administrative centres of both pre-conquest royal authority and the apartheid bantustan of KwaZulu, as well as other powerfully evocative historic sites nearby, undoubtedly influenced the development and evolution of content in the KwaZulu Cultural Museum at Ulundi (S 28°19'12.8", E 31°27'33.3"). Situated adjacent to the remains of King Cetshwayo kaMpande's *ikhanda* (royal residence) of Ondini, and within a few kilometres of battle sites that altered the course of history in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, the museum was officially opened on 13 April 1985 by Mangosutho Buthelezi. The initial desire to create this museum reflected a narrow, ethnically Zulu nationalist perspective of history, and was integral to the wider political and ideological programme Buthelezi promoted as Chief Minister of the homeland and head of the ethnically oriented Inkatha Freedom Party. The origins of the KwaZulu Cultural Museum and its collections should therefore be considered in view of this ideological approach to history undertaken by Buthelezi (Dlamini 2001: 40-50).

When the Zululand Territorial Authority was constituted in June 1970, Buthelezi was installed as chief executive officer (Karis & Gerhart 2013: 260). In June 1975 Buthelezi launched Inkatha yeNkululeko yeSizwe (Organisation of National Freedom) as a "national cultural liberation movement", which increased his political profile further and indicated his aspirations for a larger national constituency (Karis and Gerhart 2013: 269). A new and distinct phase of Buthelezi's ideological approach to cultural heritage emerged after KwaZulu became a self-governing territory on 1 February 1977, although not an independent homeland equivalent to Transkei, Ciskei, Bophuthatswana or Venda. Provisions within the 1971 Bantu Homelands Constitution Act allowed the newly created chief minister of KwaZulu and his cabinet wide discretionary powers (Thorrington-Smith et al. 1978: 7). Among the areas of control ceded to Buthelezi at this point were national monuments and heritage sites. The approach taken by KwaZulu with respect to this subject has been the topic of several detailed studies (Wright and Mazel 1987, Forsyth 1989, Golan 1991, Wright and Mazel 1991, Harries 1993, Mazel and Ritchie 1994, Dlamini 2001, Dlamini 2002).

This field of research has documented how Buthelezi engaged with, and became preoccupied by, an extremely narrow, ethnically inspired history of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region:

> He views history as a tool for understanding the present and peppers his speeches with "I have learnt from history," "as an historian…" and "we must learn the lessons of history." In his speeches, history takes on a life and dynamism of its own as it "demands," "lends," "decrees," "forges," "infuses," "shapes," "creates," "screams," "shows," "makes," and, particularly, "teaches." Buthelezi draws numerous parallels between past and present events (Harries 1993: 114).

Buthelezi came to believe that a "cultural rebirth" was necessary in KwaZulu, focusing energy and resources on the site of Ondini. Already a national monument, one of the few royal sites recognised as such since the 1940s (Buthelezi 1986: 176), Ondini was a singular location (KwaZulu Monuments Council n.d.) for the manifestation of Buthelezi's selective, idealised and romantic view of the past. From an ethnic nationalist perspective, in which history is a means of cultural liberation (Harries 1993: 115), the symbolic importance of both the Zulu victory at Isandlwana and the destruction of Ondini by British forces after the battle of Ulundi were crucial examples of heroic Zulu warrior prowess and callous imperialism respectively.

Work at Ondini was formally initiated on 13 July 1981 when an archaeological dig began (Dlamini 2001: 41), and a month later the KwaZulu Cabinet decided that 1983 would be observed as "King Cetshwayo Year", culminating in the centenary of his death on 8 February 1984 (Anonymous 1981). As part of tributes planned during that year, the partially reconstructed *isigodlo* (private quarters) of the Ondini royal residence was opened and the foundation stone of the KwaZulu Cultural Museum was laid on 20 August 1983 (Buthelezi 1983). The completed museum was opened less than two years later on 13 April 1985 (Dlamini 2001: 51). The first exhibition installed for the opening of the museum comprised archaeological material from sites within KwaZulu and artefacts representing the material culture of nineteenth-century Zulu royalty and their associates (Mazel and Ritchie 1994: 230). Wright and Mazel have interrogated the problematic nature of these "static ethnological displays" that made no attempt to explain the complex and contested history of the region (Wright and Mazel 1987; Wright and Mazel 1991). Instead, "the ideological functions of the displays are clear. They operate firstly to assert the legitimacy of KwaZulu as a

political entity, and secondly to assert the legitimacy of the present KwaZulu leadership" (Wright and Mazel 1991: 67).

The KwaZulu Cultural Museum presently has close to 100 metallurgical artefacts of locally forged iron in its collection, distributed over four sites, namely Ondini, Isandlwana, Rorke's Drift and the King Shaka Memorial at KwaDukuza. The vast majority of these metallurgical items are edged weapons, with spears accounting for 86% of the collection. Only ten are field-hoes, all of which are held at the Ondini Complex, either as part of exhibitions in the KwaZulu Cultural Museum or in the metallurgical artefact store. There are no accession records for the six *amageja* on display in various exhibitions of the museum, which will be discussed in the following chapter of this thesis, but the four field-hoes held in the museum's metallurgical store were all acquired over a relatively short period between 1991 and 1994. Very little information is recorded for two of these *amageja* (C3326 and C3480), while a third is listed as having two possible origins, either from Ondini or Mgungundlovu, and was donated by A. Harris of Melmoth (C3858).



Figure 11: C3234 KwaZulu Cultural Museum, once owned by Princess Nokwenda kaMpande; dimensions are L 308mm, W 137mm. (S. Kotze personal photograph 2016)

It is notable that only three women are positively identified as the owners of specific hoes among one hundred and ten items included in the present survey. The first of these can be found among the hoes of the KwaZulu Cultural Museum (C3234; Figure 11), and has the remarkable provenance of being the personal possession of a royal princess, namely Nokwenda kaMpande. The princess was also closely

related to notable members of the Zulu royal household, as her mother was Queen Monase kaMntungwa of the Nxumalo and her brother Mbuyazi who engaged in a ferocious civil war during 1856, over the issue of who would succeed King Mpande kaSenzangakhona. According to the accession material, the *igeja* was made between 1840 and 1850 and formed part of the princess's wedding gifts from the residents of KwaNodwengu, the king's primary royal residence, which was also the home of Nokwenda. After her marriage to a man identified as Mtshe Sibiya, Princess Nokwenda moved to Ngoye near Louwsburg. Although the field-hoe does show some signs of wear, indicating that it was used in agricultural production, there is no way of knowing if Nokwenda kaMpande cultivated crops with it herself. What is of interest, though, is that this example illustrates that *amageja* represented an essential part of a married woman's personal effects, and that even a high-ranking member of the royal family received a field-hoe as part of her public wedding gifts. At some point the object passed into the custody of Mr Sibiya of Ndlangubo near Eshowe, who sold it to the KwaZulu Cultural Museum in September 1993 for an unspecified amount. The artefact was later included in the exhibition entitled *Amagugu kaZulu / Zulu Treasures*, and appears in the catalogue (Roodt 1996: 106), where Mr Sibiya is identified as the son of Nokwenda kaMpande.

Fugitives' Drift Lodge, Rorke's Drift

An important private collection of locally forged metallurgical artefacts is kept at Fugitives' Drift Lodge (S 28°23'26.6", E 30°36'31.4"), situated on a ledge of a steep valley overlooking the Mzinyathi River close to the battlefields of Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift. Practically the entire collection of *imikhonto*, *amageja* and *izizenze* are mounted as a display in the dining room of the Lodge, effectively an informal exhibition of objects owned by the family of the late David Rattray and his wife Nicky Rattray. The origin of this collection, and its arrangement in the dining room, cannot be separated from events surrounding the British campaign to invade the Zulu kingdom during 1879, and storied accounts of two battles fought in close proximity to the where Fugitives' Drift Lodge is located.

In a seminal article, Guy (1998) examined the process by which these two battles, which defined a disastrous imperial misadventure, were selected from among

numerous other battles and expressions of conflict, and translated into key pieces of a battlefield tourism market. In his view, this is due to

> the perception that these scenes of past slaughter have the potential to make money: to sell books, to attract visitors, overseas visitors in particular, and create financial opportunities for those well placed in the tourist industry and its adjuncts (Guy 1998: 165).

Battlefield tour explanations are largely devoid of details concerning the immense destruction of personal property and looting inflicted on civilian Zulu homesteads in retribution for acts of concerted resistance at Isandlwana and elsewhere. According to Guy, the absence of historical context in guided tours, or details of the consequences that followed conquest, renders these endeavours banal. Furthermore, an outcome of that conflict is the military-oriented perspective of Zulu history that persists in popular culture, both in South Africa and Britain.

Battlefield tourism in northern KwaZulu-Natal evolved largely over the past thirty years, and its origins stem partly from a renaissance of local academic and popular interest in the various conflicts associated with the region following the 1979 centenary of the British invasion of Zululand. While limited accommodation and a few battlefield guides were available in the Dundee-Ladysmith area before that date, and the sites attracted both individual visitors and school tour groups, it was only in the late 1980s that a small number of establishments came into being with an exclusive focus on the “Zulu War”. Among these was Fugitives’ Drift Lodge, which was started by David and Nicky Rattray in 1989. The Rattray family connection with the area goes back much further, to the early 1960s though, when David’s parents Peter and Gillian Rattray bought the farm West Kirby, on which the Lodge is built (Rattray 2007: 11).

Although the Rattray family lived in Johannesburg, where Peter practiced law as a patent attorney, the purchase of West Kirby as a holiday home was influenced both by his interest in local military history as well as his friendship with George Bunting, who farmed on a neighbouring property. In David Rattray’s recordings of his battlefield narrative, “The Day of the Dead Moon” (Rattray 1997), he recounts memories of holidays at West Kirby and frequent visits to Isandlwana and Rorke’s Drift in the company of Bunting, who was an accomplished folk-historian and storyteller. Rattray did not pursue his interest in the history of the Zulu kingdom

academically though, and studied zoology instead, graduating with a B.Sc. Honours degree in entomology at the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg (Rattray 1982). Following their marriage in 1983, David and Nicky (née Twigg) worked at Mala Mala in the Sabie Sands Reserve, where they gained invaluable experience in the hospitality industry. The Rattrays moved to Fugitives' Drift in 1989, set up accommodation in the family holiday home and offered guided battlefield tours.

The success of Fugitives' Drift Lodge, attested by several industry awards, as well as the expansion of the business from its modest start, is attributed to David Rattray's widely documented skills as an orator (Stossel 2015: 151; Hilton-Barber 2001: 113), along with the organisational skills and business acumen of Nicky Rattray (Rattray 2007: 14). Equally important in this respect is the location and layout of the Lodge, which has a view of Isandlwana mountain framed by riverside cliffs and African bush, while the interior décor of the rooms, and especially the dining room, evokes the late nineteenth-century period of the conflict. Original artworks, framed copies of *The Illustrated London News* and sepia-tinted reproductions of photographs taken in 1879 constitute a military-antiquarian atmosphere, an essential element of the guest experience at Fugitives' Drift Lodge. A large number of weapons including Martini-Henry rifles, *imikhonto* and *izizenze*, representing both British and local African manufacture, are among the items displayed.

Most of the seventy spears and war-axes in this collection hang without labels or, display texts or accession numbers between artworks on the walls, and include noteworthy items such as a finely made nineteenth-century stabbing-spear (*iklwa*) once reputedly owned by Mehlokazulu kaSihayo, said to be used by him at Isandlwana, and donated to the Rattray family collection by his son Umnandi Ngobese (David Rattray pers. comm. 2001). In comparison, apart from three loose examples lying on a table without captions, a group of eighteen locally forged field-hoes is arranged in three drawers of a large display case, many with detailed captions that describe the objects and their provenance. A further two hoes in this collection are examples of imported or traded items manufactured outside the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region. The aforementioned wooden case and its contents reflect the scientifically trained instincts of David Rattray, who prepared and labelled the wide variety of artefacts it contains. Items that range from Stone Age tools found on the lodge property to field-hoes and cartridge cases uncovered at Isandlwana are

accompanied by handwritten paper tags pinned under glass like an entomological collection, consistent with nineteenth-century modes of museological display.

David Rattray's endeavour to classify and label the display case contents provides varying levels of information on the field-hoes. A few of the items are identified simply as hoes, while others are attached to the name of the family which previously owned it, and some are also provided with a detailed description of the historical and cultural context of the artefact. Four *amageja* in the left seventh drawer are all badly worn, with only small parts of the blades remaining, and three of these are identified with eight local families or individuals, such as Tjankaza, Ngcobo (Mangeni valley), or "Umnandi Nghobese" [*sic*]. Another two *amageja* in the left ninth drawer are also described as belonging to the latter family, along with the date of donation: "Two Nguni Iron Age implements from the Nkobhese [*sic*] family. The descendants of Sihayo and Mehlokazulu that live in in the Sikhubhutho valley. May 1990". Finally, both right and left eleventh drawers are devoted to a display of thirteen *amageja*, many of which are again contextualised by names of male family members, in particular the Mpanza clan, many of whom are employed at Fugitives' Drift Lodge (Rattray 2007: 14). A striking exception is a large hoe with a buckled oval blade, broken lip and rusted surface [Figure 12 below]. The long, thin tang continues as a ridge that extends 60mm into the blade, with the following caption: "This broad hoe was given to David Rattray by Sithela Mpanza, Mzonjani's mother. It had belonged to her grandmother who in turn had inherited it. This is extremely old – the paper thin blade indicating that". This *igeja* is the second of only three field-hoes in the present survey for which the identity of the female owner, or in this case a lineage of female owners, is known.



Figure 12: The “extremely old – paper thin blade” of a hoe which belonged to Sithela Mpanza; dimensions are L 325mm, W 197mm. (S. Kotze personal photograph 2016)

Phansi Museum, Durban

Opened to the public in its current structure on 17 August 2006, the Phansi Museum at 500 Esther Roberts Road (formerly Frere Road) (S 29°52’31.3”, E 30°59’ 21.1”) in Durban (Verga 2006) is the most recent collection established among the eight in the present survey. The artefacts on display, which fill much of the space in a large double-storey Victorian house, are the private collection of architect Paul Mikula. The museum is thus closely linked to the development of Mikula’s professional practice and a number of other cultural institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. Although the Phansi Museum is best known for extensive collections of beadwork, ceramics, wood-carvings and earplugs representing the craft of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, the small number of locally forged metallurgical items includes an important example of a field-hoe.

Paul Mikula studied architecture at the University of Natal in the early 1960s, and became part of the Building Design Group Architects towards the end of his studies (Sanders 2003: 33). This innovative collective of young architects rejected conventional organisational and design approaches found within their profession at the time, and played an important role in the evolution of spatial theory and practical

construction in KwaZulu-Natal between 1968 and 1977 (Sanders 2003: 1). In 1977 Mikula began working for the Urban Foundation, a Non-Governmental Organisation working to improve housing conditions and access to education in South African townships after 1976 (Hill 1973: 73).

Mikula's work as an architect, both as part of the Building Design Group and the Urban Foundation, was deeply influenced by his appreciation for local art and artists, an appreciation he shared with his late wife Maggie Mikula, herself a noted ceramicist (Mikula 2004). From the mid-1970s, the Mikulas assembled a large collection of beadwork, earplugs, basketry, woodcarving and ceramic beer pots (Peters 2008: 6). The Mikula collection is informed by a philosophy that seeks to unite the object, its original context and the person who made it. As described in their online Collection Policy, they "began to look deeper into the objects and got closer and closer to the makers" (Phansi Museum 2016). This approach is further defined by a quotation from Hlupekile Mchunu, "One learns about the meanings of things to the makers, the recipients and the wider public" (Phansi Museum 2016). Although the Mikula collection was initially a private initiative of Paul and Maggie, the idea for a formal museum evolved over the course of several years.

Part of the evolution of the Phansi Museum from a private collection kept at home to a publically accessible institution can be traced though Paul Mikula's work on the BAT Centre. Following the repeal of apartheid legislation in the early 1990s and the transition to democracy in 1994, art was seen as a unifying, common cultural thread in certain sectors of South African society (Radford 2002: 21). Mikula was commissioned to design an arts-focused community centre on the edge of Durban harbour. Funded by the Bartel Arts Trust, named in honour of benefactor Hugo Bartel, the BAT Centre opened in 1995. Using an approach that has been distinctive of his style as an architect since he started work as part of the Building Design Group, Mikula recycled materials and adapted a former naval training facility into a series of spaces that included artist studios and exhibition galleries, a dance studio, musical rehearsal rooms and a resource centre, among other venues (Marschall 1998: 2). The stated mission of the BAT Centre is still "to celebrate the arts and culture of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal […] by promoting local talent and skills [and to] celebrate our unique cultures" (BAT Centre 2015).

In June 1985 Paul Mikula purchased and renovated the former residence of anthropologist and author Esther Roberts, situated at 500 Frere Road, to serve as offices for the architectural firm Architects Collaborative (Peters 2008: 6). More than a decade later, when his collection of African art could no longer be contained in his own home, Mikula employed a similar philosophy to the one that guided the BAT Centre and created the Phansi Museum, which opened in 2000 (Mikula 2011: 75). Literally meaning “beneath” in Zulu, the name is derived from the basement space occupied by the first exhibition when it opened. Originally much smaller, with only limited numbers of artefacts on view to the public, the scale of Phansi Museum was expanded considerably after 2006 when the entire Roberts House was used to exhibit the Mikula collection. Relocating the architectural offices to rooms surrounding an outside courtyard, Phansi Museum now occupies most of the space on three levels within Roberts House. Displays of many different traditional art forms created by African cultural groups from all parts of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region defy categories of either strictly ethnological or artistic exhibitions. Objects are gathered together in large numbers mainly by type, accompanied by limited explanatory panels and captions, although a staff member is on hand to offer guided tours and answer questions that arise.

The overall experience of the displays of Phansi Museum, as a large private collection of mainly twentieth-century African art from the KwaZulu-Natal region, belies the attention paid to documenting details of individual objects in the collection. A brief set of accession documents record data related to each item, but these are not presented alongside the objects, a point which the metallurgical artefacts demonstrate well. Although limited in number, including only three spears, one battle axe and a single field-hoe, the origin of each is carefully recorded in the style of professional museum collection accessions. In the particular case of the field-hoe, one with a large round blade of the type Moffett et al. (2017: 7) identified as typical of hoes used as trade items, and showing substantial corrosion on the surface, the accession information provides rare documentary evidence of the original owner. This *igeja* was obtained in the KwaMabophe area near Phongola, and dates from the 1920s, according to its former owner Mkhipheni Mazinga (Phansi Museum n.d.; Figure 13). Although this is only the third example for whom the identity of a former female owner is known, the hoe, has never formed part of any displays at Phansi

Museum and, along with the three spears, was held in storage at the time of the present study.



Figure 13: Example of an early twentieth-century, store-bought hoe that belonged to Mkhipheni Mazinga of KwaMabophe near Phongolo, in the Phansi Museum collection; dimensions L 452mm, W 209mm. Most likely a Type 2 Imported hoe acquired by trade (Moffett 2017: 7). (S. Kotze personal collection 2016)

Campbell Collections, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban

The Campbell Collections of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, housed in the former home of “Killie” and “W.A.C.” Campbell at 330 Gladys Mazibuko Road (formerly Marriott Road) (S 29°50’6.4”, E 31°0’17.0”), in Durban, represent a diverse combined collection that includes the large library of Africana material, a world-class compilation of art from, and relating to, the region, and a carefully documented ethnological collection. In addition, the architecture of the building “Muckleneuk”, as well as the surrounding gardens, should also be considered part of this unique institution founded by Killie Campbell, with the assistance of her brother William (known as W.A.C.), and bequeathed to both the local university and Durban municipality in 1965 as a public resource (Buthelezi et al. 2011: 4). The metallurgical artefacts of locally forged iron in the Campbell Collections represent one of only two sets surveyed in the current study in which *amageja* are more numerous than *imikhonto*.

According to Esther Roberts, the great love of books, which was a defining feature of Killie Campbell's life, was nurtured from a young age by a friend of her father, David Don, who left his own collection to the Durban municipality in the form of the Don Africana Library (Roberts 1966). This interest developed further when Killie completed her education at St Leonard's School in Scotland, and she began to acquire her own library, concentrating on history books concerning the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region (Herd 1982: 29). She later added important unpublished manuscripts, such as the oral history research gathered by James Stuart, as well as other oral histories she collected herself from 1912. By the time she died, on 28 September 1965, Killie Campbell had accumulated tens of thousands of volumes of books, and many other significant documentary sources. Together with her brother W.A.C., she also made concerted efforts to preserve the material culture of the region, and played a vital role in the establishment of both the Local History Museum as well as the Old House Museum (Herd 1982: 123).

Her desire to see a permanent museum of African culture in Durban led to Killie and W.A.C. ceding ownership of their magnificent home "Muckleneuk" to Durban Council. Upon Killie's death in 1965, her former home was used to house the family's joint bequest of their library, art collection and artefacts to the University of Natal, which formed the Mashu Museum of Ethnography[5]. The Campbell Collections currently have ten locally forged *imikhonto*, three of which, displayed in the Mashu Museum, are finely made examples of the Zulu blacksmiths' craft, along with other metallurgical items like brass neck rings (*izimbedu*) and gauntlets awarded for bravery (*izingxotha*). In contrast with all other collections of this nature though, the field-hoes outnumber the spears as there are thirteen *amageja* compared with ten spears. While this is not the largest singular number of hoes in a local museum collection, the Campbell Collections has a wide range of hoe types, representing the various styles, the majority of which are in good condition. Two of the hoes are from the original collection (MM109 and MM110), with no further information recorded, while another three have not been accessioned at all. Lying on the floor of the Mashu Museum alongside two grindstones, the hoe MM110 is an exceptional example of a finely crafted implement. While resembling a leaf-shape, the style is somewhat different from others in this pattern, with an almost right-angled edge

[5] Named in honour of Killie's father Sir Marshall Campbell who was known as "Mashu" in Zulu.

closest to the tang, curving to a sharp point, and the tang extends into the very thin blade as a noticeable ridge [Figure 14 below]. This artefact most likely originates from outside the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region and I therefore have not included it in the total of locally forged examples in the Campbell Collections.

In addition to these five hoes, the remaining eight hoes entered the Campbell Collections from three sources. The first of these was a single, very large *igeja* with a length of 723mm (MM905), donated by Lynn Acutt. The item was accessioned incorrectly, as a result the number on the typed tag attached to the hoe does not correspond with the Ethnography Collection register and information on the artefact is limited to a brief description: “Zulu hoe of Native iron. Very old”. It forms part of a substantial gift of photographs, beadwork and other items bestowed on the Campbell Collections by Lyncesal (Lynn) Robert Leslie Acutt, who worked from a commercial studio at 343 West Street (now Pixley kaSeme Street), and is best known for photographic postcards and pictures of Durban that included portraits of African men and women in traditional costume, among many other topics (Gutsche 1972; Campbell Collections n.d.). A few years younger than Killie, Acutt was born in 1890, and part of the wealthy elite in the city, known colloquially as the “Old Durban Families” (or ODF); he moved in the same social circles as the Campbells, and shared many of their interests. Neither its origin or date of collection is known, and no further information regarding this hoe is forthcoming, but this example is the largest *igeja* in the eight collections surveyed, as well as one of the heaviest, with an extremely long tang.

Two hoes and an axe became part of the Campbell Collections as donations by the estate of Harry Lugg in October 1979, about a year after he died at the age of 96. Harry James Camp Lugg was a court translator who rose through the administrative ranks of the Native Affairs Department in Natal until he attained the post of Chief Commissioner. The fact that his father fought at Rorke’s Drift (Knight 2008: 114), his mother-tongue proficiency in the Zulu language and his long employment in the civil service gave Lugg the reputation as an authority on African culture and history (Gillings 1979: 43). Two of the hoes he collected are held in the ethnological collection storage area. Both were found near Eshowe, showing only small parts of the hoe blades still intact and significant rust pock-marks on the metal surface hints that they were buried. The first was found in November 1950, with a narrow blade

damaged from use as a hammer (MM1943), while the other was uncovered near King Shaka kaSenzangakhona's royal *ikhanda* of KwaBulawayo in 1952 (MM1944). A third, much smaller blade described as an axe, is part of the metallurgical artefacts exhibited in the Mashu Museum (MM1931). The detailed description includes the location and date of where and when the iron was mined: "in Msibe, Nongoma district during Dingane's reign", and that it was given to Lugg by Dukuza Mdletshe of the Ngobamakosi *ibutho* in 1946 (Campbell Collections n.d.: 1931).

Four additional hoes were donated to the Campbell Collections by another official of the Native Affairs Department, Sighart St I de B Bourquin, in 1985. A generation younger than Lugg, "SB" Bourquin, as he was known, graduated with a B.Sc. degree from Stellenbosch and joined what later became the Bantu Affairs Department in 1950 (Gillings 2004: 100). While his responsibilities included overseeing the forced removal of families from Cato Manor in the 1960s, a process he carefully documented for the historical record, his post and fluency in the Zulu language also granted Bourquin privileged access to African perspectives on local culture and history (Gillings 2004: 101). After his retirement in 1974 he devoted himself to the study of military history relating to the KwaZulu-Natal region and achieved a similar status to Harry Lugg as an authority on the subject. According to the accession register, Bourquin procured all four *amageja* from the community of Dlomodlomo, situated on the northern side of the Mhlatuze River valley approximately 40km northeast of Empangeni. Little additional information is provided, other than that the hoes are nineteenth-century Zulu artefacts, and their sizes relative to one another. The smallest is 247mm long (MM3039), with a shiny black surface and an extra accession entry indicating its use in preparation of traditional medicine, as a "small hoe used for chopping up bulbs in stony places" (Campbell Collections n.d.: MM3039). Of the remaining three, two locally forged hoes are briefly described only as "Medium size" and "Large size" respectively (Campbell Collections n.d.: MM3040; MM3041). A third example originating in the same donation (Campbell Collections n.d.: MM3042) does not conform to the typical pattern of locally forged Type 4 hoes (Moffett 2017: 4) and is not included in the total of hoes from the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region. This hoe is interesting due to its close resemblance to another hoe (MM110) from the original collection of the Campbell family. The very thin, well-made blade is approximately 5mm thick at the tang and tapers to less than 1mm at

the tip, while the shape flares out sharply at almost right angles from the tang to an overall width of 231mm before coming together in an elegant point. Although attested from different sources, these virtually identical *amageja* suggest a common origin, either from the same forge or as evidence of a regional similarity in hoe styles and are possibly examples of styles from north of the Limpopo River (Moffett 2017: 7). A further two hoes in the Campbell Collection have not been accessioned and match the Type 6 pattern from the northeastern Lowveld (Moffett 2017: 6).



Figure 14: Iron hoe found near KwaBulawayo, Eshowe district, by Harry Lugg in 1952 MM1944, donated to the Campbell Collections by his estate in 1979; dimensions L 290mm, W 119mm. (S. Kotze personal photograph 2016)



Figure 15: Iron hoe from the original Campbell family collection MM110, with an exceptional unused leaf-shaped blade; dimensions L 471mm, W 173mm. Brought to colonial-era Natal from north of the Limpopo River during the nineteenth-century or earlier. On display without any label or description in the Mashu Ethnography display, Campbell Collections (S. Kotze personal photograph 2016)

5

Making a case for hoes:

Exhibitions of metallurgical artefacts in museums of KwaZulu-Natal

In the previous chapter I discussed how locally forged field-hoes or *amageja* constitute a class of artefacts that may be considered a neglected archive, which represents a tangible record of agricultural labour performed by African women in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region. In addition, a basic comparison of the number of hoes relative to weapons in eight museum collections of KwaZulu-Natal revealed a bias in the manner that locally forged metallurgical artefacts were acquired and entered the archive. Although no explicit reasons for this preference can be established[6], a total of eighty-nine locally forged hoes compared with three hundred and twenty-four spears demonstrates that agricultural implements constitute less than one quarter of locally forged metallurgical artefacts in those archives [Table 1], while the rest are weapons of various types. Equally important though, few exhibitions in the museums covered by this study provide any contextual information on either the gendered nature of field-hoes as agricultural implements used mainly by women, or the key contributions made by women in African agricultural economies prior to the introduction of ox-drawn ploughs.

Even though most hoes in the documented collections have an almost complete lack of information pertaining to manufacture and prior ownership, such artefacts constitute an overlooked, if partial and incomplete set, of sources on the material culture of nineteenth-century African agricultural production in Natal and the Zulu kingdom. The present chapter undertakes a critical survey of exhibitions related to African history in the eight museums that are the subject of this dissertation, to assess the ways in which the agricultural contribution of women is depicted, if at all. Finally, the chapter concludes with a detailed examination of new displays proposed for the Mkhumbane Museum, which was completed in 2017. New exhibitions that will be installed at this site are intended to focus on the contribution of women to society,

[6] Apart from the fact that three of these collections are located within battlefield museums that naturally have a military focus.

and thus present an opportunity to include research and analysis generated in this dissertation.

The labour power of women played an essential role in food production within the subsistence economy of rural African homesteads of Natal and the Zulu kingdom (Beall 1982; Guy 1987; Hamilton 1985; Hanretta 1998; Wright 1981). Gender division of agricultural labour persisted from pre-conquest societies in the region, throughout the colonial period and into the twentieth-century when these territories eventually became KwaZulu-Natal. Among Nguni-speaking communities in southern Africa the basis for this facet of economic life was "the dichotomy between men and cattle on the one hand and women and agriculture on the other" that originated in the Iron Age (Huffman 2004: 82). Research published largely over the past four decades has built on earlier ethnographic work to examine aspects of women's labour power in Natal and the Zulu kingdom, either as generalised or theoretical articles (Gluckman, 1935; Krige 1950; Beall 1982; Guy 1987; Wright 1981), or detailed examinations of the *izigodlo* as an institution of patriarchal authority and labour extraction (Hamilton 1985; Hanretta 1998). All of these articles note the scarcity of detailed direct documentary evidence, including oral sources, for the role of women in pre-conquest African agricultural production. Recent historiographical interventions have recommended a re-examination of archives and museum collections in order to challenge "master narratives" and determine the significance of previously neglected material (Hamilton 2011; Wright & Kros 2014).

Notwithstanding shortcomings regarding detailed evidence on the origins of specific artefacts, hoes are part of an archive that provides insight into an aspect of life otherwise largely hidden from the record. Such implements remain important for a range of reasons and reveal how artefacts with rich symbolic meaning, conventionally associated with women's agricultural production, are archived and exhibited. In the first instance, the *amageja* surveyed in eight museum collections, as well as the previously undocumented private collection of Bobby Radebe, constitute original evidence of women's labour in the archives of KwaZulu-Natal. Among the collections of the Durban Local History Museums, Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum, Talana Museum, KwaZulu-Natal Museum, KwaZulu Cultural Museum, Fugitives' Drift Lodge, Phansi Museum and Campbell Collections, as well as the Radebe collection (Appendix 1: 138), it is significant that only three hoes among the almost two

hundred I have examined have any record relating to the women who used them. Nearly all exhibits of hoes present them as archaeological artefacts or "type" specimens to demonstrate the appearance and characteristics of locally forged agricultural tools. While this treatment often applies to categories of male objects, such as spears or staffs that belonged to commoners, very little effort has been made to contextualise the vital economic value of the female agricultural labour that hoes represent. An early study on agricultural fertility rites by Gluckman (1935: 262) recognised the bias that exists in our understanding of this topic: "hoeculture is vitally important labour, but, though fruitful well-tended fields may honour the owner, the labour itself is no great dignity […] It is for cattle, not for grain, that wars are waged", also emphasising the dichotomy and hierarchy of importance acknowledged by Maggs (1991: 131) and Huffman (2004: 83).

Considerable debate among archaeologists concerns how closely social relations of Early Iron Age farming communities resemble or form the origins for those of Nguni-speaking societies of pre-conquest south-eastern Africa. The gender division of labour is therefore not a proven feature of life since the very earliest settlement of the region by Iron Age pastoralists. Within the past five hundred years, however, the agricultural production of women in patriarchal homesteads formed the basis of a subsistence economy for Nguni-speaking society in the region between the Phongolo River in the north and the Mzimkhulu River in the south, an area which approximates the province of KwaZulu-Natal and the Zulu-speaking realm. This way of life was summarised by Guy (2009: 1):

> Production and reproduction took place in largely self-sufficient, polygamous, patriarchal homesteads, aggregations of which made up the pre-capitalist state. The power and wealth of these homesteads was to be found in the number of productive people – wives, children – within the homestead. New homesteads were founded by men on marriage with their fathers' cattle. Within these homesteads wives were placed in ranked houses which had considerable economic and social autonomy. Cattle in the control of men were exchanged for fertile women, and young women of the homestead were exchanged for cattle.

Wright and Hamilton (1989), however, previously criticised such a portrayal perceived to be reinforcing a static and ahistorical version of African society in this region, while Hamilton (1985) provided analysis of women's labour power and social stratification in the early Zulu state through an investigation of evidence related to the

royal institutions of *izigodlo*. A significant challenge is also posed by ethnological museum depictions of static African social and labour relations, from the pre-conquest era until the period of large-scale urbanisation in the twentieth-century (Wright and Mazel 1987).

With the exception of new content relating to the Anglo-Zulu War, "exhibitions leave the viewer with little or no concept that the precolonial past was a period of change" (Wright and Mazel 1987: 303). At the time, the authors identified as a probable cause for this situation, not only a dearth of academic research on the topic, but also the ideological function of museums as part of the different kinds of nationalist state apparatus. Considering the amount of research published since then, it is more difficult to understand and explain the enduring presence and appeal of such static ethnological displays at the present time. The overwhelming focus of the displays and exhibitions on the history of African society in KwaZulu-Natal undertaken during the last twenty years, selected from the eight museums and described below, remains fixed on colonial conflicts, the ideology of warrior-centric militarism and the male-dominated world of cattle. The absence of any significant effort to engage with the crucial subject of food security and agricultural production of women is notable and in need of critical redress, reflected in the title of the exhibition proposed at the end of this chapter, which is derived from a Zulu idiom "*igeja lishis' emhlane*" (Nyembezi 1990: 113). The meaning of "the hoe burns on the back" implies a great responsibility, one that weighs heavily on the shoulders, like the labour of women in the fields.

Durban Local History Museums

An important exhibition jointly curated in 1996 as a travelling show by staff from two institutions covered by this study, which included artefacts from five of the collections documented here, illustrates this point. In the foreword to a second edition of the catalogue, it is stated that *Zulu Treasures: Of Kings and Commoners / Amagugu kaZulu*, "brought together different collections to produce one of the most comprehensive exhibitions of Zulu material seen in South Africa" (Local History Museums 2011: 7). The catalogue contains twelve essays relating to various aspects of Zulu culture, yet the attention remains focused on the patriarchal elite, witnessed by contributions on "Zulu Cattle" and material culture of the kings "*Indaba yamaKhosi*

Ayibanjelwa Mlando / The Matter of Kings is Not Kept". The essay on metallurgical artefacts contains a single mention of hoes, as one of a number of items forged by local smiths (Roodt 2011: 95), while the exhibition itself contained forty spears, three *izinhlendla* (decorated spear-like insignia of chiefly rank), five *izizenze* (battle axes), two harpoons, an axe and an adze, compared with only two hoes.

Among the seven sites of the Durban Local History Museums, only the Pinetown Museum (S 29°48'56.8", E 30°51'43.1") contains a display of hoes, which are used primarily as archaeological artefacts to illustrate Iron Age metallurgy. These four items are on loan from the provincial Museum Services collection (Accession tags: KwaZulu-Natal Museum Services). The staff of what was then the Natal Provincial Administration Museum Services Department created the display for the opening of the museum in February 1995 (Anonymous 1995: 5). Above glass cases containing metallurgical artefacts such as hoes, furnace walls and slag, a detailed description of Iron Age characteristics includes smelting of iron, ceramics and the introduction of domesticated animals and crops. No effort, however, was made to contextualise such hoes, as primarily used by women, neither was the division of labour in homesteads on the basis of gender, nor the role of women in early agricultural subsistence production, addressed in these panels.

Two mannequins exemplify Zulu culture at Pinetown, dressed to represent, on the one hand, stereotypical nineteenth-century warrior militarism and on the other female domestic pursuits centred on coiffure and beadwork. The caption for the male figure introduces "Sigidi (brave, courageous), I am a soldier (ibutho) from the Zulu regiment (impi)", and describes both his weapons and dress (Pinetown Museum exhibition c1995). Meanwhile, the extended caption for "Jabulile, meaning 'happiness'" evidently personifies a fictional personality as the typical African woman of this region:

> I am in a traditional Zulu skirt (isidwaba), a vest (ivesti) and a shawl (ibhayi). My headdress (isicholo) is made of basketweave [*sic*] or grass, covered in cloth. Popular Zulu beadwork includes love letters (ucu), necklaces (umgexo), waistbands (isibhamba) and ear-rings (amacici). My farming ancestors came to Pinetown when the San\Bushmen lived here. I went to school and work and live at Dassenhoek. (Pinetown Museum exhibition content c1995).

Three problems emerge from this description. Firstly, the pleated leather, kilt-like *isidwaba* worn to denote the married status of women throughout the region well into the twentieth-century is here designated a specifically Zulu form of attire. Naming such attire as "Zulu" perpetuates the narrow, nationalist ideology that all Zulu-speaking inhabitants of the region share a single coherent identity. This colonial-era notion, promoted during apartheid, has been the subject of extensive analysis (Wright & Hamilton 1993; Wright 2008a, 2009, 2016; Hamilton & Leibhammer 2016). Secondly, only items of costume or ornament are labelled on the female mannequin, with no mention of tools or implements used by African women or their responsibilities within homesteads, despite the fact that agriculture is explicitly mentioned. Finally, history stretching back a millennium, hundred-year old traditions and contemporary life are conflated anachronistically in a striking example of how African culture is viewed as ethnologically static, in the face of quoted evidence to the contrary and the incorporation of recently introduced items of clothing such as the vest.

Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum, Pietermaritzburg

Although a position for a display designer was created at the Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum in 1982 in recognition of the need for new and more diverse exhibitions, changes required government approval (Rodéhn 2008: 200). As a result of the political significance of the site in terms of apartheid ideology, modifications and additions occurred slowly, and the first major exhibition to address African heritage in its own right was a temporary installation of *Zulu Treasures: Of Kings and Commoners*, which opened in the expanded facilities on 22 October 1997 (Guest 2012: 150). Three years later, the first component of a permanent exhibit focused specifically on aspects of Zulu history was mounted (Rodéhn 2008: 222), while in April 2006 an exhibition of Pietermaritzburg history entitled *A River Runs Through It* made an effort to demonstrate the extent of historical and political changes experienced by African people living near or in the city during the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century (Guest 2012: 178-179). Some archaeological artefacts, including a field-hoe (51. 1912 W.J.J. Botes donation), are mounted in a display on the origins of Iron Age agriculture, with the following text:

> African farmers first settled in the Pietermaritzburg area about 1300 years ago, their ancestors having moved from Sub-Saharan Africa. They grew

> crops and kept domestic animals. They melted [*sic*] iron in furnaces and forged tools such as hoes and spear blades. (*A River Runs Through It: The Iron Age* 2006).

Considering that the idea of African Iron Age farmers settled south of the Limpopo was previously opposed and undermined on the basis of Afrikaner Nationalist ideology associated with the very origins of this museum, the statement above is an indication of a transformation in approach as the long Iron Age sequence was acknowledged. The process of agricultural production, and gender-based division of labour, is not addressed though, and the text also contains an important error that is repeated in one of the captions for the artefacts. Asserting that iron was "melted" instead of "smelted" could be a typographical error, but becomes more significant when seen in conjunction with the adjacent description of a tuyère as "Claypipe [*sic*] through which melted iron was poured (part of furnace)" (*A River Runs Through It* 2006; Figure 4 above). Combined, the two statements create an erroneous impression that Iron Age Africans cast tools using molten iron.

Though the point is subtle, it is no minor problem in a museum exhibition on the Iron Age. Because it was a bloomery furnace process that produced the iron over this long period (Maggs 1982: 139; Friede & Steel 1986: 82; Whitelaw 1991: 34), the result could never be molten metal. As a result, the display text in question misrepresents a key element of Iron Age technology, and perhaps betrays a notion that attention to detail on this topic is not essential or that the curators responsible had not done sufficient research. The erroneous description of the tuyère also indicated a type of problem that may occur if captions strive to simplify complex information too much, with the result of content that is brief but also incorrect. Though difficult to prove conclusively, this points to a discourse that tolerates disregarding facts in favour of concepts that are perceived as affirmative, such as producing cast iron. Furthermore the persistent use of a small number of archaeological artefacts as symbolic of that period, which is dealt with almost as window dressing or curtain-raising to more important history, rather than the principal context, thus reinforced a perception that facets of pre-history are secondary to subsequent, more recent events. A similar approach is manifest in another exhibition on the Zulu kingdom in the museum that retains a limited focus on royal authority and traditional male domains of warfare and cattle.

Talana Museum, Dundee

At Talana Museum locally forged field-hoes are deployed in exhibitions either as products of local metallurgy or implements used within homesteads. The museum's entire collection of twelve *amageja* are exhibited in two adjacent rooms of Talana House, and were presumably first displayed in this way when the content on that site was developed in 1984 (Leveridge 2016). An introductory display in the first room depicts aspects of the Stone Age and Iron Age side by side, with flaked stone tools lying on the floor of a stylised rock shelter near some pieces of wood, a spear-sharpening stone and smelting equipment including broken tuyères, as well as a rusted spear blade and cracked hoe of the diamond-shaped variety that originate from the Lowveld (Moffett et al. 2017: 7), configured to suggest an Iron Age forge. The caption for these items states "Early iron age [*sic*] items: Remains of funnels to a furnace; Early iron hoe; Very early iron tongs." The pattern of hoe blade is not addressed, despite its distinctive difference from others in a nearby display, neither are its origins discussed. The relationship between iron tools and the introduction of agriculture to this region is not elucidated further either.



Figure 16: Hoes arranged among other domestic utensils inside an *iqhugwane* hut display at Talana Museum. (S. Kotze personal photograph 2017)

The remaining eleven hoes in the Talana collection are arranged on the floor of a cutaway section of a beehive hut constructed within the second room of Talana

House [Figure 16]. These artefacts, including both damaged, worn and unused examples of locally forged implements typical of this region, in addition to two which appear to be examples of imported trade goods (Moffett et al. 2017: 5-7), are displayed among spears, shields, drums, other household utensils and examples of crafts. The untitled beehive hut exhibit presents an imagined facsimile of African homes at some point in the past, most likely prior to 1879 although that is not stated. Captions for thirty categories of domestic objects are provided by two boards, each approximately 600mm x 400mm, with various typologies illustrated and numbered on one with an indexed list on the other. The entire set of *amageja* are listed as “9. IGEJA / AMAGEJA (Hoe / hoes)” and placed between the hearth (*iziko*) and spoons (*ukhezo*), near other objects associated with food production and cooking, such as Late Iron Age grindstones for maize, eating mats and wooden milk pails.



Figure 17: The facsimile interior of an *iqhuwane* hut at Talana Museum, illustrating the index of objects displayed on the two tan-coloured boards in the centre. (S. Kotze personal photograph 2017)

This 1984 display, which seemingly has not been altered since it was included in Wright and Mazel’s study in 1987, presents African culture in this region as a static and chronologically flattened ethnological fact. The livelihoods of ordinary people, as opposed to the chiefly elite, are portrayed as the context or backdrop for wars that took place in the countryside surrounding Dundee, known in the sphere of tourism as the “Battlefields” region. In contrast to the negligible information on domestic,

economic or political conditions in pre-conquest African society provided here, the following rooms contain detailed commentary on the British invasion of the Zulu kingdom in 1879, and exhaustive accounts of nearby military engagements. Another site within the museum grounds though, a former cowshed, houses antique agricultural equipment, but this is limited to commercial farming activity on privately owned land. The cowshed contains displays that, according to the website, deal with "life on farms in this region, crops that were grown and numerous pieces of farming equipment. Veterinary instruments, cheese and butter making equipment and a superb collection of all types and fashions of wagons", but neglects to mention the role of Africans, either as labourers or farmers in their own right in homesteads (Talana Museum 2014: Agriculture).

KwaKunje cultural village was established in the grounds of Talana Museum during 2008, with the assistance of Miranda Mineral Holdings and the Department of Environment and Tourism, and was officially handed over to the museum in February 2009 (Anonymous 2009: 3). According to the museum website, KwaKunje means "it was like this", and is

> a living monument to the Zulu culture that reflects the roots of traditional village culture, and places it in context with the 21st century. KwaKunje Cultural Village is inhabited by Zulu's [*sic*] who act as guides and cultural interpreters" (Talana Museum: KwaKunje Cultural Village – online 2014).

Displays inside the collection of the thatched "beehive huts" are dedicated to a wide variety of topics that include beadwork, "Zulu cultural dress", medicinal plants, Nguni cattle and "Zulu homes" among others. Although the panel providing information on homes focuses on the layout of a nineteenth-century homestead and construction of grass huts (*izindlu*), a separate display provides specific detail on what was termed a "traditional kitchen" (*ixhiba*). Hand-made kitchen utensils, described by the materials and method of manufacture are once again largely characterised in a timeless, ethnologically static context (*KwaKunje*: Ixhiba exhibition 2008). One critical change though, compared with the earlier Talana House displays concerning African domestic life, is an acknowledgement that "due to the Western civilization influence, the traditional way of living has gradually changed. Certain ways of living were no longer convenient", followed by examples of changes found in homestead cooking areas, which occurred during the course of the twentieth-century alongside and illustrated with industrially manufactured items such as a paraffin stove and plastic

basin (*KwaKunje*: Transformation process of *ixhiba* to a modern kitchen exhibition 2008). While a single panel was devoted to animal husbandry in the *KwaKunje* exhibition, none of the displays address the question of agricultural production at all, or the continued use of hoes by women in subsistence farming still practiced in many homesteads.

KwaZulu-Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg

In certain important respects staff at the KwaZulu-Natal Museum shaped an early phase of debate regarding the role of exhibitions and archaeologists in response to ideologically motivated historical interpretation favoured by both Afrikaner nationalists and their Zulu counterparts (Maggs 1993: 73-75). By the late 1970s, quite soon after the long Iron Age chronology was accepted by academics (Mason et al. 1973), the museum began planning a major multi-phase exhibition on the millennia-long processes of social and political change in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region (Rodéhn 2008: 194; Guest 2012: 208). Almost a decade later, that display's first components were opened as the *Hall of Traditional Cultures* in March 1986, while the 500th anniversary of the Portuguese circumnavigation of southern Africa was commemorated in March 1988 (Guest 2012: 241). A full scale replica of a Drakensberg rock shelter used by Stone Age hunter-gatherers, reproduced complete with copies of rock art, opened to the public in 1992 as the next phase of *The Story of People in Southeast Africa*, and the first to draw on more recent archaeological research conducted by the museum (Rodéhn 2008: 207). Prehistoric Iron Age agriculture formed the next part of this wide-ranging installation in 1997, under the title *A New Way of Life – The Early Iron Age Farmers* (Croeser 2010), which thus formed the third element in a substantial renovation of the museum's cultural content.

Themes within the display were developed by the museum Working Group from July 1992 (Rodéhn 2008: 208), and drew upon published work on Iron Age metallurgy (Miller and Whitelaw 1994), pastoralism and pottery (Moon and Whitelaw 1996; Whitelaw 1996), as well as crop cultivation (Maggs and Whitelaw 1991). *A New Way of Life* is introduced with an imagined homestead from the period captioned 'Aspects of Early Iron Age Life' with seven key factors illustrated, although human figures are not represented. A conscious decision was taken to depict a lifestyle that was visibly

different from more recent African cultures in order to make sure that the audience didn't think there was an unbroken or direct link between the development of Iron Age agricultural communities and the rise of the Zulu kingdom (Rodéhn 2008: 213; Anonymous 1997). Although a field of crops is illustrated with pumpkin, beans and millet, along with a typical Early Iron Age grindstone, the absence of human figures leaves open the question of labour division in this context, although a caption on an adjacent display mentions gender-based division of tasks.

The following panel *Farming Comes to Southern Africa* contains a brief illustrated timeline of metallurgy and crops portrayed with the African continent as a backdrop. The first line drawing shows a smith in his forge beating a hoe blade while the text explains the origins of large-scale iron production. The third image shows a field of cereal crops with four figures representing two children and two women, one of whom is holding a hafted hoe by its handle; the text mentions the sub-Saharan domestication of sorghum and millets between 4000 and 2000BCE. A final passage below the map indicates that the Early Iron Age is first documented at South African sites such as Silver Leaves at 410CE and Mzonjani at 420CE (*Farming Comes to Southern Africa* c1997). Another panel titled *Iron Age farmers, AD 400 – 1000*, beside a glass display case demonstrating crops, domestic animals and metal, deals with the spread of agriculture, the changing nature of the communities it supported and their archaeological record. The panel contains a brief, but almost unique description of agricultural production by women — "Women of each household in the village tended the crops and prepared plant foods" — though the three women illustrated are only shown winnowing and grinding harvested grains, not tilling soil, planting or tending crops. The quoted statement is one of only two such statements found among current captions or panels in the nine museum exhibitions of African history in KwaZulu-Natal reviewed in this study, along with an illustration of a hafted hoe in the adjacent metallurgy display.

KwaZulu Cultural Museum, Ulundi

The only comparable attempt to explain the importance of metallurgy and hoes in agriculture, with a separate mention of the role of women, was made at roughly the same time as *A New Way of Life*. In the late 1990s, after the original Ondini exhibition of the KwaZulu Cultural Museum was refurbished to integrate elements of

Zulu Treasures: Of Kings and Commoners / Amagugu kaZulu, a number of hoes were included in new displays. As in several other museums, a number of *amageja* are used here as the Iron Age artefact *par excellence* as they denote both metallurgical processes and agricultural tilling. Alongside one example, an introductory caption for the Iron Age states “These new colonists brought with them a knowledge of iron-working; kept domestic animals and grew crops” (*The Iron Age* c1998), but does not make mention of gender division of labour. The artefact itself is accompanied by a brief description: “Hoe blade: Used to clear fields and plant crops. (Donated by A. Harris)”, while another more complete example nearby also has a concise caption: “Hoe blade / *igeja*: Eshowe, Nomyaca. Second half of 20th century.” A piece of tuyère and small model of a blacksmith’s forge is accompanied with a short but accurate account of how iron ore was smelted in a furnace, while a portion of another hoe tang forms part of a tactile display fixed to the outside of the exhibit captioned “Please touch – 5: Iron hoe”.

At the same time however, an adjacent display case titled *Roots of Zulu kingdom* contains four spears used to illustrate Zulu military heritage, including two in which the owner is identified as “Petrus Msezana who fought in the Anglo-Zulu war in 1879” (*Roots of Zulu Kingdom* c1983). Elsewhere in the museum two additional hoe blades are employed to demonstrate firstly, archaeological stratigraphy standing for “Iron Age / Isikathi sesimbi”, and secondly the archaeological basis for reconstruction of the Ondini royal residence in a display named *Uncovering the Past*. Therefore, while the KwaZulu Cultural Museum does use a relatively large number of hoes in its historical displays, they are largely consigned representative status of either Iron Age metallurgy or scientific archaeology. A different section of the exhibit originated in *Zulu Treasures* and deals with domestic life in a traditional homestead (*umuzi*) and contains a detailed description of historical forms of labour division based on gender. Among the forms of labour women are responsible for, the following is listed: “All agricultural work (except anything which was linked with cattle i.e. ploughing)” and the panel continues to explain that the traditional roles it describes changed with the advent of labour migrancy in the nineteenth-century and increasingly during the past hundred years as people in Zulu-speaking society adapted to modern Western lifestyles.

An unusual use of hoes in the KwaZulu Cultural Museum formed part of a temporary display during 2016 titled *Sayings: Building Ubuntu through idiom* that examined relationships between material culture and idiomatic expression in language. A single hoe (bringing the total number on display in this museum to six) was shown with a caption that explained Zulu adages linked to hoes. In both cases these phrases indicate values which no longer hold for these objects. The first, "*udlala ngeja kuziliwe*" is translated as "he plays with a hoe during a time of abstinence" and refers to one doing something inappropriate at the wrong time (Nyembezi 1990: 63-64), referring to spiritual prohibitions which are largely no longer observed in contemporary African society. The second, "*igeja lithengwa ngokubona*" means "the hoe is bought after being seen" and carries various significant implications. Explicitly, the idiomatic connotation is that marriage is a serious matter which should be carefully considered before making a final decision (Nyembezi 1990: 194), but as discussed in greater detail above in Chapter 3, it equally reveals that a woman is also represented by a hoe while serving as confirmation of a historic value for hoes that predates large-scale industrial manufacture of such implements.

Fugitives' Drift Lodge, Rorke's Drift

Most of the artefacts in the Rattray collection relating to the history of the Mzinyathi River valley are displayed in a museum that was created in 2017, using the repurposed space of a former dining room at Fugitives' Drift Lodge (Fugitives' Drift Lodge 2017). Very few of the pictures or objects mounted on the walls are captioned or identified, regardless of significance or origins. Examples include rare items which David Rattray claimed previously belonged to high ranking nineteenth-century British officials, a unique replica of the 24th Regiment's Queens Colour and spears from the Ngobese chief's family (David Rattray pers. comm. 2001). The provenance and meaning of virtually the entire display of these artefacts is available to visitors only as oral history related by resident guides, or members of the Rattray family, in the mode of a semi-public "cabinet of curiosity" rather than following current institutional museum conventions. A large wooden cabinet described in detail in the previous chapter is an exception, as David Rattray captioned the contents in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

As a result, apart from three uncaptioned *amageja* displayed loosely on a small round table, twenty hoes in the Rattray collection have descriptions of some kind, including fourteen that are linked to previous owners (Appendix 2: 159-161). Excepting a single example identified as having belonged to Sithela Mpanza, a woman who claimed to have inherited the hoe from her grandmother (Fugitives' Drift Lodge: Display case, drawer 11L), all others are contextualised either by family names or the names of one of three men: Mnandi Ngobese, Mqombothi Mpanza and James Mjale. The field-hoe given to Rattray by Sithela Mpanza is one of only three field-hoes in the current study in relation to which the identity of a previous female owner is known, but once again there is no mention of the function of hoes, nor of the critical role performed by women farmers in this valley providing food security in this region both prior to the Anglo-Zulu war, and right up to recent times.

Many of the handwritten labels in the display case contain typographic errors such as names spelled inconsistently or misleading information. For instance, the two drawers side by side containing Sithela Mpanza's hoe, along with twelve others, has a general caption stating the following:

> *Late Iron Age Nguni Artefacts*
>
> The implements were made in this area by the Zulus before white traders appeared. Iron was smelted from the dolerite, converted to steel and fashioned on primitive anvils. Some of these tools were in use a few years ago. (Fugitives' Drift Lodge: Display case, drawer 11L)

The statement that "iron was smelted from dolerite, [and] converted to steel" is incorrect. While dolerite boulders, known colloquially as "ironstone", are a feature of the local landscape, iron was smelted from haematite ores often in the form of "snuffbox shale" (Whitelaw 1991: 33). Personal conjecture based on elements of local folklore are thus included in captions presented in the quasi-scientific setting of artefacts under glass in a display case. This is also the case regarding Sithela Mpanza's hoe, described as having been in her family for generations and "extremely old – the paper blade indicating that" (Fugitives' Drift Lodge: Display case, drawer 11L). As can be seen in many other examples included in this study though, and discussed in the recently published typology of hoes (Moffett et al. 2017: 3), the relative thickness of a blade does not have a simple relationship to age as hoe blades wear down from the lip towards the tang, and a hoe of this pattern is most likely an example of imported trade goods. Accordingly, the information

provided by Rattray is most likely his personal opinion and is not supported by evidence. In addition, the use of the term “primitive” to describe the stone anvils raises the condescending notion that technology employed by local metallurgists was somehow of a lower order. The achievement of smelting ore and production of delicately worked weapons and tools in itself contradicts this point.

Phansi Museum, Durban

The exhibition format adopted at the Phansi Museum appears designed mainly as a platform to reveal the breadth and quality within the Mikula collection of artefacts, predominantly from the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region (Durban Tourism 2015). Initially the display style of items creates an impression of an almost overwhelming concentration of ethnographic objects. Artefacts are categorised in relatively neat arrays by typology, and with considerable effort made to ensure that individual items are clearly visible to the viewer, but an even moderate period of time spent examining various components of the exhibition evokes the experience of an artistic rather than an ethnographic installation. The most striking example in this respect are more than thirty near-life-size, soft sculptures in human form that are suspended from cables in an upper gallery of the museum (Phansi Museum 2015). Described as puppets and used as an innovative three-dimensional method of presenting beaded ceremonial attire from southern Africa, each sculpture is clothed in a set of garments representative of a specific geographic area, but none is captioned and oral descriptions are only available as part of guided tours (Verga 2006; Phumzile Nkobi pers. comm. 2017). Placement of some artefacts without captions reduces them to the level of décor in certain instances, including a row of wooden milk pails (*amathunga*) inaccessibly high on a wall, and wire-work beer pot covers (*izimbenge*) down the side of a stairwell with poor lighting.

A stated aim of the museum, facilitated by means of the Phansi Museum Trust, is to “promote, document and preserve South Africa’s cultural heritage through documenting indigenous traditional ceremonies, customs, crafts and artefacts [*sic*], and stimulating public interest in South African indigenous culture” (Ulwazi 2016). Encouraging public engagement with African heritage and material culture is enabled both by means of guided tours and captions that range from simple bilingual descriptions in English and Zulu, to extended quotations from academic texts in

some cases (*Izigqiki / Headrests* c2006). Meanwhile, careful attention paid to documenting the origins and details of artefacts in the collection forms part of the museum's goals, as this allows comparative research to be undertaken. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this applies to the single *igeja* held at Phansi Museum, which is not on display but was obtained in the KwaMabophe area near Phongola, and dates from the 1920s, according to its former owner Mkhipheni Mazinga (Phansi Museum: Accession card "Igeja / hoe"). In addition to the name and residence of the owner being recorded, an interesting detail concerning this hoe is its probable origin as an item bought from a trade store or itinerant trader and possible industrial manufacture (Moffett et al. 2017: 7). Another hoe of the same pattern in the private collection of Bobby Radebe is stamped "2½ lbs", which explains the unusual dimensions of these hoe blades (Appendix 1: 143-145). A discussion over the origin and design of such hoes, including how imported implements replaced locally forged examples, would make a valuable addition to Phansi Museum exhibitions of local material culture. Furthermore, the remains of an early twentieth-century draught plough, kept alongside a large collection of ceramics, illustrates another stage in the history of subsistence homestead agriculture in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, but neither the hoe or plough currently form part of any curated displays in the museum.

Campbell Collections, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban

The author and intellectual Herbert I.E. Dhlomo was the first to document plans by W.A.C. Campbell, sugar magnate and brother of Killie, to establish a museum of African cultural heritage in Durban. As early as the mid-1940s Dhlomo drafted an article for *Ilanga lase Natal*, which in the end was not published in the newspaper, in which he recorded Campbell's idea for an exhibition of "Ancient Zulu Customary Articles" housed conveniently in the city "where it will be within reach of all Africans" (Dhlomo, undated draft manuscript: KCM 9705, file 14a). It is not made clear whether the proposed museum was intended to be open to members of all races in addition to Africans, although the fact that both W.A.C. and Killie Campbell were conscious of legal requirements of segregation in Durban was made clear in the bequest of their respective collections a few years later (Buthelezi et al. 2011: 4). In the draft article Dhlomo lists the types of artefacts Campbell collected, including different types of spears and shields, but no specific mention is made of hoes, which

were presumably included under the broad description of “many other things of Zulu interest”.

Ultimately though, the realisation of W.A.C. Campbell’s museum took a further three decades, and now forms part of what are known as the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s Campbell Collections housed in the family’s former residence “Muckleneuk” at 330 Gladys Mazibuko Road (formerly Marriott Road). After the respective deaths of, firstly W.A.C. Campbell in 1963, followed by Killie in 1965, plans were drawn up to extend the building in order to house a new library, as well as the Mashu Museum of Ethnology (Campbell Collections brochure c1980). Named in honour of W.A.C. and Killie’s father, Sir Marshall Campbell, the collection of African material culture was moved into the new museum wing that was completed in 1974. According to the collection’s former museologist, only minor changes have been made to the arrangement of displays since they were first installed in the late 1970s (Yvonne Winters pers. comm. 2015). The exhibition consists of two permanent parts. In the first, artefacts are mostly arranged according to type, and shown in six large but portable glass cabinets with extended generalised captions that do not identify individual examples or distinguishing characteristics, regardless of significance. The second part of the permanent exhibition is made up of ten display cases that are fixed to the walls, each containing an array of traditional beaded attire from a particular southern African linguistic group, collected during the twentieth-century.

A small number of artefacts, including several metallurgical items, are not kept in display cases: weapons and shields are mounted on panels with the use of fishing line, while utensils and tools associated with food production are placed directly on the floor of the gallery. In addition to a grindstone, a basket containing maize and a wooden grain mortar, this uncaptioned arrangement includes an example of a trade hoe (Moffett et al. 2017: 7). The glass display case containing further examples of locally forged metallurgy includes remnants of two further hoes, one of which was manufactured at Msibe in Nongoma district during the reign of King Dingane kaSenzangakhona and presented to Harry Lugg in 1946 by its owner Dukuza Mdletshe, a veteran of the Ngobamakhosi *ibutho* (Campbell Collections n.d.: MM1931). The omission of these details from the display texts is not remarkable in light of the fact that very few items in this exhibition are singled out for exhaustive or individual descriptions.

Analysis

The majority of exhibitions and displays in museums that form part of this study overlook or even obscure the material culture evidence for the role of African women in domestic food production for Natal and the Zulu kingdom. In contrast, the widespread prevalence of detailed information on kings, conquest, warrior regiments, military tactics and weapons betrays a uniformity of curatorial approach in these displays that can be seen as constructing a "dominant memory" based mostly on the experience of men. The single most important group of visitors to the museums of KwaZulu-Natal is school children, which makes the concealed contribution of African women to food security and livelihoods, particularly during the pre-conquest period and nineteenth-century, a significant educational problem. Due to the generally opaque process of exhibition design, as Porter (1994: 33) points out, "the act of 'creating history' is removed from view, so that what is offered is anonymous and consequently authoritative". In this way, not only does the vital economic role of women largely disappear from exhibitions of African history, the military history of warriors engulfs and defines all other aspects of what the viewer is presented with, and often accepts without question. A significant challenge to the approach of using field-hoes as a symbol of the vast social and economic contributions made by African women, is the criticism, recently voiced by Dr Nkosazana Dlamini -Zuma, that hoes also represent back-breaking and demeaning labour (Swingler 2016: 9). When I presented part of the research this dissertation is based on, at the Archive and Public Culture workshop in Cape Town during November 2017, participants were divided over the proposed portrayal of women in museum displays primarily as agricultural workers in fields, and providers of domestic work.

This critical response to how nineteenth-century divisions of labour are depicted in South African museums, demands careful and considered research on the part of curators and writers, such as myself, engaged in the task of formulating how to incorporate material which is both difficult *and* neglected. Clearly the lack of direct documentary evidence of how women produced the crops on which homesteads depended plays a part in this curatorial omission, as does the determined approach of curators seeking to fasten objects on to received histories from secondary sources. The principal concern of curators seems to be the placing of artefacts, as physical objects, on display, without sufficient appreciation of the display format itself

as an articulation of ideas, or a form of visual and material argument, in which a variety of competing concepts and narratives may be expressed. In the case of the KwaZulu-Natal museums examined here, the accumulation of material culture relating to African communities has typically been the result of passive collecting or donations, and generally without any collections methodology consciously applied. Nineteenth-century obsessions with Zulu warfare have translated into large numbers of spears, war axes, knobkerries and shields, alongside much smaller numbers of hoes. There have been some shifts away from a singular focus on military themes, for example, during the twentieth-century, beer pots attained a much higher value in the eyes of curators, but although they are made by women, these still primarily form part of the social life of men as functional objects. Unlike ceramic beer pots though, locally forged field-hoes were hardly ever included in displays regarding the livelihoods of African women.

Moffett et al. have argued convincingly that hoes are not exclusively, or one-dimensionally a feminine tool, but rather carry multiple symbolic values dependent on their context (Moffett et al. 2017: 17). In addition to their functional purpose therefore, the comparative rareness of these tools in museum collections relative to weapons needs to be accounted for. This apparent lack of interest in the rather mundane function of hoes as farming implements, is underscored by the simple and repetitive form of design seen in the hoes. The fact that all hoes look roughly the same, and do the same thing, has placed this class of artefact outside the curatorial conventions of collecting a sequence of objects to confirm a chronological development of design. On the whole, sequential collecting omits items which have endured with few observable changes, or which are apparently simple and purely functional, such as hoes. The way in which *amageja* are collected as well as the way they are displayed, has reinforced this flat, ahistorical and timeless understanding, and thus,

> “detached from context and use, they may become insignificant within the type. It is with these simple, undifferentiated tools that women, children and less skilled men have characteristically worked, in repetitive and low-paid tasks; in service industries and support services within industries” (Porter 1994: 28).

The superficial simplicity of hoes has denied these objects a place in museum exhibitions, and with them an opportunity to present a more complex and nuanced

history of the women who owned them. By comparison, ceramic beer vessels have gained prominence as works of art and, although such objects command high prices, museums and private individuals enthusiastically collect late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century examples (Jolles 2005: 103, 109; 2015: 10, 21). It is interesting to note the inversion of manufacture and use for these two types of artefacts, as women made ceramic vessels, but men used them, while men made hoes for the use of women.

An arbitrary distinction between hoes and other locally forged metallurgical artefacts thus reinforces a hierarchical division between the perceived roles of African women and men in Natal and the Zulu kingdom. Not only is more space given to the history of war and conquest under the reign of Shaka kaSenzangakona, but descriptions of male life in regiments are usually highly differentiated with extensive details supplied. The domestic life of women in homesteads, in contrast, is described in relatively simple terms, “activities of a more general character [which] become dislocated fragments within the hierarchical scheme” (Porter 1994: 31). Although food production is always part of such descriptions, it is generally implied to be only the final stage of that process, namely grinding or crushing of cereals and cooking. In reality, all plant-based food consumed within Natal and Zulu homesteads, as well as military establishments, was not only prepared by women, but grown by women too. In the most important way possible, food security in a subsistence economy, the survival of entire populations depended on the labour power of women (McLintock 2013: 255). Use of hierarchical classification tends to oversimplify relationships in material culture, and in this case reduces the role of women within that culture, thereby negating the substantial levels of skill, hard work and expertise required.

In order for museum exhibitions of African history in KwaZulu-Natal to address the problems first raised by Wright and Mazel (1987) thirty years ago, the complexity and diversity of social experiences over the past 200 years, as well as the nature of historical change must form a greater part of displays that are undertaken. The necessity for such intervention is evident considering near identical statements of a revisionist and ideological nature concerning the role of history and museums in the region made by President Jacob Zuma and King Goodwill Zwelithini respectively. On 8 May 2011, Zuma declared a responsibility for state institutions

> The government, through the eThekwini Municipality, has undertaken to establish an interactive cultural museum and heritage centre, with the aim of acknowledging and celebrating the role played by the Zulu Monarchy in the country's liberation struggle. It also acknowledges [*sic*] the role of the Royal Family in achieving peace in the province and the country as well, as its subjects are spread throughout the country" (Zuma 2011).

Six years later, King Zwelithini repeated most of this contentious statement verbatim in a newspaper interview (Maphumulo 2017: 7), which suggests that certain political leaders view museums as a medium to convey narrow, nationalist interpretations of history. Both Zuma and King Zwelithini, in these parallel statements, appear intent on using cultural platforms to rewrite the role of the Zulu monarchy in apartheid institutions including the KwaZulu *bantustan*. Allied to this, are depictions of a static African way of life in this region, seemingly trapped forever in the ambit of a nostalgic pre-conquest military society circa 1850, prevalent in several displays described above. In order to counteract such impulses, new exhibitions will need to expand to include the process of urbanisation, development of townships and the political struggles of the twentieth-century. Among the aspects of history that require inclusion are the economic roles of women that sustained family homesteads, and in the long run the entire Zulu kingdom as well. While the number of hoes in museum collections is smaller than the number of spears, there are enough of them and there is sufficient diversity among these artefacts, as well as archival and other sources to complement and contextualise locally forged field-hoes, to investigate and convey this previously concealed element of history.

Mkhumbane Museum

The large settlement of Mkhumbane, also known as Cato Manor, played a significant role in shaping the development of Durban, as the first site of large-scale urbanisation of African people in KwaZulu-Natal (Edwards & Nuttall 1990: 4). During the early twentieth-century, although this process was organised largely along policies of racial segregation, Mkhumbane was a racially diverse urban slum located on the western periphery of the city, about 8km from the centre (Popke 2001: 739). Despite being less well known than areas such as District Six in Cape Town and Sophiatown in Johannesburg, the neighbourhood also experienced forced removals and saw black people being subjected to segregation and discriminatory laws during the apartheid era (Edwards 1994: 415). However, people removed from Mkhumbane

also retained recollections of a vibrant and creative urban area during the 1950s, "which offered opportunities not found in the sterile and monotonous formal township areas to which residents were relocated in the 1960s" (Marx & Charlton 2003: 8). After democracy was established in South Africa, the extensive land of Mkhumbane left vacant for decades was re-occupied by a large population of people who built shacks there, as it was relatively close to the city centre, and the new informal settlement of Mkhumbane was established during the 1990s (Edwards 1994: 423). In order to manage this process, in the twenty-first-century an integrated development project created formal housing, and better living conditions, as well as improved economic opportunities for residents in comparison with previous circumstances (Marx & Charlton 2003: 24).

There have been three important proposals to create museum-oriented historical displays of Mkhumbane over the past two decades. The earliest of these was produced as part of a European Union-funded initiative to develop the area during the late 1990s, following the end of apartheid (Cato Manor Development Association 1998). This report had two functions, "first to present a consolidated account of completed research; and secondly to highlight those aspects of the area's history which would feature in the cultural/preservation strategy" (Cato Manor Development Association 1998: 1). The document suggested the construction of a Community Heritage Centre, which would include interpretive displays on Mkhumbane history, its redevelopment in the 1990s and "a brewing/distilling museum" linked to the heritage of the 1959 beerhall riots, but at this time the idea of a fully-fledged museum was dismissed with the justification that it "should not be a facility for the preservation/display of precious artifacts [*sic*]: it would be too expensive and other facilities do exist in the City" (Cato Manor Development Association 1998: 8-9).

Despite the recommendations of this report, plans for a new museum began and the architectural partnership of Phil Mashabane and Jeremy Rose was appointed to draft a comprehensive design concept for a significant new museum that would be constructed on the banks of the Mkhumbane River (Mashabane Rose Associates 2004). Working with a large team of academic historians and cultural specialists, the firm developed an ambitious new proposal for

> "a centre, which conveys the cultural, social and political history of Cato Manor and its past and present inhabitants, to a local and international

> audience, establishing this as a primary and ‘must see’ attraction in Durban” (Mashabane Rose Associates 2004: 1).

Along with detailed architectural plans, a comprehensive historical narrative covered 2000 years, from a nearby Iron Age site (Whitelaw 1991: 29) up to the present, in ten “chapters” that contained thirty-two discrete topics ranging from indentured Indian labour and the Shembe Church to beerhall riots, police murders and soccer (Mashabane Rose Associates 2004: 9-18).

Once again though, these in-depth blueprints for a building and exhibition content were later abandoned when Chromomaski Architects were appointed following a public competition for museum design at the current site (Luyt 2013: 18). While construction was delayed for nearly a decade, the future museum grounds became a royal burial site when the remains of Queen Thomozile Jezangani kaNdwandwe Zulu were exhumed from Chesterville cemetery and reburied in a specially built crypt on 7 May 2011 (Miya 2011; Luyt 2013: 19). The grave of King Goodwill Zwelithini’s mother alongside the new museum building that was completed in 2015 (Nkobi 2015: 10) has added a new dimension to the exhibition concepts and storylines that were originally proposed by Mashabane Rose Associates. According to the most recent proposal (Local History Museums 2016), Mkhumbane Museum exhibits will have two distinct areas of focus, namely a consideration of Zulu history associated with the royal tomb of Queen-mother Thomozile, as well as the twentieth-century history of the Mkhumbane community, popular protests surrounding beerhalls and subsequent forced removals.

Accordingly, a new theme was developed in order to represent both the transformation of African family life from rural homesteads to urban settlements, in addition to the impact of political persecution that followed, as well as the struggle of women to sustain family life in urban areas in the face of segregation and suppression of opponents by the apartheid government. These two concepts are combined by a single central theme for the site, namely: “From homesteads to the city: the struggle of women to sustain family life at Mkhumbane” (Local History Museums 2016). The Mkhumbane Museum exhibitions currently projected are intended to portray processes of continuity and change in African society, particularly across the rural / urban divide, seen through the role of women in Zulu-speaking cultures, and in particular those living at Mkhumbane until the 1960s. This overall

theme would also allow the museum to explore how the process of urbanisation unfolded in KwaZulu-Natal, and how people from a rural and traditional society came to live in a city, namely Durban.

Originally founded as a base for ivory traders in 1824 (Guy 2013: 35), Durban grew into a more substantial settlement around the port during the second half of the nineteenth-century after the surrounding territory was annexed as a British colony (Marx & Charlton 2003: 2). Over the next hundred years, the city became the most important urban and economic area within the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region as the largest port and city on the east coast of Africa (Roberts 2008: 521). Following new regulations adopted in South Africa's democratic dispensation, the local government structure created to administer a combined municipal area of 2300 square kilometres was named eThekwini Municipality. This included an extensive coastline from the Mkhomazi River in the south to the Tongati River in the north, and from Durban Bay west to Cato Ridge. eThekwini Municipality is the largest urban area within the province of KwaZulu-Natal and third largest in South Africa, with a population of 3 442 361 people in 2011 (Lehohla 2011: 95). The migration of people from rural homesteads of this region to the city of Durban is the most significant social and cultural set of changes experienced during the twentieth-century (Swanson 1964; La Hausse 1984; Edwards 1989; Maylam 1995). Attempts to manage and control this vast movement of people gave rise to racist laws and segregation in Durban, both before and during apartheid, as well as resistance to such discrimination as families struggled to keep together despite difficult circumstances (La Hausse 1982; La Hausse 1987a; 1987b; Edwards 1988; Edwards 1994; Maylam and Edwards 1996; Brown 2010; Brown 2012). The experience of moving from farms and areas of traditional authority under *amakhosi* to urban areas was repeated all over South Africa, and the community of Mkhumbane provides insight into how that process occurred in Durban.

Despite far-reaching transformations experienced in African society over the past two hundred years, particularly when considering the period from the rise of the Zulu kingdom to the end of apartheid and advent of democracy in 1994, the family unit remains a common element of society throughout despite significant changes it has undergone during that period (Guy 2013: 24; Hannaford 2015: 38). The staff of Durban Local History Museums responsible for creating new displays for

Mkhumbane Museum, among whom I am included, have an opportunity to demonstrate such processes of change in history. As a writer and researcher in the exhibitions department, I take part in curating new forms of displays that examine the details of family life in different eras, and the display of the ways in which families were affected by specific historical events will allow visitors to place themselves at the centre of the story being told. The team of colleagues I work with are able to portray the life experience of Queen-mother Thomozile kaNdwandwe as symbolic of tradition, family life and urbanisation. Her family was from a rural area in northern KwaZulu-Natal, and she became a member of the Zulu Royal Family as the wife of King Bhekuzulu Cyprian kaSolomon (Zuma 2015). Therefore, although her background is represented by the traditions of rural homesteads, she lived in Cato Manor and was originally buried nearby at Chesterville. At the reburial of her remains it was reported that she also participated in political protests during the 1950s (Miya 2011), while her tomb alongside the museum was designed with reference to the traditional architecture of an *iqhuwane* or beehive hut (Luyt 2013: 19).

While the second and third floors of Mkhumbane Museum are intended to depict the urban community of Cato Manor, the women's protest movement from 1956 to 1959 and subsequent forced removals lasting to 1964, the first floor has a 155m^2 space dedicated to an exhibit that provides background on the social and economic contexts of rural African homesteads in the late nineteenth-century (Local History Museums 2016). This pre-conquest historical and spatial context was the source of Zulu-speaking communities that first moved to Mkhumbane during the decades that followed (Edwards 1989; Maylam and Edwards 1996). While the planned narrative briefly establishes the rise of the Zulu kingdom under King Shaka kaSenzangakhona, the focus of this museum as a site of women's history demands a perspective that extends beyond stereotypically standard views of Zulu society limited to a military culture of warriors engaged in warfare and conquest.

In the first instance, the conventional focus on military regiments and conflict in African societies of this region has often reduced women to the supporting roles of historical bystanders, victims of male aggression or obscured them entirely. Mkhumbane Museum offers an opportunity to uncover and display the variety of roles played by women in the social life and cultures of communities that were amalgamated to become the Zulu kingdom, as well as those that fell outside the

centralised authority of that state. Secondly, it is necessary to describe in as much detail as possible the considerable changes that these societies underwent during the nineteenth-century to demonstrate the principle that momentous change is not only associated with industrialisation and urbanisation at the start of the twentieth-century. The creation of Mkhumbane Museum serves to illuminate the role of women in social change, as well as the impact of such change on their lives and families. The topics described below represent a brief summary of proposed displays for the first gallery of Mkhumbane Museum.

Iron Age origins

The introduction of this exhibition establishes the antiquity of African homesteads, and stresses that important archaeological evidence for this way of life from the Iron Age is found around Durban, at Mzonjani, Nanda and even at Cato Manor (Whitelaw 1991). A full-scale replica of an iron smelting furnace will be created in cross section, below a text panel summarising how Iron Age farmers settled in this region around approximately two thousand years ago, and introduced domesticated crops and animals, as well as metallurgy. The panel briefly but clearly addresses the point that Early Iron Age communities do not represent the direct ancestors of contemporary African populations in KwaZulu-Natal.

Rise of Zulu kingdom

Further developing the concept of social continuity and change as means of understanding history in this region, the exhibition considers the rise of the Zulu kingdom. A display case containing examples of weapons from the Local History Museums collection will be accompanied by text with a direct acknowledgement that the conflict of this period has led to a conflation of African culture and warfare (Hamilton and Wright 1993: 43). A large map will indicate both the chiefdoms and other areas brought under the control of the Zulu kings by 1828, when King Shaka kaSenzangakhona was assassinated, together with a concise discussion of current academic debates of the chief causes of conflict around the turn of the nineteenth-century. These include trade at Delagoa Bay in Mozambique, as well as slaving; cattle raiding for the purposes of trade; competition for resources caused by population growth; and environmental factors such as climate fluctuation (Wright 1989; Hannaford 2015). The main element of this display however, addresses the

impact of the *amabutho* regimental system on family life, namely the absence of unmarried men for significant periods of time during their service to the state (Laband 1995; Hannaford 2015: 68), how some unmarried women were incorporated into royal *izigodlo* while others participated in a women's version of *amabutho* (Hamilton 1985: 422-464), as well as the extraction of food supplies from homesteads discussed above in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

Igeja lishis' emhlane: Homestead life in the 1850s

The reign of King Mpande kaSenzangakhona (1840-1872) is a key period to examine the many ways in which life changed or stayed the same for ordinary African people of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region. A tragic episode at the centre of this period was a civil war fought in 1856, which is rarely represented in museum exhibitions and demonstrates how Zulu militarism was turned against the kingdom's own subjects (Ballard 1981). Along with documented accounts and images of homestead life during the 1850s, this conflict thus serves as a context for the discussion of African domestic life in this particular decade. Furthermore, the 1850s are a useful counterpoint to both civil unrest led by urban women of Mkhumbane a century later and the subsequent forced removals to apartheid townships.

The main focus of this central display of the exhibition is the precarious stability of the homestead economy, both within the Zulu kingdom and the colony of Natal. This self-sufficient way of life allowed African families a large degree of independence from colonial authorities as long as they had access to land firstly in the Zulu kingdom and Natal, but later in Native Reserves and mission stations (Guy 2013). Emphasis on the way of life in an *umuzi* raises the profile of women in the strenuous effort of daily life and culture in African society of this region, while reducing stereotypical notions of a warrior identity being the main expression of lifestyles in the eighteenth- or nineteenth-centuries. A small display of Local History Museums wooden artefacts that relate to cattle, namely milk pails (*amathunga*) and meat platters (*izingqoko*), is used to discuss the gendered division of labour that includes the construction of houses and clearing of fields.

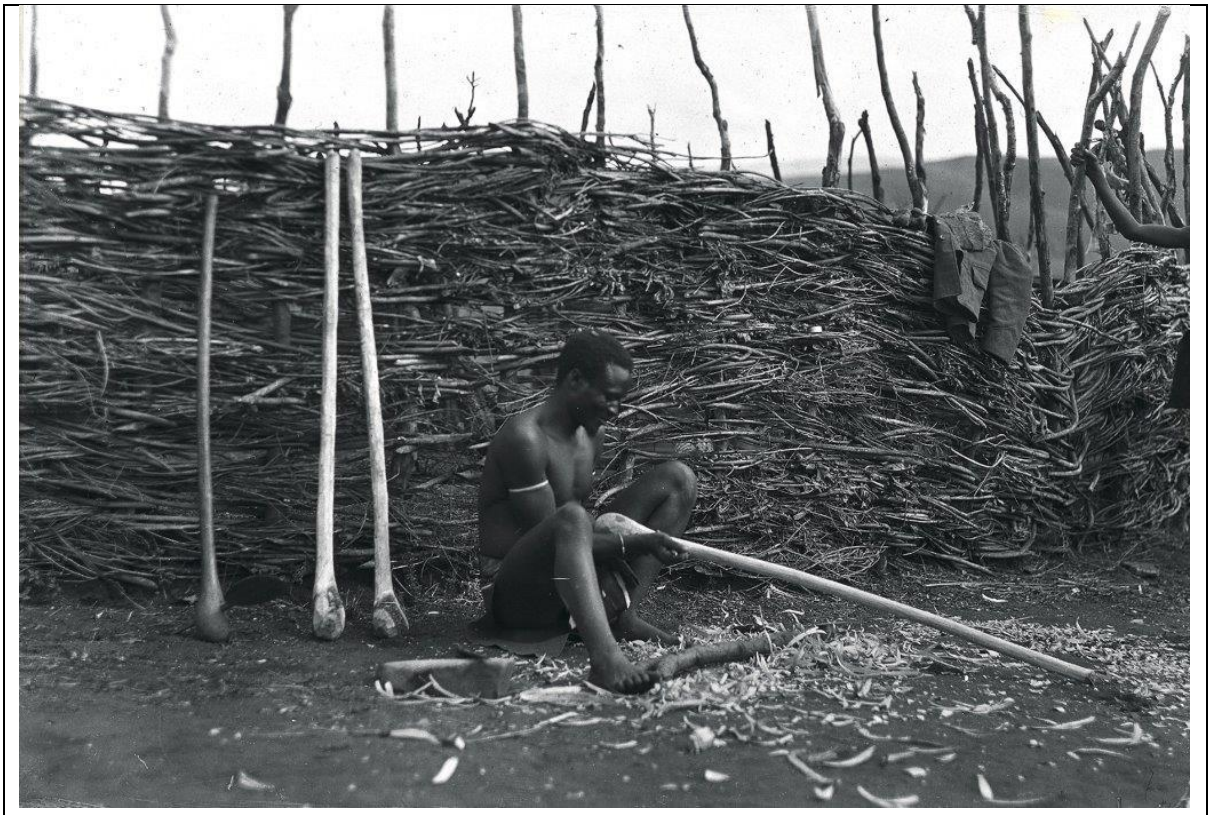


Figure 18: A man making traditional hoe shafts, photographed in northern Zululand by Alfred Duggan-Cronin in 1920 (DC 91: McGregor Museum, Kimberley). Note the blade already mounted to the wooden shaft on the far left of the image.

The central display in this portion of the exhibition relates to agriculture, food production and the cuisine of African people in the mid-nineteenth-century. On the one hand, a number of locally forged hoes are used to show the current state of such objects, along with a replica hoe blade attached to a wooden haft to illustrate their construction, and examples of the grain crops cultivated together with illustrations of various vegetables produced. Several categories of domestic utensils used in African homesteads relate to the production of traditional sorghum beer (*utshwala*), and a selection of these items is displayed in order to draw attention to continuity between this element of rural life, and later state attempts to control beer brewing and consumption in cities like Durban. Text also explains how the burden of food supply fell largely upon women in this subsistence economy, and how the spiritual ceremonies devoted to the field-fertility cult of Nomkhubulwane were practised (Lugg 1929; Gluckman 1935) to alleviate fears of famine and invoke hope of abundant crops to ensure the lives of their families. These domestic rituals are also briefly contrasted with national First Fruits festivals, which became elaborate displays of

centralised political and military authority by the Zulu elite, despite having alternative agricultural origins discussed in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

Conquest and resistance

The final textual element of this exhibition links the history of the Zulu kingdom and urbanisation of African people in KwaZulu-Natal during the twentieth-century, continued in the second gallery on the floor above. Although Africans' need for land was initially accommodated, during the second half of the nineteenth-century, white settlers made increasing demands for more land in the colony of Natal, while the independent Zulu kingdom was increasingly seen as a threat to British interests in southern Africa, leading to the invasion by the British of the kingdom in 1879 (Laband 1992). A display panel details the British annexation of Natal on 4 May 1843, along with the proclamation of Durban in 1854 and George Cato as first mayor. The land of Mkhumbane was later given to Cato as a farm, which resulted in the name Cato Manor (Edwards 1989: 1).

A central theme I have incorporated in this display is the major period of social and cultural change experienced in African societies during the second half of the nineteenth-century (Guy 1977). The most significant event was the British invasion of 1879, which resulted in significant loss of lives for many families and economic upheaval that ultimately followed the loss of political and military autonomy (Guy 1977; Laband 1992). Although the homestead economy remained a part of life for rural Africans across the region, particularly on large "Native Reserves", some people moved to cities such as Durban where they became urban residents for the first time as the system of migrant labour was introduced, particularly after the discovery of minerals in the interior (Murray 1980). From 1860 the arrival of indentured Indian labourers marked another significant change in social relations (Desai and Vahed 2010). I have used the final part of this display to draw a direct link between two related events that demonstrate far-reaching change just after the turn of the twentieth-century, namely the Bhambatha Rebellion of 1906 and introduction of the Beer Monopoly Act in 1908.

The panel briefly describes how increasing taxation of homesteads was a principle cause of the 1906 uprising, and the brutal repression that followed (Guy 2006). Two years later, the municipal administration of Durban passed a law that made the

production and sale of sorghum beer a government monopoly (La Hausse 1984: vii). This regulation was not only another form of taxation—it came to constitute an onslaught on the traditional realm of women in the production and provision of beer to men in their families, particularly around Mkhumbane, and formed the genesis of beerhalls.

The Field

An exhibition of this nature faces a challenge conveying an emotional experience of arduous women's labour over the course of many centuries, when limited only to the use of historical or archaeological artefacts. It is for this reason that it is constructive to include a piece of contemporary art that directly addresses this issue. Two exhibitions in 2012 and 2013 respectively demonstrated the meaningful way in which social history is communicated by means of artworks. In June 2012 Carlo Gamberini exhibited one hundred grindstones from his own collection, most of which were sourced from rural Mpumalanga province (Joburg Live 2012). The querns were placed in the ellipsoid space of Circa gallery in Rosebank, Johannesburg, not as ethnological artefacts of African food production but as found objects transformed into a piece of installation art that featured a large pile of maize seeds at the centre of the room. A staff member of the gallery at that time commented on her experience of being in the room with the stones, which evoked a strong empathetic feeling of the manual labour performed by the many women who used these objects to feed their families (Sikho Siyotula, pers. comm. 2017). Likewise, when Michele Mathison was selected to represent Zimbabwe at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013 he created the sculpture *Ikhuba* (2013) with modern steel hoes as part of the installation entitled *Harvest*, which was later installed at Zeitz Centre for Curatorial Excellence in the Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, in Cape Town, from 22 September 2017 to 15 January 2018. According to the introductory caption for the installation, the "work interrogates humanity's dependence on land and traditions of crop cultivation; the value of labour" (Zeitz MOCAA 2017).

In order to thus provoke an emotional or experiential reaction, rather than purely intellectual response to ideas of women's labour, the Local History Museums of Durban acquired an artwork created with a similar intent to those described above, namely *The Field* (2016) by Matlhogonolo Charity Kelapile. This installation consists

of thirty-two individual components, which are composite assemblies of cast concrete blades and wooden handles representing two different sizes of field-hoes. Exhibited at the KwaZulu-Natal Society of Artists from 26 July to 13 August 2017, the sculpture featured twenty of the larger hoes with blades 270mm long, 230mm wide and a socket 80mm high, interspersed with twelve of the smaller size with blades 175mm long, 155mm wide and a socket 60mm; all of the hoes placed together over a space roughly 6m long and 3m wide, standing on their blades with the wooden handles of varying heights upright. The sculpture creates an immediate visual impact, even without any knowledge of the context of field-hoes as gendered agricultural implements, but it also forms part of an exhibition entitled *iQhiya*, which was shown at several South African galleries in 2017. The eleven artists responsible for this exhibition are all black South African women who are members of a collective, also named iQhiya, which is dedicated to addressing the lack of representation by black women in South African art galleries.



Figure 19: View of *The Field* (2016) by Matlhogonolo Charity Kelapile at KZNSA, August 2017. (S. Kotze personal photograph 2017)

The iQhiya collective formed in 2016, and members include Thuli Gamedze, Lungiswa Gqunta, Bronwyn Katz, Bonolo Kavula, Matlhogonolo Charity Kelapile, Letlhogonolo Pinky Mayeng, Thandiwe Msebenzi, Sethembile Msezane, Sisipho

Ngodwana, Asemahle Ntonti and Buhlebezwe Siwani (KZNSA 2017). Working across a broad spectrum of disciplines, and using a variety of media in their individual practices as artists, iQhiya has also produced performance art as a collective (Leiman 2016). Their combined artists' statement at the KZNSA exhibition declared, "We realize that Black Women throughout history have been engaging in the practice of decolonising knowledge but there remains a lack of black female voices within the mainstream media" (KZNSA exhibition content), which applies equally to elements of history exhibitions in museums, as this chapter has demonstrated. The name iQhiya is a Xhosa word for a twisted piece of cloth used to support heavy loads carried on the head, but the artists have also claimed this prosaic artefact of daily life for African women as "a symbol of infinite love, of a space of solidarity among women" (Guily 2017). This notion also conveys something of the idea of social burdens carried by women, also contained in the Zulu idiom "*igeja lishish' emhlane*" used as the title for this planned Mkhumbane Museum exhibition. The use of this artwork *The Field* would therefore allow visitors to the Mkhumbane Museum exhibition to engage with a figurative representation of women's solidarity in their often unrecognised manual labour, as well as a potent artistic effort by a black female sculptor to reclaim agency. Due to the content material in adjacent displays, which explain the historical background of work performed by rural women, it would not be necessary to explain the artists' motivation in detail, but allow visitors their own interpretation of the piece.

In this way, the emotional and experiential personal response the artwork encourages in visitors to this exhibition acts to ameliorate potential criticisms that depicting agricultural work in exhibitions is demeaning towards African women. Providing a more comprehensive cultural and historical context for all forms of domestic work in nineteenth-century subsistence homesteads in this region, including a discussion of gender-based division of labour, the exhibition I have proposed in this study invites debate and discussion of this topic. As the final part of the display consists of the artwork described above, this serves as a physical space to reflect on the earlier historical content before moving to the next gallery which deals with the process of urbanisation and life in Mkhumbane during the first half of the twentieth-century.



Figure 20: Detail of *The Field* (2016) by Matlhogonolo Charity Kelapile at KZNSA, August 2017. (S. Kotze personal photograph 2017)

Summary

Thus, by means of bilingual textual displays in Zulu and English, combined with images, artefacts in glass cases, reproductions of certain objects and contemporary art, informed by my systematic study of existing collections and displays, the exhibition *Igeja lishish' emhlane* proposes to directly address the nature and extent of women's labour in rural homesteads, as well as the complex symbolism of field-hoes in African communities of the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region. This exhibition is also conceived to demonstrate how important aspects of homestead life, in particular the brewing and consumption of sorghum beer (*utshwala*) remained part of family life under the control of women in an urban setting, which led to conflict with authorities of the Native Affairs Department when these officials forbade the sale of home-brewed alcohol. The creation of such detailed historical context, and discussion of agricultural and domestic labour of African women during the nineteenth-century in this region thus serves two important functions. Firstly, it comprises a direct engagement with and redress of the near "invisibility", or one-dimensional portrayal of women in previous social history displays seen in museums of KwaZulu-Natal. Secondly, the intended content of this gallery affords a more appropriate background

to the domestic world of African families in the urban environment of Mkhumbane during the 1950s, as this broad topic is the focus of the second gallery on the floor above. *Amageja* are therefore placed at the centre of the displays, in a position of status usually accorded to military weapons. This underlines a shift of emphasis in Mkhumbane Museum from a depiction of African history as both timeless and based on warfare, to an illustration of social change over time and the crucial role of women in food production that lay at the centre of survival. It must be noted that a number of museum exhibitions which formed the basis of the research presented in this chapter are similarly capable of enacting minor modifications to their present displays to achieve the same effect. In particular the Durban Local History Museums display in Pinetown, Rattray collection at Fugitives' Drift Lodge, the *Ixhiba* display at KwaKunje cultural village, Talana Museum, and Killie Campbell Africana Library have sufficient space to allow for artefacts to be arranged in new settings with captions that introduce both the concept of agricultural production, as well as the role of women in this important economic work.

6

Conclusion

For almost one thousand five hundred years, from the fourth-century advent of farming in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region until nineteenth-century imported iron merchandise replaced the products forged by African metallurgists and blacksmiths, the bulk of locally smelted iron was made into field-hoes (Maggs 1991: 136). Considering the vast amount of metal produced over that time and the numbers of individual *amageja* used, remarkably few examples of these artefacts still exist in the twenty-first-century. Susceptible to rust, iron field-hoes also suffered abrasion in the soil and were worn down to the tangs before being repurposed as smaller blades (Moffett 2017: 3). Spears were affected by the same physical wearing away over time, yet they maintained a greater value (Radebe pers. comm. 2017). During the late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century, when private donors gave collections of locally forged metallurgical objects to museums, most were examples of spears (Maggs 1991: 131; 136). In the second half of the twentieth-century, archaeological evidence established the long Iron Age chronology (Mason et al. 1973), and the numbers of hoes in museum collections increased as a result of hoards that were discovered (Maggs 1991: 131).

The research I have undertaken in this dissertation examined archival and historical sources relating to metallurgical collections in eight museums in KwaZulu-Natal, as well as the collections themselves, to establish if reasons could be determined for

Table 1: Ratio of local field-hoes to spears in eight KZN metallurgical collections

Collection	***Local hoes***	***Exotic hoes***	***Spears***	***% Local hoes***
Durban Local History	4	2	48	07.7
Msunduzi-Voortrekker	6	0	12	33.3
Talana, Dundee	8	4	25	24.2
KwaZulu-Natal	34	18	92	27.0
KwaZulu Cultural	10	0	70	12.5
Fugitives' Drift Lodge	18	2	64	22.0
Phansi	0	1	3	0.00
Campbell Collections	9	4	10	47.4
TOTAL	89	31	324	21.5

the scarcity of traditional field hoes relative to spears. Subsequent to a detailed survey of these sources and collections, described in Chapter Four, I found that the number of spears in these specific museums is more than double the number of

field-hoes (Table 1 above). While I could not ascertain any single substantive reason for the disparity, I concur with Maggs that a general preoccupation with African military history among mostly male collectors resulted in a bias towards spears in museum collections (Maggs 1991: 131). The principal obstacle I encountered in my attempt to explain the aforementioned disparity or bias is an almost complete lack of evidence in accession registers regarding field-hoes in the eight collections. Throughout the twentieth-century, when most of the locally forged *amageja* entered these museums and private collections they were treated largely as serial typologies or symbolic of indigenous mining and metallurgy rather than for their intrinsic value as agricultural tools. Among one-hundred-and-twenty hoes in eight collections, of which eighty-nine were forged within the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region, only three are identified by the names of their former owners. For the remaining eighty-six artefacts, very little evidence exists, beyond where they came from, the name of the donor and the date of donation.

I have further argued above that, despite a lack of conclusive evidentiary proof in this regard, pervasive patriarchy can be seen as the ultimate basis of this discrepancy. A division of labour, recorded in observations from the eighteenth to nineteenth-centuries and attested in oral histories, assigned the task of crop cultivation almost entirely to African women (Guy 1980: 114; Beall 1981). The pre-capitalist subsistence economy practised in this region, according to Guy, allowed male homestead heads to appropriate the surplus labour of women in their households and consequentially resulted in a gender-based social division (Guy 1987: 24). The establishment of more centralised and stratified political authority, first in the form of the Zulu kingdom and afterwards the colonial government in Natal, placed further pressure on the degree of “qualified subordination” experienced by African women (Wright & Hamilton 1989: 70). Care must, however, be taken to recognise the significant agency of women in the domestic sphere, for although they carried the tremendous burden of providing food security in extremely difficult environmental circumstances (Hannaford 2015: 88-89), as wives within patriarchal homesteads African women were also endowed with rights to land and a certain degree of control over the crops they produced (Healy-Clancy & Hickel 2014: 6), although homestead heads ultimately determined the distribution of food from family grain pits (Wright 1981: 89; Guy 1987: 24). Field fertility rites practised during the nineteenth-century

created brief inversions of authority in homesteads, which have been interpreted as "rituals of rebellion" instituted to recognise the gruelling demands of agricultural labour (Gluckman 1963: 113).

Although no records exist of how women felt about cultivation or field-hoes, or what these objects represented in the lives of individual women, something may be gleaned about the general attitude towards agricultural labour from a number of Zulu-language idioms based on *amageja*. The phrase "*igeja lishis' emhlane*" is representative in this regard, and means "the hoe burns on the back" (Nyembezi 1990: 113). This idiom is interpreted to mean a great burden or onerous obligation, such as women endured in crop cultivation[7]. What is also evident though, is that field-hoes are not accorded the same symbolic value as spears. Following the colonial conquest of Natal in 1843, but particularly after various military engagements in the territory of the Zulu kingdom between 1879 and 1906, locally made African spears came to represent the masculine embodiment of male military prowess (Maggs 1991: 131). This idea is undeniably represented in several exhibitions I have examined in this dissertation, many of which were created during the late-1990s (Rodéhn 2008: 222). Zulu military history, accompanied by displays of weapons and detailed discussions of tactics, was perceived as a suitable and constructive way in which to address the question of political transformation within the museum environment in the immediate post-apartheid period(Guest 2012: 178-179).

While spears have an undeniable association with persistent colonial notions of African military prowess, field-hoes have rather more negative connotations with hard manual labour. A drawback arises therefore, in ascertaining the most suitable and appropriate method of documenting and displaying the historical context of this type of work which may be considered a demeaning chore by many contemporary African women (Swingler 2016: 9). As my research has identified a relative scarcity of hoes in museum displays, particularly in comparison with weapons, addressing the overall absence of this type of object in local exhibitions must be weighed against a contested view of manual labour. An opportunity in this regard is presented at the new Mkhumbane Museum, where I am currently working with a group of my

[7] Discussed in Chapter 3 above, p 44.

colleagues to develop displays representing the transformation of African domestic life during the process of large scale urbanisation in the early twentieth-century (Local History Museums 2016). In these proposed displays it is important to acknowledge both that the work of crop cultivation was difficult, and apparently demeaning from some perspectives, but it nonetheless forms a significant part of the history of the region and often goes unrecognised. While growing food is no longer a vital task, or demeaning work assigned only to women (Swingler 2016: 9), active endeavours must be made to draw attention to a domestic chore that has been concealed in written accounts and museum depictions of African homesteads, as there are contemporary comparisons with imbalanced allocations of housework based on gender. The final chapter of this dissertation describes proposed displays for the Mkhumbane Museum in Durban which focus on the domestic realm in nineteenth-century African societies of this region. These displays emphasise the communal nurturing context of food production as the historical basis of later economic activity women undertook in the urban setting. Therefore, a display on field-hoes and crop cultivation potentially serves as a point of departure to debate the way that certain tasks within the home remain defined by gender.

Though it is important to acknowledge current views regarding the nature of agricultural labour performed by women, the total of almost one hundred locally forged *amageja* in eight collections within KwaZulu-Natal nonetheless represents an under-acknowledged record representing the material culture of subsistence farming in this region. The relative absence of field-hoes in museum displays, in contrast with the near ubiquity of weapons, reflects the degree to which one class of metallurgical artefacts has been privileged above the other. Consistent bias in this regard rouses doubts that this situation has persisted by chance, and suggests to me that the treatment of field-hoes by collectors and curators in the past is evidence of their association with, and a perpetuation of, the under-appreciated contribution of African women to the subsistence economy of homesteads in the Phongolo-Mzimkhulu region prior to the twentieth-century.

Appendix 1

Interview with Sihle Bobby Radebe

kwaMuhle Museum, 130 Bram Fischer Road, Durban

23 February 2017: 9h07

Steven Kotze: Thank you very much for coming to Durban today, and for speaking with me. Can you please let us your full names and where you were born?

Bobby Radebe: Sihle Bobby Radebe, born in Mtunzini District.

[Later with use of a map, Mr Radebe's home was located at Nteneshane, close to both the Higher Primary School and Ekuphumuleni Clinic. His homestead and workshop containing a storeroom with his metallurgical collection are approximately 1km south of the Mhlatuze River, 5km by unpaved road from the "Malandela" tar road between Empangeni and Eshowe, and 13km west of central Empangeni (-28.78395, 31.76033)]

SK: and what year?

BR: 18 / 11 / 1963

SK: and where do you live now?

BR: I still live there at my born place.

SK: and what work do you do?

BR: I am a qualified boilermaker, I work with steel.

SK: so when did you first become aware of these amageja, these locally made ones?

BR: it was 1987, I used to go around my homestead, it was about 80m or 100m, I found one. They had just burned the veld and I found one lying on the veld, but I didn't know what it was. I first thought it was a chisel, but no, it was too flat at the front here. I thought it was a brick bolster, but now the shank was square and tapered. I didn't know what it is, but I took it home and put it on my steel trunk. I found one in 1987; in early 1996 I find the second one. They had just established a sugar cane plantation and long one of the contours I found that they had just dug a trench for the pipe culvert and on the soil that came there, I saw one piece of steel protruding from the soil there. When I went to retrieve it, I found that it was the same as the one that I have got at home, but now I didn't know what was it. When I went to home just before you enter my gate, there's a store there, there was another man sitting there drinking sorghum beer, one old man, and I asked him what was it, and he told me "no, it was the hoes that were made by the forefathers." And my interest grew from there. In that year, later that year, Empangeni Museum opened up to the public. I went there, I found that the museum is running but now they haven't got one, and having saw the Harrison Collection, that inspired me to start my own collection.

SK: so when you saw the Harrison Collection, that inspired you. And before you spoke to that old man in 1996, you had no idea of how these things were made, or nothing like that?

BR: no, hey, blank, blank, blank [*laughing*]

SK: was there any particular reason, other than that you had found these two hoes, that made you interested in amageja? It was just by accident that you found them?

BR: it was just by accident, because I've never been to the museum before. Going to the museum at Empangeni, that was my first time to go to the museum.

SK: and what made you go there?

BR: no, I used to read the newspaper and I found in the newspaper, I found that there was a story that the museum will be opened that year.

SK: in 1996?

BR: in 1996, later, and I went there.

SK: you must have seen imikhonto in imizi, so you saw them, but you weren't aware that there was also traditional hoes?

BR: ay, I was blank, because even school we never heard anything about museum or amageja. We were never told / taught anything, because at that time, ay there was nothing.

SK: so you weren't aware, even then, that people will collect, museums will collect spears and amageja and things like that? Only when you saw the Harrison Collection for the first time?

BR: I went there, I found that at the Empangeni Museum they had spears, imikhonto, but no they didn't have amageja.

SK: now after you found those two, the one in the veld and the second one in the sugar cane culvert, how then did you find all the others that you have?

BR: from there, ay, I tried to get it from the people around there. I used to talk with the old people, ay, some told me, "oh, it was at home," but now they don't know what happened to it because in most of the cases you find that the children will play with it and then it gets lost. But I did find there was another woman there, old woman, next to my place [name: Ndayiso Shozi], she used to hoe the land with hand, ja, with one of the new ones, that you bought from the store. I told her that I am looking for one, luckily when she work her plot here, she found one. Some months later she found another one in the ground, and some months later she found [another one], I got three from her because the site they were in, it had been inhabited before.

SK: now that old lady, is she still alive?

BR: ay, she passed away early 1990s.

SK: but you have the hoes that she found, as part of your collection?

BR: [affirmative nod]

SK: and when did you start looking in scrapyards?

BR: see, from 1992 I used to go to the scrapyards to look for re-usable steel, axles and stuff like that, but at that time I didn't know anything about amageja. But now if I had seen one at a scrapyard I would have collected it because it fascinated me, see, but now at the scrapyards, I think it was '96, I managed to get a lot of it from 2008 because in 2008 there was a scramble for scrap metals because at that time the scrap metal dealers for the first time paid R2 / kg. You find that were a lot of people going around from home to home looking for some scrap things, and those people from inland, Mahlabathini and there [abouts], they used to bring some steelware with old hoes at times.

SK: so only after 2008 were you find more hoes [in scrapyards]? Mr Radebe, I can tell you that you have done a great service to the history of your people by saving those hoes because I am sure there are many that got melted and sent to China!

BR: ay, a lot! You see I talked to, there was another old man that I knew, he would never go past a bottle lying on the ground, and he passed away. Before he passed away, he gave one lady permission to collect steel from his yard. After passing away, when I was looking for amageja, I talked to his son. I showed him one, and he told me, “Oh, at home there was a lot of this stuff,” and we went there; he could still remember they were on the boot of the motor car that was parked just outside. When we went there we found that, oh, everything that was there was taken by the lady.

SK: you don’t remember the name of that old man who died, with the hoes in the boot?

BR: his surname was Zungu.

SK: and they also lived close by you?

BR: plus minus 700m or so.

SK: and the old lady who found the three [hoes] in the field, what was her name?

BR: her surname was Shozi, and the name they used to call her Ndayiso.

SK: how many amageja do you have in your collection now?

BR: I think it’s more than 50, more than 50, but what I did, the original ones, I think are more than, they are close to 45 or so and the other ones I think are trade goods. See, when I went to the scrap metal [dealers] you can see that I used to buy anything, I used to find anvils, blacksmith tools, grinding stones, not grinding stones, grinding wheels.

[Radebe produced receipts for all the ironmongery and goods purchased from 3 branches of Reclamation Group scrap metal dealers in Empangeni and Richards Bay, with the weight and value of the metal he bought recorded, and occasionally a handwritten description on the back.]

SK: so this is a hoe? [Referring to a receipt]

BR: no, that one is for an anvil.

SK: oh, these are all [for] anvils. I see.

BR: there is no-one that is written “a hoe” here, but I used to get it just to give you a picture that I used to frequent the scrap metal dealer at least twice a week. Because on that one there, it was a grinding wheels and old drills and [TAPE? indistinct], that are used on a drilling machine powered by hand. How much is that one there?

SK: it says 3.5kg.

BR: no, there’s another one, I think it’s 1.something…

SK: yes, that’s a hoe? This is very interesting. [Receipts for hoes are documented only as “Unprocessed iron” in the form.] So you have more than 50, but you said that some are trade goods and some are modern hoes, how many do you think are like this, traditional hoes?

BR: the traditional, I think they are more than 40.

SK: the majority.

BR: and plus minus 10, [SK: at least], I think they are the trade goods.

SK: and the majority of those 40, plus minus, you think come from the scrap yards, or you found them in the fields?

BR: no, I used to get from the scrap yards because people used to bring [WITH / USED? indistinct] steel, even though those people, some of the people who worked there, because you see if you bring steel to the scrap yard, they get weighed and then they are going to offload in the yard, and those people who work inside the scrap yard, they will offload. If it is a bakkie they will offload piece by piece there, and I showed them what I was looking for, and they'd keep it for me. But now I used to go there because there is some other stuff that I used to look for.

SK: excellent, and if you found the hoes in the umuzi, you know, if you went to someone's house and you asked them do they have amageja, would you, do you pay those people for it or do you just ask them for it?

BR: no, ay, you can't just get it without paying [*laughing*].

SK: of course, it's true.

BR: because that lady, I used to pay her R100 a piece.

SK: really, the old lady, Mrs Shozi?

BR: the old lady, ja Mrs Shozi. At the scrap yard they are cheap because they were selling per kg. They started in 19…, early 2000 it was R2 [per kg] and it went up to R2.50 / kg. I never paid a lot for it, but now I used to, ay, I had to travel a lot.

SK: yes, of course, it's expensive; and you're still employed, or are you retired?

BR: no, I'm self-employed. Otherwise I wouldn't have time to go to the scrap metal dealers and…

SK: that's very interesting, and you said you would pay someone like Mrs Shozi R100. Do you sometimes pay more than that, or less than that for the hoe?

BR: no, at times it depends because I did find another one that was badly worn, I used to give less than that, but for Mrs Shozi, ay, they were still good.

SK: …excellent condition?

BR: although they were used, but now the condition was good. Some others, you find that, ay, they are worn up to here [indicating where tang joins blade of a hoe], just a…

SK: you can see even in my ones [the printed survey index], many are just a small piece that is left of the blade. I would be interested to photograph you hoes, if you don't mind? Just to record it, just because I think what you have done is really interesting and the museum, you know, understands that it is your collection and, I mean, that's your… they are completely safe. Um, just because you can see your personal collection if half of the rest of the province's [*laughing*], so it's really interesting that you have 50 hoes, you know, 40 of which are traditional hoes because at Maritzburg, in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum, the biggest collection is 30 [*laughing*]. So you have more than any other museum.

BR: there at Legislature House, or Natalia [meaning Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum]?

SK: next to Legislature House, in, next to the police station, in Jabu Ndlovu Street.

BR: oh, the Natal Museum?

SK: the Natal Museum, the old Natal Museum, it's now KwaZulu-Natal [Museum]. So you have even more hoes than them and they have a big collection. So, just to record the condition, and also I would like to measure them, but I mean you must feel safe that your hoes are yours, you know, the museum does not want to confiscate them or anything like that, it's just to document them and record them. Anyway we can talk about that later. The next question I am interested in, is why did you decide that you must collect these hoes?

BR: no, you see, after seeing the Harrison Collection there, ay, it came up to my mind that, ay, maybe one day I will have a, I can open up a museum myself. Because even the Harrison Collection, they had a museum at Mtubatuba but due to burglaries, and then they decided to donate it to Empangeni.

SK: yes, ok. So you were inspired by that collection? So right from the beginning you had, after 1996, you had the idea of exhibiting these hoes as history, ok? That's very interesting. And then, I also would like to know, ah, what are your plans, for what should happen to your hoes, one day?

BR: ay, you see, ay, I'm trying to build up a collection so that, if it happens, I can open a museum, a small museum.

SK: but you don't have any plans beyond that?

BR: no.

SK: and what do your children think about your hoe collection, do they understand the value of it?

BR: no, not yet, because they are still young you see.

SK: and they are stored at your house, at your workshop or something?

BR: no, I keep it in my house.

SK: and, um, because you are aware of the, you know, the rusting, have you done anything to protect them against the rust, or you just clean the dirt off it?

BR: no, you see, some of it, I did apply oil on it, but now I find that even if I apply oil here, there's some scale that come. That's why I came here, because maybe you can give me a clue what to do to stabilize the rust?

SK: even myself, I'm not sure because you can see this hoe is not treated, but I think it's because it was being handled, people were touching it, so it kind of gets, you know, like some kind of protection, I'm not sure [indicating an example in the personal collection of Steven Kotze with shiny patina]. What I am going to do, is I will ask the people at KwaZulu-Natal Museum what is the best…

BR: way to protect…

SK: protect it from rust, because I mean if you look at these pictures that I showed you [the research index], some are them are rusted and then they continue rusting, they get that scale, but um, it's ah, you know it's something that we need to know about and I will find out for you.

BR: because if they were kept inside the house, no, they haven't got problem, but those that were underground…

SK: or in the veld, I know…

BR: now if it was lying on the veld, here, it hasn't got problems, but now it can be covered by ground, that's a problem because when you find it, you find it has got a soil it rusts. But now, if it's lying on the open air, then that rust comes off. Ja, just like that one that I gave you, I donated last time…

SK: yes, that one, it's lying up there on my shelf. Ja, that, that, you know, even that whole plate kind of lifted off. That's very interesting. But I mean, I have also been wondering what is the question of how are these things best conserved, how they are protected, so um, I will find out and I will get back to you on that. Um, the next question I have here for you, number 15, is um, do you know of anyone else there in Zululand, Mtunzini, Empangeni that collected amageja?

BR: ay, I would be lying to you [*laughing*], I would be lying, I would be lying to you.

SK: no, I knew that is the answer, but I have to ask you because you know, you are the only person. OK, um, and um, since you've been collecting them and you now have this large collection of 50 amageja, um, what have you learned about the hoes since then, since you started building up your collection? Because I see you have brought a history book with you [Readers Digest Illustrated History of South Africa (DATE)], and have you been trying to find more information about them?

BR: ja, I do try to find some information, but I think it was last year, when I read a newspaper about, the Zulu one, I can't remember but I think it was Isolezwe, and I think that professor is Jabulani Maphalala, he wrote about the amaHlubi clan. He wrote there, most of the people of the amaHlubi clan were metal workers.

SK: that's right…

BR: ja, I think they are my forefathers. I am Hlubi too, Radebe.

SK: oh, are you a Hlubi? Of course, yes, it's the name, the isibongo of Hlubi. OK, that's right, that's interesting, so you see a connection between your forefathers and your own trade as a boilermaker, and now you are even collecting the hoes.

BR: …the hoes. And there he wrote that for one [hoe] they used to charge a goat, and for three they'll charge a beast, a cattle, a head of cattle. So you see, they were expensive. But now they were cheaper because they was no other way to pay for it.

SK: no, it's true, um, and I mean, I've read also about, um, the Shezi of Sigananda.

BR: Sigananda, oh, Nkandla…

SK: Nkandla, who also made metal and that was their business. I mean they made the iron, the made imikhonto, they made amageja, and you know, as you say, there was no money to pay, people had to pay in animals.

BR: livestock [*laughing*].

SK: so those guys, they became wealthy from it you know, because I mean, spears are important, because they are needed for protection and stuff like that, but hoes are essential. I mean, otherwise people couldn't eat. It's like, for me, I'm surprised that I'm the first person who is doing this research on amageja, to find out what do we know about how the amageja were made, and where they were made and how many are left, and you know, I was thinking, so many people are researching, you know, the wars, with the English, and the

Boers, you know, and the spears are important, but you know, people weren't fighting all the time, but every year they were planting.

BR: ja, every year.

SK: every year they were planting, so um, it would be amazing to know how many amageja were made, in the whole time, you know, that people were living here.

BR: oh there were thousands…

SK: …thousands, and one guy at KwaZulu-Natal Museum told me that the very old ones, we don't find them so much, ngoba [because] the old people were recycling them. So when it gets small, they take 2 or 3 and they make a new hoe.

BR: even if they don't make a new hoe, they use it for something else.

SK: yes, like a knife or something. Make a blade on it, or something like that.

BR: also on that that book Inqolobane [Inqolobane Yesizwe, 10th edition (1992)], I read that for digging they used to use, just a sharp stick…

SK: ja, induku.

BR: …maybe it could happen with those [hoe tangs] that are long, once they are worn here [indicating the blade], then they can use that shank for digging roots and shafts like that, you see. Because at home there, I have got one that is completely worn here, but you see there, the shank is long, so they could use it for something else.

SK: for digging, yes, that's right. In fact, there's a lady that I know, who lives at KwaCele down near Port Shepstone and last year, two years ago, she built a house there and, um, I know the guys who built the house for her, and when they were building they found a long piece of iron, straight one, um, and they used it, unfortunately, they used it for a chisel. But when I saw it afterwards, I realised that it is in fact the shank [tang] of igeja, and it had only a small piece of the blade on the top left, and that's what they used to hit. They didn't know what it was, they thought it was just an old, like a spike, and it was actually, I think, I think it was, igeja, very old one. But ja, no, it's very interesting. And um, and how often do you go now to the Empangeni Museum? Because that guy that I spoke to, Mchunu, that, he gave me, …what is his name, you have a friend there that works at the…

BR: oh, Nxumalo?

SK: sorry, Nxumalo, ja, um, so do you still visit the museum often?

BR: no, I did go, I think it was three weeks ago, because after donating one [hoe] to you, I went there and I donated one there, and on that day I did have a look at their collection there.

SK: the other thing we would like to talk to you about, is um, you know, we're building this new museum, um, at Mkhumbane, Cato Manor, and um, we would be interested to host your collection for a temporary exhibition. Not forever, even for 3 months, just to show people your whole collection and then you take it back to Mtunzini…

BR: [*laughing*]

SK: …but that is for you to decide. The museum will only be opened next year, 2018, and we can talk about it more, um but, you know, I think people will be very surprised to see the Radebe collection in the museum, and as I said, even if it's only there for 3 or 4 months at

the opening of the new museum, as part of that opening, temporary exhibition, but I don't want to put any pressure on you, I just want you to think about it and maybe over time when we, when our relationship develops, I can maybe come up there to Mtunzini, um, to see, to photograph the others, if you say that's OK? Only when you say it's OK, um, but, it's something for you to think about because your story is very important, you know, I think if people, if other people in KwaZulu-Natal realise what you're doing, they can start the same thing. It might be too late, you know…

BR: ay, you see the problem with the scrap metal dealers, ay…

SK: it's gone now.

BR: there's no place that's not been worked.

SK: mmm, I know that because when I was living at Nqutu [between 1997 and 2001], and used to drive, I used to drive there, from Durban through Msinga, you would see lots of [metal], even scrap cars in the veld, just lying there, in the dongas.

BR: …but now you won't see anything.

SK: everything is removed, everything! There's no more scrap, it's all gone to China. [*laughing*]

BR: you see, at my side there, you will find women going from home to home, and those with the bakkies get people to collect and then they pay them what they pay them and then, to the scrap metal dealers.

SK: and it's not happened, um, with the old spears? You know, because people keep the spears?

BR: ay, no, ayayay… no, no, they keep the spears, they keep the spears. No, ay, you can't find a spear at the scrap metal [dealers], nothing. I did saw one, it was badly worn, it was badly worn, but ay, you won't, you won't find them at the scrap metal dealers because the people know… the value of the spears [34'36"]. You see the problem that most of the old spears they haven't got the shaft [wooden haft] because when the owner of the dies, they will use the spear to pinpoint the grave and his son will stand naked, holding the spears, and after, and during, when they bury him, then they will broke the shaft [haft] of the spear and bury the shaft with the owner. That's why most of the spears hasn't got the shaft [haft].

SK: do you mean the wood [haft]?

BR: ja, the wood.

SK: OK, so they take, they break the wood off, and they bury it with the person?

BR: ja, with the person.

SK: inside the coffin, or next to the coffin?

BR: no, outside the coffin.

SK: OK, ja. OK.

BR: but they used to do that long time ago.

SK: yes, ja, I know.

BR: now they don't do it anymore.

SK: OK, but the blades, the metal part is still, in the house.

BR: that's why mostly, in most homesteads you will find the blades only.

SK: yes, OK.

BR: without the shaft [haft] wood.

SK: so, do you think that is why the blades are valued, because the belonged to the family, they see the spears are [valuable], you know, used to belong to the father or something like that?

BR: ja.

SK: OK, and that's why they are not sold?

BR: hai [no], ay, you won't find the spears at the scrap metal dealer because… That scramble for scrap steel it lasted for, it was 2008, 9, 10, 11, 12, and after 2012, hai [no] it died out, because even that scrap metal dealer where I used to get a lot of stuff, it even closed down.

SK: closed down? OK, there wasn't enough left?

BR: hai [no], they were not getting enough steel, you see, and it closed down.

SK: um, so, um, in your opinion, um, do you think that spears are more important than hoes?

BR: no, both are important, but the hoes are very important because you can't survive without [*laughing*], without eating, you see.

SK: that's interesting.

BR: because the spears are just for defence, but the hoes, ayayay, they are life and bread.

SK: ja, excellent. Mr Radebe, thank you very much for coming here today and talking to me, and letting our friendship grow [*laughing*], because you and me are interested in the same thing, and there are not a lot of people who know about these things, You are one of the few experts on amageja that, and I've been looking now for a few years now into these things, and you can see all the photos that I took, um, but, um, next time, um, you must let me know, when you have thought about it a bit, and also, if you're not, if you're not interested in me to come up and see them and photograph them and measure them, then that's also fine. I mean, I will understand, it's, those are your private collection, but um, I would also like to tell you that I would like to include them in my study because it turns out that you have biggest collection [*laughing*] in KZN, and I think they are very important.

BR: where do you study, at Wits? My degree is…

SK: at Wits, ja.

BR: that Wits Department of Archaeology have got that. That's why I brought that book, [indicating photograph (Readers Digest Illustrated History of South Africa 1988), page 31], what do you think that is?

SK: that's for digging, it's like a pick.

BR: oh, that is, that is what is on my mind. That was a short pick, and also there was a long pick. Let me show you something here… that is what I have been thinking, because that one is a pick, but mine is damaged a bit here, it has been, you see that one?

SK: oh that, yes [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 1]. Ja, it's interesting what you're saying, um, I've seen this type of damage [hammered lip of blade]. Many, many of the hoes have it, and I think that they put it in the ground, and they used it to hit something [as an improvised anvil], but um, I mean, it's interesting what you say, um, about a hoe like this, because it might be a pick, but what they say at the KwaZulu-Natal Museum, they've got a lot like this, they have got at least 10 or 15 that look like this one, um, and they say, um, these are hoes. They're just very old ones. This one, is maybe 300 years old?

BR: no, but if you see that one here [illustration in book], it can't be a hoe, it can't be a hoe.

SK: that one, is not, but they say, um, they say this is a hoe. This one, I can show you, on my pictures here, um…

BR: what I think of, with the, the oldest one, they were having a, a bigger shank [tang], like that one, but the shank wasn't, wasn't so long. Because the more you handle it, you get an idea of what was going on.

SK: ja, no, I agree, I agree with you, um, where is this other one? …my dog [*laughing*; an aside comment on an unrelated photograph]. So where's that big one? [Scrolling through photographs to find a specific reference] …this one here [KZNM collection Cat. No. 75/62] is 552mm long…

BR: …that one? I've got another one, ay, I think it's almost the same, same size, or close to 500 [millimetres], ja…

SK: yes, so, and they say, um, those are hoes…

BR: but if you, if you can look at it, it hasn't got that [indicating ridge extending into blade of hoe]

SK: yes, it doesn't have that thing there, yes. I mean the thing is that… um, the thing is that they, um, you know, you can see these, these er, shank [tang] is very long, they very big, the very th…, some of them are 20mm thick and 30mm wide here. I mean they are very, very big, and but, the guys in the museum say that all of these things, even I mean, this one here looks like a hoe [Cat. No. 80/37], um, these here [indicating other large examples in KZNM collection], they are big heavy objects, and they tell me they are all hoes. Even this thing [illustration: Readers Digest Illustrated History (1988), page 31], they will tell you, the archaeologists will tell you that this is a hoe, not a pick, but we don't know.

BR: but if you can compare that one [illustration: Readers Digest Illustrated History (1988), page 31] with that one [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 1], then you will see that, whether it matches or not.

SK: no, I agree. I 100 percent agree with you, that it looks from the phot, um, more like, um, a pick, but um, the archaeologists tell us there is only one name for this, which they say is hoe.

BR: [*laughing*] no, because even there on that book here [indicating: Inqolobane Yeswizwe 10th edition (1992)], they've got umgxala, which is, which is a pick. Ja, … I think it's page 23 or so [page 24], I can't remember where… and there's also isimbo, the isimbo was lighter than that one, because I asked some…, I asked one old man, he told me they used to fit it with a long shaft, long handle, so that they can dig…

SK: …dig properly.

BR: ja. Because that one [umgxala], they used it for digging burial chamber, for the…

SK: oh, specifically for the burial chamber, this one here?

BR: ...burial chamber and food pits.

SK: oh, this one here?

BR: because they were, ja umgxala and there's another one, isimbo.

SK: …for burial.

BR: ja, even for digging the, the crude iron [ore].

SK: OK, oh, mining. Yes, ja.

BR: because, you, let's say you, if it is a mine, you can't use something longer, you need something short so…

SK: it's in a hole.

BR: ja, because they used it for food pits too, to make it wider at the bottom.

SK: yes, yes… ja, what you are saying makes a lot of sense, and I agree with you, I'm just telling you what the archaeologists say [*laughing*]. Um, so I'm interested here, in this list of, here, [Inqolobane Yesizwe 10th edition (1992), p 23], so, ubambo? [Number 1 on list]

BR: that was a scraper.

SK: oh, scraper, ok. And then igcema [number 3 on list]

BR: no, it was, what you call, a needle for, for doing thatching, thatching.

SK: oh, thatching needle, ok. I just want to write these things down because it's useful having you here today. Thatch needle, ok, I know what igeja is. Ugence? [Number 5 on list, page 24]

BR: Ugence? Uh, bushknife.

SK: bushknife, OK.

BR: The problem is that everything they made had a blade and shank [tang], now it's quite difficult to differentiate which is which.

SK: [*laughing*] yes, which is which. And igudu? [Number 6 on list]

BR: no, for smoking dagga.

SK: OK. Ugxa? [Number 7 on list]

BR: ugxa, ugxa, oh, small, that was a small pick, just another name for it.

SK: yes, ok, and then ikhuba is just another way for igeja? [Number 8 on list]

BR: for igeja.

SK: ilembe [another synonym for hoe; number 9 on list] I know, umbaxa? [Number 10 on list]

BR: umbaxa, its either a snuff spoon, or a snuff, or a double, ah, a double-headed spoon or… a double-headed snuff spoon.

SK: OK, a double spoon, a double-headed snuff spoon. Imbazo is an axe [Number 11 on list]

BR: ja, an axe.

SK: imbemba? [Number 12 on list]

BR: they had a small, small axe for, er, the war axe, war axe.

SK: OK, war axe, OK. K, you told me what umgxala [Number 13 on list], umhhebhe? [Number 14 on list]

BR: umhhebhe? Umhhebhe, a knife, a Zulu knife…

SK: oh, a Zulu knife.

BR: …that were used by women when cooking.

SK: it says, "Ummese wesintu owawumise okomkhonto…"

BR: …okomkhonto. "Almost the same shape as the… [spear]"

SK: oh, "…ngamakhosikazi lapo efula" and in the field.

BR: when they are reaping maize from the field.

SK: reaping. OK. Impondwe is a horn, is that right? Number 15, impondwe.

BR: impondwe… Oh, I asked man what was that, impondwe. You see the shoulder blade, of the oxen, of the ox, they told me they used to use it as a hoe.

SK: yes, oh, OK, a shoulder blade…

BR: a shoulder blade, because it's flat like that, ja.

SK: shoulder blade, used as hoe. Impuco? [Number 16 on list]

BR: no, a shaving blade.

SK: OK, 16, razor. Umukhwa? [Number 17 on list]

BR: is another name for knife.

SK: oh. Incoshoba? [Number 18 on list]

BR: no, what do you call it, a small knife for making, what do you call it, those [demonstrating cuts or incisions] by izinyanga for…

SK: oh, incisions?

BR: ja, incisions.

SK: medical incisions. Inhlanga? [Number 19 on list, page 25]

BR: same, ja, same thing as incoshoba…

SK: small knife. And insingo is the same, it says… "Bheka impuco..."

BR: ja, it is. Same, same.

SK: intshengula? [Number 21 on list]

BR: intshengula, a snuff spoon.

SK: oh, a snuff spoon. Isampothwe [Number 22 on list]

BR: isampothwe, carving, used for carving. What do you call, the adze, adze

SK: oh, adze, OK. Isicwalo? [Number 23 on list]

BR: oh, a comb, ja.

SK: isigece? [Number 24 on list] A knife?

BR: …same for knife. Isigqobela [Number 25 on list], what do you call it, a…, snuff pot. Container, container for snuff.

SK: isigwedo? [Number 26 on list]

BR: you see when they are making um, meat plate [platter], or making spoon, something for carving…

SK: oh, for carving?

BR: ja, for carving, just a carving tool.

SK: isikhipha? [Number 27 on list]

BR: that's for taking out the dirt from the, from the nails [indicating fingernails].

SK: OK, isikhwece? [Number 28 on list] Ubambo…

BR: oh, ubambo, ja. I think its number 1 there… [See number 1 on list, page 23]

SK: number 1, ja, what was that again, oh, cutting…

BR: …for removing, eh, sweat. For removing sweat, a sweat scraper.

SK: OK, 27, uh, where did we get to? Oh yes, 31, isiphalo, "insimbi ehwaya izikhumba." Oh…

BR: maybe something like that, for tannery?

SK: yes, tanning tool.

BR: …and they also use it for, for working the king's field.

SK: oh really?

BR: ja…. For the food for the kings, they use isiphalo for, for cultivating.

SK: not igeja, not amageja?

BR: no, er, maybe they used the amageja there, but they also used isiphalo, according that… [Indicating text of Inqolobane Yesizwe 10th edition (1992)] "Kukhona futhi uhlobo lweziphalo ezazihlakula ukudla kwenkosi emasimini, " meaning: There is also a type of isiphalo used for cultivation of food in the king's fields.

SK: …also used isiphalo, oh, according to here. Oh I see… And isiphiselo? [Number 32 on list]

BR: let's see, isiphiselo, oh, you see when you, on a wooden shaft, to drill that hole there? They will burn the…, isiphiselo, then burn the hole, burn a hole on the wood.

SK: …to make a hole for shank [tang of metal blade]. Um, usungulo? [Number 33 on list]

BR: usungulo, is the needle.

SK: needle, and then itulo? [Number 34 on list]

BR: itulo? No, is the same as, for your, thatching needle, thatching needle.

SK: oh, thatching needle. Izembe, …is an axe, ja? [Number 35 on list] Umbhuko [*sic*], umbhuku, number 36…

BR: umbhuku, no, for your… what do you call it, umcamelo, a pillow, pillow [headrest].

SK: oh, making a headrest…

BR: …a pillow, but that one, umbhuku, is a pillow without the legs.

SK: oh, OK. Headrest, without legs.

BR: ja, without legs, ja.

SK: OK, and then umgqiki, it's the same thing. [Number 38 on list]

BR: ja, isigqiki is the pillow with the legs.

SK: oh, OK.

BR: 37, isigqiki… wait.

SK: …without, and 38, with legs. 36, umbhuku, was… what did you say that was? Oh… umbhuku is a knife, is a tool?

BR: umbhuku? No, no, is the… the pillow.

SK: that is also the pillow?

BR: ja, that's just another name. Because they'll tell you, when you reach another name, look at the…

SK: …it's the same. So which was the, which was the tool that was used for mining ore, for mining the raw iron?

BR: it must be umgxala.

SK: oh, that's the same one. OK.

BR: what do they call it in English, I think they call it a short pick. Ja…

SK: short pick, so that's 13 [on the list].

BR: because you can't mine ore with the light, light pick, you see that one, it has got the weight [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 1]. That's what, I was thinking that was a short pick…

SK: …ja, I think you're right and you know, the thing is that, also, for a long time, um, people have not been …not been working on these things, you know, what are all these different things. Even me, now, when I sent these photos to Wits, they are like, "ha, there are so many different shapes." They are all different shapes and sizes.

BR: you see that one here? [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 2]

SK: oh ja. Ja, ja… that's…

BR: …you can't say that is igeja?

SK: that's what they say.

BR: no, but I think it was a…,

SK: …so small.

BR: …that one for, is isimbo [Number 30 on list]. The lighter than that one [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 1], ja. Because when I found it, that was a bit burned here [indicating point of the tang], I think they used to fit a shaft [wooden haft], then you can work it, just around.

SK: …straight, yes, right.

BR: because there's another one at home, which I found it burned also like that, at the end here. I think its plus minus 100mm in length, bit burned…

SK: …burned, OK, ja, ja.

BR: …because even if you can see here…

SK: yes, no, it's very thick. The blade is small, but thick, and that's not worn. I mean, it was only made, made this size.

BR: …ja, it was only made this size. Because that one, I found it from that old lady.

SK: oh, Shozi?

BR: but now, Shozi, luckily it was not worn, because the other one, two, was not, the other two were not very worn because the other one is still good here [indicating the blade of the hoe], you can see that it is still good.

SK: ja. No, absolutely. Um, and this is amazing, that these, does this also come from Shozi, no [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 1]? Just this one [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 2]?

BR: no, that one, that one I got from Mpanza [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 1].

SK: oh, Mpanza, OK. So, um, most of your hoes, can you remember where you found them?

BR: ja, I can remember. There were a few that I found around, not more than even 10, I can remember, but the other ones, ay, I used to get from the scrap metal dealers. Maybe once a month, maybe once in 6 months' time…

SK: no, no, but I mean, even that, when you look at them, you know, this one came from a scrap dealer, this one came from Mpanza, this one is from Shozi.

BR: no, I don't have a mistake with those.

SK: [*laughing*]

BR: because I didn't forget one time, not one time. You that one here? [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 3]

SK: oh yes, ja no, these are great.

BR: because that one, I thought maybe it was a wood-working tool. Because if you can see here, it was sharpened here…

SK: …it's very sharp, yes.

BR: …because even if it's rusted, but now the rust can affect the steel uniformly. It can't just attack [indistinct] just at the end here.

SK: you are correct, ja. Um, that is correct, sho. Do you mind if I take photos of these?

BR: no, I don't mind.

SK: thanks. [*break in recording*]

Radebe Collection: *Artefacts are kept in boxes, in a storeroom of workshop*	Part of privately held collection of metallurgical artefacts Bobby Radebe homestead Nteneshane, Mtunzini District KwaZulu-Natal
Donated example: 	[ACCESSION NO. PENDING] Donated to LHM on 31 January 2017. *Description* L 290mm W 127mm Tang 170mm Badly damaged by rust, a large section of blade has come loose from the blade in a plate. The hoe has a tang of 12mm thick and 20mm wide where it joins the blade. Originally bought from the Reclamation Group scrap yard in Malcolm Clark Road, Empangeni, at some date between 2008 and 2012.
Example number 1: 	Unaccessioned hoe blade *Description* L 385mm W 120mm Tang 255mm Slight hammer damage to the lip of the blade. Item is described by the owner not as a hoe, but an *umgxala*, or "short pick". Used for heavy excavation, it has a substantial tang of 18mm thick and 23mm wide at the blade, as well as a prominent ridge extending into the blade.
Example number 2: 	Unaccessioned hoe blade *Description* L 350mm W 85mm Tang 270mm Lip of the blade slightly worn, item is described by the owner not as a hoe, but an *isimbo*, used for digging medicinal plants or in confined spaces such as food storage pits or a burial chamber. Originally unearthed in a field by Ndayiso Shozi in early 1990s. Tang 13mm thick and 22mm wide at blade.
Example number 3: 	Unaccessioned hoe blade *Description* L 300mm W 78mm Tang 220mm Slightly rusted, sharpened blade, item is described by the owner not as a hoe, but a wood-working tool, or adze. Evidence for this assertion is given as the wide tang, which is 38mm in width but only 8mm thick at the blade, making it easier to hold and use when carving wood.

SK: the 50 that you have, um, already rescued, are, you know, going to, um, be maybe even more, because if you can find, you know, if you carry on looking for them you'll find even more, you know.

BR: ay, I think its scarce now.

SK: they're getting scarce?

BR: no, because most of the steel that it comes now, you find that it's just an industrial steel. Because those, during that, time for the, during the scramble for scrap metal, you used to get some old ploughs that are more than 60 years old, the oxen drawn ploughs, ja. But now,

ay, you won't, it's very rare. Even the old grinding wheels, almost that size… [Indicating approximately 1500mm high off the ground]

SK: yes, people just threw them away…

BR: because I was lucky to get 3, just complete, with some small parts missing. The other one I still have to assemble it, because if I get a part of it, I used to keep it, maybe after some time I get a part of it, keep it, and then I can assemble another one.

SK: and that hand-grinding mill [*sic*: possibly "wheel"], um, did you, where did you get them from African families, or they're from scrap yards?

BR: ay, the best is to get from the scrap yards, because ay, you don't know where to go to find them, because the only way, best way is to go to the scrap metal. Otherwise you have to, search all over, maybe the whole of Durban… [*laughing*] You can't go from house to house looking for these things…

SK: no, you can't, you can't. The scrap yard is, ah, but do you think that those, uh, hand, uh, grinding mill, was used by, by black people or white people?

BR: no, they end up in the hands of the blacks, ja. They ended up in the hand of the blacks people.

SK: yes, OK.

BR: because the farmers, the white people, they used them long time ago. Then they was taken over by blacks, because I don't think in the '40s, '50s there was a white farmer that, you, needed maize meal [*indistinct*: possibly "milled"], you know.

SK: [*laughing*] …that's true.

BR: …maybe in the early 1900s, in the late 19th [century] or early '20s [20th?], they used, they used the grinding mills for, for mealies, but later, ay. I even went down, my father [Elcome Radebe] was born at, at Impendle, ja. I went there, I knew my grandfather [Philip Radebe] had a lot of stuff, and when I came there I found the Indian there, the Indian guys went there, ay, and they collected a lot of steel there.

SK: let me just write that down. Very interesting. Um, so your father, or your grandfather was from Impendle?

BR: no, my father was born at Impendle, ja.

SK: OK, and there was a lot of stuff that had been taken away from there?

BR: ay, they sold a lot off to the, to the Indian guys who collect scrap, scrap metal. And I find that a lot of steel has been sold to the scrap metal dealers.

SK: because I was reading a story about the, um, Nkosi of amaFunze people…

BR: oh, Ngcobo…

SK: Ngcobo, yes, that live at, er, at Elandskop, and his name was Langalakhe. Langalakhe kaHemuhemu.

BR: oh, kaHemuhemu…

SK: …Ngcobo, and this guy Langalakhe Nkosi, he became Nkosi when he was 4 years old [*laughing*]. Hemuhemu died ngo1900, and then this young boy, this child became Nkosi, but his older brother Mveli, was much older, and he was, became the regent. And this

Langalakhe became Nkosi of the amaFunze people when he was 22, and that was in 1918, but he stayed Nkosi until the 1960s, for such a long time because he was so young when he became Nkosi. And there is a story, from a man who worked in this office, and his name was Harry Lugg, that Harry Lugg went there to Elandskop, and they watched this guy, Langalakhe performing special ceremonies with amageja, to make the fields grow, and um, they used this *very* old hoe of the Ngcobo people. And they made a fire underneath it, and they cooked special imithi, on top of the hoe, and then Nkosi had to eat, eat the food, the, the imithi, from the hoe. And he was doing that in 1929, and he lived until 1962, when he died, and I'm wondering what happened to that igeja? Because it was there, it's the Nkosi's, hey?

BR: heh, hau, maybe it was lost long time ago? [*laughing*]

SK: …but no, it wasn't *so* long ago, I mean it was 1965, 1962, the time you were being born, the Nkosi was still alive, they wouldn't throw it away while he was still alive, surely?

BR: no, but, ay, ah, after his death then anything can happen.

SK: ja.

BR: …you see the problem, if it was taken over by children. They play with it, play with it, and [then it] get lost. Oh, they used that, Nkosi used to, take medicine on top of that [indicating a hoe blade]?

SK: …cook it on the igeja.

BR: …on the igeja?

SK: …but a special igeja, not any igeja. It's the igeja of the, the ancestors.

BR: oh, ancestors…

SK: …ancestors, they kept it in the umsamo.

BR: umsamo?

SK: ja, umsamo. They kept the igeja there, and also umkhonto, the two special things. There wasn't just a special umkhonto, there's a special umkhonto and a special igeja.

BR: maybe it was for his forefather?

SK: his own forefathers, ja. Um, so…

BR: or maybe they used that ceremony during the, the First Fruit?

SK: that's right, that is the same hoe, and um, and so that is what, um, I am curious about. That it seems that *all* of the amakhosi, would have such a hoe? …270… But now they, these things are missing, they've been lost. OK, so…

BR: you must have a Vernier… [Referring to manual measurements being taken of hoes with a tape]

SK: huh?

BR: you must have Vernier calliper…

SK: [*laughing*] ja, that's right. It would be easier… 220… I didn't know when I started this work that I needed a Vernier, but you're right… 13… And this one, this one here, this small

one, what did you think this was used for? This is a pick, you think this is a pick? [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 2]

BR: ja, that a short pick, that one [indicating the tang] when it was fitted into a shaft [haft], then it was a long pick, something like that, I don't know what is its name [in English], but in Zulu they call it isimbo, isimbo ja.

SK: isimbo? Oh, isim-bo?

BR: ja, "o"…. does it appear there? Let me have a look… isimbo, isimbo… [Looking for translation of "isimbo" in Dent and Nyembezi, *Scholars Dictionary*; Number 30 on list, Inqolobane Yesizwe 10th edition (1992), page 25)]. No, it doesn't have every word…

SK: it's a scholar's dictionary, so…

BR: …it's for the vocabulary of the scholar… [*laughing*]

SK: but it's useful for me when I just want to check something quickly, but now… No, it doesn't always have everything, ah… [*Brief interruption*] And this one, what did you think they used this one for, the…

BR: I think that one was for, they used it, as an adze? [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 3]

SK: yes…

BR: because they also had woodworking tools.

SK: yes, yes…

BR: because if I see the width here, [indicating the flattened tang], if you are going to work with the woods, you can use something like that… [Indicating the thin, narrow tangs of the hoes], because it will easily… turn around.

SK: …move around easily. The flat shank [tang]…

BR: if it's like that, it stays straight like that.

SK: now, I have to tell you, Mr Radebe, that talking to you today has been, um, you have provided me with so much information. I mean, even that, [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 3], because I would never know that, er, a wide flat shank [tang] like that, is important for working with wood, because, you know. I've seen this, here, they all look so different, I mean that's why, you can see in my photo, each one, there's no two hoes that look the same, even this one here, and, and, I also read, someone, well, someone said that certain hoes were used for digging imithi, from the veld. You know, that each one of these things…

BR: ja, that must be… [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 2]

SK: …like that one there, ja.

BR: because you can't dig with, with a wide blade, ja. Easier if you use a smaller blade…

SK: ja, so… its, it's very helpful to me, to talk to you about these things, um, so, I mean, I think that even one day, um, what we can do is that we can go to Pietermariztburg, to look at the Maritzburg collection [KwaZulu-Natal Museum] and you can see them, and um, you can tell us what you think they were used for.

BR: ja.

SK: People like me, we, our training is only in the university, you know, and then they dig and they find them, in some places, um, and uh, and even the one, the one, some of the ones in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum are, um, they found them where people hid them. So, in one place, they would find 10 hoes, all wrapped up, the skin that they wrapped it in, is gone, or the, sometimes they think they were wrapped up in, in icansi [sleeping mat], but that's gone, and all that's left in its place, is 10 hoes. And they think that someone buried it there, and they were planning to come back… [*laughing*]

BR: no, what I think, because I, when, I think on the [indistinct], there's another book about Pietermaritzburg, I did read on that book there, that some were found at, at the site for, at Plessislaer, at the site for…

SK: …yes, Somta Tools.

BR: I think maybe during the wars, people would hide their…

SK: …the precious things.

BR: ja, ja, the hoes and stuff like that.

SK: …these ones here, these are the Somta Tools, these are the ones from Somta Tools [indicating photographs from the KZNZM collection]. This 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 not that one. Um, and these ones too, this is from Greytown [Indicating KwaZulu-Natal Museum Cat. No. 80/36], it's very thin, very very thin, um, you know, like that thickness, and funny shape, like that, more like a shovel, and the blade like, and the shank [tang] like that. I don't know, I mean, so, it will be, it will be very interesting for, for you to come with me, um, to have a look at all of these things, and just, ah, for us to discuss there, what, what's going on. But even today, um, um, you know, I'm very grateful that you, um, that you came here, and that you specially, that you brought these 3 hoes for me to look at, because, I mean, just these are, you know, interesting, and you can discuss about, you know, if this is a short pick, because I think you're right, I mean we have to, uh, think about, about what uh, what they're called, and what are the names? They can't just be all amageja.

BR: because even if you look at that one, you can't say that is igeja, 100 percent. [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 2]

SK: no, the blade is too small, ja.

BR: ja, even the length [of the tang], is for something else. But now for those people at KwaZulu-Natal Museum, if they haven't handled a lot of them, different, they won't have a view of what was going on.

SK: no, exactly. I agree with you, and even me, you know, as you can see, I have photographs of 110 hoes, but I don't have the knowledge, you know, from looking at them, also, that you know metal, you know, that's your job, so you know, it does make a difference. Excellent. Um, is there somewhere I can take you?

BR: no. [*break in recording*]

INTERVIEW ENDS

[Bobby Radebe contacted me on 27 February 2017 and requested another meeting to discuss hoes in his collection which he believes are trade goods. A further appointment was made for an interview the following morning, at kwaMuhle Museum]

Follow-up interview with Sihle Bobby Radebe

kwaMuhle Museum, 130 Bram Fischer Road, Durban

28 February 2017: 8h30

Radebe Collection: *Artefacts are kept in boxes, in a storeroom of workshop*	Part of privately held collection of metallurgical artefacts Bobby Radebe homestead Nteneshane, Mtunzini District KwaZulu-Natal
Example number 4: 	Unaccessioned hoe blade *Description* L 441mm W 230mm Tang 210mm Large, unused hoe with almost perfectly round blade <2mm in thickness, slightly wider on diameter opposite tang (232mm). The regular, square shape of the tang is 12mm on all sides for 175mm, then tapers to an even, sharp pyramid of 35mm in length. Blade is stamped with indistinct letters and "2½ lbs"
Example number 5: 	Unaccessioned hoe blade *Description* L 210mm W 202mm Tang 90mm Substantial portion of formerly large, possibly paddle-shaped hoe with thin blade and thin, tapering tang, which has since been broken or worn away. Two small holes rusted through the blade close to tang and light patina of rust on surface of blade. Tang has a width of 15mm and thickness of 11mm at blade.
Example number 6: 	Unaccessioned hoe blade *Description* L 276mm W 134mm Tang 205mm Remainder of rusted and worn out hoe blade with pitted surface and lip of the blade is chipped. The long thin tang, which tapers slightly, from a width of 16mm and thickness of 14mm at join with blade.
Example number 7: 	Unaccessioned hoe blade *Description* L 258mm W 143mm Tang 193mm Remainder of rusted and worn out hoe blade, with a long thin tang which tapers slightly, from a width of 14mm and thickness of 12mm at join with blade.
Example number 8: 	Unaccessioned hoe blade *Description* L 350mm W 153mm Tang 235mm Remainder of formerly large, but now badly rusted and damaged hoe with broken lip. The substantial tang tapers to a sharp point, from a width of 21mm and thickness of 13mm at join with blade.
Example number 9: 	Unaccessioned hoe blade *Description* L 299mm W 129mm Tang 205mm Remains of formerly large hoe, now badly rusted and pitted on the surface of the blade, which also has a large chip in the lip. The substantial tang tapers to a sharp point, from a width and thickness of 18mm x 18mm at join with blade.

SK: Where's the weight [mark]? [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 4]

BR: …just look here.

SK: …oh ja. I can't see… I can some writing, I can't see the weight though, but there's definitely writing.

BR: but the weight, I think it's 2, that's 2, and that's 1, and then…

SK: but that's not writing there?

BR: no, that must be writing there, although it's worn, it must be 2 and ½…

SK: …we can't see it, yes, 2. Ja, I can see 2½ lbs, yes. No, you are right. This is made in a factory. It's exactly the same as that other one [KwaZulu-Natal Mus Cat. No. 82/43]. So these are trade goods. You are clever Mr Radebe.

BR: ja, trade goods.

SK: [*laughing*] really, you have answered something now, which I didn't realise. So basically, they saw the, the, white people, they saw…

BR: these ones are almost matches that one, even if you can see…

SK: yes, yes, and this one too, because I've seen, I've seen many, maybe even this one…

BR: …this one, ay, I don't know.

SK: …you don't know, ja. Because there was a lady, at, at, [the] University museum [Campbell Collections], Yvonne [Winters], now sadly, shame she died last year, ah, because she would love to meet you as well, but she said to me that she thought, um, the, um, the traders, they saw hoes like this one, or like this one, which is locally made, I think, even now, I'm not sure, um, and then they made ones, like this overseas, to come and trade, because the know the, the Zulu people didn't want a hoe like that, with a hole in it. They want this, and so they were making, she said she they made ones like this, um, for the trade market.

BR: ja, for the trade.

SK: hmm, hmm, and now! You are providing the evidence, because here it says "2½ pounds," maybe that is even the name? [Referring to the stamp mark above weight]

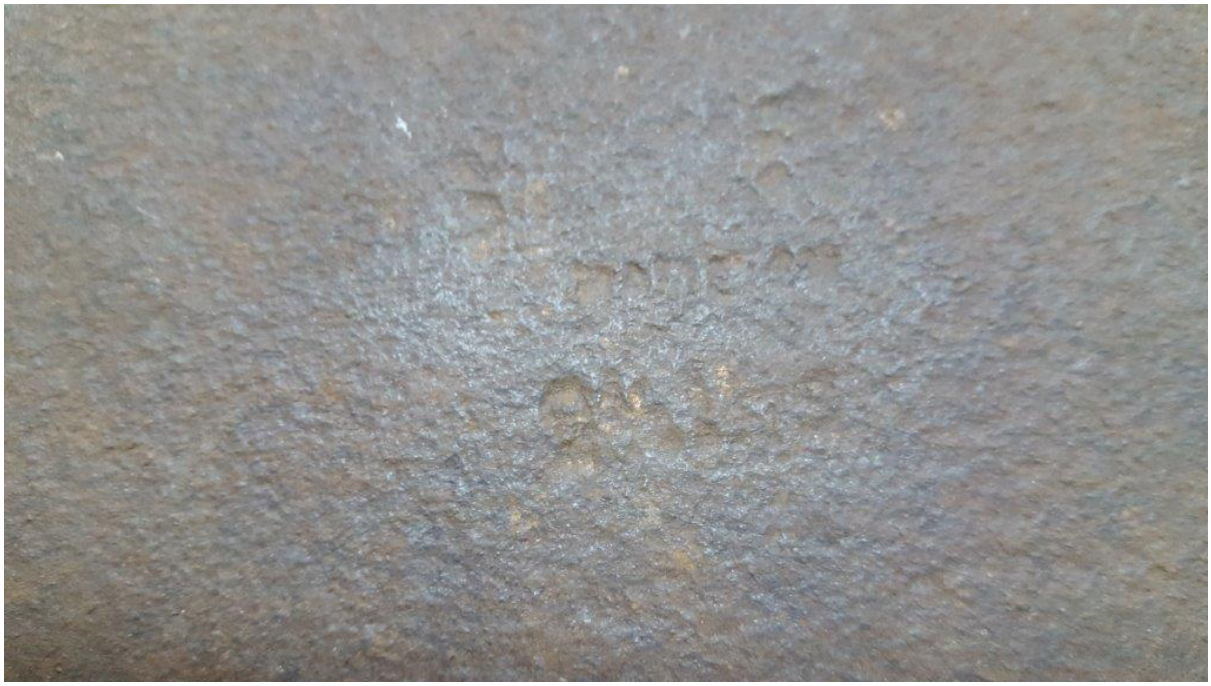
BR: ja, there must be something there. It's writing here.

SK: ja, it is writing.

BR: ja.

SK: …let's see, if we can't, if we take a picture? [*Break in recording*]

[While taking a photograph of the stamp markings on the blade of the hoe below [Radebe Collection: unaccessioned hoe, example 4], the recording was inadvertently stopped. During the break in recording Bobby Radebe explained how he acquired this particular hoe from a young man, then still at high school (1990s), with the nickname of "Mzero" Dlamini, who in turn found it at a homestead in the nearby settlement of uFasimba, less than 10km from Nteneshane. The hoe was stored inside a house, which explains the condition of the item, with only light rust on the surface and slightly worse deterioration along one edge. "Hai, it was kept inside, otherwise it would have worn out," according to Bobby Radebe. The photograph below illustrates the two lines of letters and numbers stamped into the metal of the blade, with the upper text completely illegible and the lower only faintly legible as a weight of 2½ lbs.]



SK: I also wanted to ask you about, um, your father and your grandfather, um, that lived at Impendle. Um, what was your father's name?

BR: My father was Elcome.

SK: Elka?

BR: Elcome, E, L, C, O, M, E.

SK: oh, OK, Elcome Radebe. And your grandfather?

BR: oh, my grandfather, was Philip.

SK: Philip, OK. Were they amakholwa? They've got English names.

BR: ay, they had English names.

SK: OK, um, and then the other thing that I wanted to ask you was, um, when we were talking about the amageja, the igeja of, of [Langalakhe] Ngcobo, for that imithi, then you said they were used in the First Fruits ceremony, what do you know about the First Fruits ceremony, the First Fruits?

BR: although I haven't seen it being performed, because it was performed a long time ago, I knew that when the food is right on your, on the field, then they will held that…, that ceremony. And the…, the king will do that…, because they say they are strengthening the nation, ja.

SK: yes… OK. That's very good, and then, um, the last question that I thought about after you left, was, um, we, we spoke about, how, um, people don't, they didn't take, um, the spears, or the spear blades, to the scrap yard, but they would take amageja. And I just wanted to ask you if thought there was a reason why, why people were willing to sell amageja?

BR: you see, most of them, you find they were lying outside, because the spears, ay, they are kept well inside the house. But with the hoes you will find that… there's another man there, I asked him, he was an old man, he knew me because he had a tractor, and every time when he needs some welding, he will come to me, and I asked him, "haven't you got an

old hand hoe?" And he said, "no, there was one here, around here, here," you see? Ja, and we went there, ay, we tried to look at the cattle byre, ay, we couldn't find it. He told me, "oh, maybe it's underneath the cattle dung?" Because most of them you'll find that, they were lying around outside, because, maybe because they lose their value and some people they don't even know that, that was a hoe.

SK: yes, yes, so why, what do you think the reason is that maybe they lose their value?

BR: no, you see, those who owned it before, they knew the work of it, maybe those old people die and the later generation, maybe they didn't tell the following generation, and then its lost like that.

SK: OK, that's good, um, excellent ja. Um, I think that is the thing…

BR: …because when they grew up, there was nothing like that at home.

SK: and hoes are not seen to have the same value as spears?

BR: no, not now. Nothing. Long time ago, they were valued, but now, hai…, because there's nothing that they can do with it, because the only thing that help, help to keep it, they use it for, …they use it for burning holes on the calabashes. They put it on the fire, and then they burn a hole at the bottom and at the top.

SK: …igula [calabash]?

BR: ja, igula. They use this [demonstrating with hoe]…

SK: ah, I see…

BR: that's why some are a bit kept at least.

SK: excellent, ja, I think you're right, but um, thank you again. Hamba kahle [*break in recording*]…



Sihle Bobby Radebe, kwaMuhle Museum, 28 February 2017. (S. Kotze personal photograph)

[Upon leaving the interview, Bobby Radebe made a further point concerning two hoes in the Durban Local History Museums collection, which both have the same accession number (NN 89.147), stating “They can’t be from around here, otherwise there would be more [of them]. Maybe its from up north, because here they wouldn’t make a tang so short.”]

INTERVIEW ENDS



The Bobby Radebe collection: An iron trunk filled with more than seventy examples of field-hoes from the nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries, including both locally forged *amageja*, as well as imported examples used as trade goods. (S. Kotze personal photograph 2017)

Appendix 2

Survey of locally forged field hoes in museum collections included in the present study

Local History Museum *Artefacts are kept in* *Drawer C 18 within* *Store 6 of archive*	eThekwini Municipality 77 Samora Machel Street Durban Museum officer: Rebecca Naidoo
NN 89.144: 	D.M. Ac. No. 4144 The Dargle. Dargle Ntl. E.N. Griffin *Description* L 445mm W 117mm Tang 290mm Square hoe blade with original accession information sticker, transcribed above; Tang is 25mm wide and 14mm thick at blade.
NN 89.144: 	6696 “Redwoods” Compensation Hullett 1969 *Description* L 337mm W 142mm Tang 210mm Extremely badly flaked hoe blade, indications it was buried. Details of inscription on masking tape transcribed above.
NN 89.146: 	*Description* L 295mm W 112mm Tang 210mm Extremely badly rusted and flaky hoe blade, lightly varnished. Tang is 20mm wide and 16mm thick at blade.
× NN 89.147: 	*Description* L 440mm W 170mm Tang 150mm Unusual leaf-shaped hoe with distinct ridge running length of blade from tang to tip. Tang is 35mm wide and 14mm thick at blade. Slightly longer example in a pair of almost identical unused hoes with the same accession number. [**not included in tally of LHM hoes due to origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
× NN 89.147: 	*Description* L 395mm W 195mm Tang 115mm Unusual leaf-shaped hoe with distinct ridge running length of blade from tang to tip. Tang is 27mm wide and 12mm thick at blade. Slightly shorter, but wider example in a pair of almost identical unused hoes with the same accession number. [**not included in tally of LHM hoes due to origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
NN 89.1348: 	Ac. No. 4185. Picked up at Tinley Manor Beach. North Coast. *Description* L 341mm W 109mm Tang 230mm Extremely badly flaked hoe blade, indications it was buried. Additional data on accession sticker: “Pres. By J.H. Charter”

Msunduzi Museum *Artefacts are kept in drawers of storage area in 'Pastorie' building*	(Incorporating the Voortrekker Complex) 351 Langalibalele Street Pietermaritzburg Collections Manager: Slindokuhle Ngobese
52. 1910: 	FF Tredoux, Pietermaritzburg. Pik: Zoeloe pik wat 16dm lank is *Description* L 403mm W 134mm Tang 250mm Damaged lip due to use as an improvised field anvil or boot-scraper? Currently on display in Church of the Vow Museum.
51. 1912: 	WJJ Botes, Pietermaritzburg. Pik: Zoeloe pik wat 12dm lank is *Description* L 292mm W 138mm Tang 190mm Currently on display in Msunduzi-Voortrekker Museum "Iron Age" exhibition. One side of the blade has a small white mark with the number 80 written in black, as well as additional text in black "VM 51".
DSS/227: 	*Description* L 282mm W 122mm Tang 210mm Rusted hoe with square blade and tiny pock marks on surface of metal.
DSS/129: 	*Description* L 363mm W 90mm Tang 235mm Rusted paddle-shaped hoe with very thick tang at join with blade.

Talana Museum *Artefacts are kept in two display areas of "Zulu" exhibit in Talana House*	R33 District Road Dundee 3000 Curator: Pam McFadden
04/121: 	Hoe: Mines Dept donor – Agricultural T&E 3.7.1979 Zulu Room *Description* L 358mm W 114mm Tang 250mm "Oval / spatula iron head with handle eight inches in length with a straight lower cutting edge. The gradually blade tapers towards the tang at the upper end. The tang was thrust through a hole made in the knobly end of a stout stick about two feet long. One such iron hoe cost one cow. May have been imported from Tembe hawkers (as smiths) or made by Zulu smiths from native iron."
04/122: 	Hoe: Mines Dept donor – Agricultural T&E 3.7.1979 Zulu Room *Description* L 305mm W 170mm Tang 215mm "Oval shape head with handle eight inches in length with a straight lower cutting edge some 7"-8" wide. The blade tapers towards the tang at the upper end. The tang about 9" long was thrust through a hole made in the knobley end of a stout stick about two feet long. One such iron hoe cost one cow. May have been imported from Tembe hawkers (as smiths) or made by Zulu smiths from native iron."
04/1843-1: 	Hoe: Mines Dept donor – Agricultural T&E 24.2.1983 *Description* L 282mm W 160mm Tang 225mm "Talana House: Zulu display. Metal hoes none of which have handles" – Mostly used hoe with thin blade and overall thickness of approximately 7mm and wide tang of 30mm width at blade.
× 04/1843-2: 	Hoe: Mines Dept donor – Agricultural T&E 24.2.1983 *Description* L 418mm W 210mm Tang 180mm "Talana House: Zulu display. Metal hoes none of which have handles" – Large well-made round hoe with slight damage to blade point opposite thick tang of 25mm x 10mm. [**not included in tally of Talana hoes due to probable origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
× 04/1843-3: 	Hoe: Mines Dept donor – Agricultural T&E 24.2.1983 *Description* L 355mm W 196mm Tang 230mm "Talana House: Zulu display. Metal hoes none of which have handles" – Badly damaged hoe, with pock-marked surface and hole rusted through on left side; tang even 15mm x 15mm. [**not included in tally of Talana hoes due to probable origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
× 04/1843-4: 	Hoe: Mines Dept donor – Agricultural T&E 24.2.1983 *Description* L 457mm W 210mm Tang 233mm "Talana House: Zulu display. Metal hoes none of which have handles" – Exceptionally well-made hoe with thin round blade of metal 3mm thick, slightly rusted lip and carefully decorated ridge extends 70mm into blade from tang of 11mm x 13mm. [**not included in tally of Talana hoes due to probable origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
04/1843-5: 	Hoe: Mines Dept donor – Agricultural T&E 24.2.1983 *Description* L 328mm W 90mm Tang 225mm "Talana House: Zulu display. Metal hoes none of which have handles" - Shiny broken remains of hoe blade with bent tang of 30mm x 13mm.

04/1843-6: 	Hoe: Mines Dept donor – Agricultural T&E 24.2.1983 *Description* L 532mm W 190mm Tang 290mm "Talana House: Zulu display. Metal hoes none of which have handles" – Large teardrop-shaped hoe with partially erased chalk caption on blade "DR STEE…" - presumably Steenkamp.
04/1843-7: 	Hoe: Mines Dept donor – Agricultural T&E 24.2.1983 *Description* L 240mm W 40mm Tang 150mm "Talana House: Zulu display. Metal hoes none of which have handles" – Narrow, almost chisel-like, or spear shaped, small rusted hoe with broken tang of 20mm x 13mm.
✖ 04/1843-8: 	Hoe: Mines Dept donor – Agricultural T&E 24.2.1983 *Description* L 435mm W 132mm Tang 200mm "Talana House: Zulu display. Metal hoes none of which have handles" – Badly damaged and cracked remains of diamond-shaped hoe blade, with tang of 65mm x 5mm.[**not included in tally of Talana hoes due to probable origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
04/1843-9: 	Hoe: Mines Dept donor – Agricultural T&E 24.2.1983 *Description* L 345mm W 100mm Tang 230mm "Talana House: Zulu display. Metal hoes none of which have handles" – Remainder of paddle-shaped hoe with wide tang of 40mm x 10mm.
Not accessioned: 	*Description* L 143mm W 70mm Tang 100mm Fragment of hoe with most of blade and tip of tang broken off, signs of slight ridge extending into blade; tang 21mm x 21mm.

KZN Museum *Artefacts kept in the archaeological storage.*	237 Jabu Ndlovu Street Pietermaritzburg Collections Technician: Mudzunga F. Munzhedzi
Cat. No. 75/62: 	6 iron hoes; Somta factory site *Description* L 164mm *Description* L 129mm Remainder of 2 hoe tangs from archaeological site in Pietermaritzburg.
Cat. No. 75/62: 	6 iron hoes; Somta factory site *Description* L 384mm W 108mm Tang 235mm Apparently unused paddle-shaped hoe from archaeological site in Pietermaritzburg.
Cat. No. 75/62: 	6 iron hoes; Somta factory site *Description* L 300mm W 81mm Tang 195mm Paddle-shaped hoe from archaeological site in Pietermaritzburg.
Cat. No. 75/62: 	6 iron hoes; Somta factory site *Description* 320mm W 102mm Tang 210mm Apparently unused paddle-shaped hoe from archaeological site in Pietermaritzburg.
Cat. No. 75/62: 	6 iron hoes; Somta factory site *Description* L 552mm W 132mm Tang 310mm Apparently unused large paddle-shaped hoe from archaeological site in Pietermaritzburg.
Cat. No. 75/63: 	9 pcs iron – knives, chisels, sm. bracelet *Description* W 40mm Tang 143mm Remainder of a chisel-shaped hoe tang, possibly re-used as a chisel?
Cat. No. 77/93: 	Holbeck Farm iron hoe *Description* L 300mm W 158mm Tang 200mm Rusted and worn hoe blade with signs of being buried underground; long tang with square shape and 19mm wide at blade: “Natal; Mbona Nature Reserve; Iron Age hoe over all length 26cm”
Cat. No. 80/35: 	2929AB Source of Little Tugela – iron hoe *Description* L 251mm W 62mm Tang 180mm Remainder of hoe blade, mainly tang as blade mostly worn away from use.

× Cat. No. 80/36: 	2929BA Greytown – iron hoe *Description* L 434mm W 172mm Tang 200mm Formed out of flat sheet of iron 5mm thick, with distinct ridge showing hammer technique; haft tapers from 63mm wide at blade to 12mm at tip: "This is hardly used and a nice specimen to show what worked out hoes would have looked like." [**not included in tally of KZNM hoes due to probable origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
Cat. No. 80/37: 	Colenso ? 2829DB; Loose 3 iron hoes *Description* L 416mm W 155mm Tang 300mm Remainder of large paddle-shaped hoe with badly rusted lip; haft 22mm thick at blade.
Cat. No. 80/37: 	Colenso ? 2829DB; Loose 3 iron hoes *Description* L 540mm W 145mm Tang 400mm Remainder of very large and heavy paddle-shaped hoe with rusted lip; haft is long and oval in shape, 15mm thick at blade.
Cat. No. 80/37: 	Colenso ? 2829DB; Loose 3 iron hoes *Description* L 455mm W 189mm Tang 220mm Large, well-made paddle-shaped hoe with flat, right angles on metal of lip suggesting it is entirely unused; haft tapers to a sharp point and is square 14mm thick at blade.
Cat. No. 80/38: 	9 iron hoes, 1 socketed hoe, 1 spear head [no site] *Description* L 283mm W 135mm Tang 154mm Showing signs of use, and both sides of blade damaged from hammering; haft very thick 20mm at blade.
Cat. No. 80/38: 	9 iron hoes, 1 socketed hoe, 1 spear head [no site] *Description* L 456mm W 117mm Tang 250mm Apparently unused large paddle-shaped hoe with distinctive oval blade, and thicker ridge down centre of tang c.50mm wide.
Cat. No. 80/38: 	9 iron hoes, 1 socketed hoe, 1 spear head [no site] *Description* L 429mm W 126mm Tang 260mm Similar pattern to previous hoe with thicker central ridge, but asymmetrical blade and damage to lip.
Cat. No. 80/38: 	9 iron hoes, 1 socketed hoe, 1 spear head [no site] *Description* L 286mm W 130mm Tang 150mm Similar pattern to previous two examples, but tang is broken in this case; possible attempt to preserve metal against rust with some form of oil has left greasy residue on surface.
Cat. No. 80/38: 	9 iron hoes, 1 socketed hoe, 1 spear head [no site] *Description* L 315mm W 111mm Tang 185mm Another example of large worn paddle-shaped hoe, also with damaged tang and greasy residue on surface.

Cat. No. 80/38: 	9 iron hoes, 1 socketed hoe, 1 spear head [no site] *Description* L 326mm W 92mm Tang 235mm Last of five very similar hoes, possibly indicating common source? In this example the blade shows most signs of wear but the tang is complete; greasy residue on surface of metal.
Cat. No. 80/38: 	9 iron hoes, 1 socketed hoe, 1 spear head [no site] *Description* L 235mm W 70mm Tang 160mm Worn out remains of a hoe, with rusty colour with dent in blade lip; substantial tang is 17mm thick and 34mm wide at blade.
Cat. No. 80/38: 	9 iron hoes, 1 socketed hoe, 1 spear head [no site] *Description* L 181mm W 41mm Tang 130mm Apparently remainder of a chisel-shaped hoe tang blade only 51mm long, possibly re-used as a chisel?
Cat. No. 80/38: 	9 iron hoes, 1 socketed hoe, 1 spear head [no site] *Description* L 217mm W 40mm Tang 200mm Mostly a fairly long hoe tang, with tiny crescent of metal only remaining evidence of blade.
Cat. No. 80/38: 	9 iron hoes, 1 socketed hoe, 1 spear head [no site] *Description* L 190mm W 39mm Tang 95mm Rare socketed hoe blade, the only example found in 8 museum collections surveyed.
× Cat. No. 80/44: 	57 spear heads + 2 arrow heads; Bulawayo, Rhodesia [80/39-45] *Description* L 265mm W 65mm Tang 200mm Small little nub of a hoe blade with tang. [**not included in tally of KZNM hoes due to origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
Cat. No. 82/41: 	Tatton 4 iron hoes *Description* L 333mm W 185mm Tang 230mm Remainder of formerly large paddle-shaped hoe with thin blade and long tang tapering to a point.
Cat. No. 82/41: 	Tatton 4 iron hoes *Description* L 228mm W 85mm Tang 65mm Remainder of once substantial paddle-shaped hoe with a blade that is both thick and narrow with a broken tang; a small brass nail was added to tang, suggesting the hoe was hung on a wall.

Cat. No. 82/41: 	Tatton 4 iron hoes *Description* L 254mm W 58mm Tang 185mm Worn out remainder of a hoe, with damage to lip of the blade.
Cat. No. 82/41: 	Tatton 4 iron hoes *Description* L 325mm W 72mm Tang 205mm Largely unused paddle-shaped hoe with blade that is thick and narrow, and a very wide haft, 30mm at blade.
× Cat. No. 82/43: 	unknown site iron hoe *Description* L 429mm W 231mm Tang 185mm Large, exceptionally fine hoe with perfectly round blade and regular square tang of 18mm, which tapers to an unusual even & sharp pyramid point at tip. [**not included in tally of KZNM hoes due to probable origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
Cat. No. 83/38: 	Toboti 2831BB 17: I/A hoe fragment *Description* L 72mm W 48mm Tang 30mm Tiny rusted fragment of hoe where blade and tang meet: Caption “nr Toboti stream Imfolosi NR”
Cat. No. 85/8: 	Weenen N.R. 2830CC 23: tanged hoe (30 July 1985) *Description* L 161mm W 95mm Tang 55mm Small badly rusted fragment of very thin hoe blade.
Cat. No. 87/5: 	Mvoti mouth 2931AD 54: iron hoe *Description* L 361mm W 64mm Tang 270mm Small diamond-shaped remnant of hoe blade, signs of ridge in blade extending from square-shaped tang, 18mm thick at blade.
Cat. No. 88/10: 	iron hoe (loose); Hluhluwe River; Donor Mr H.B. Potter, NPB *Description* L 504mm W 144mm Tang 350mm Very long and heavy paddle-shaped hoe showing signs of wear, as well as rust damage to right edge of blade.
Cat. No. 90/13: 	52 Uplands Road, Pietermaritzburg 2930CB 60: iron hoe *Description* L 384mm W 80mm Tang 265mm Small remnant of hoe blade very similar to 87/5 described above, with a square-shaped tang also 18mm thick at blade.
Cat. No. 90/275: 	N. of White Mfolosi. East of Ondini 2831BC : 1 iron hoe *Description* L 310mm W 104mm Tang 185mm Broken remainder of formerly substantial paddle-shaped hoe with relatively short tang which is 45mm wide at blade.

× Cat. No. 90/298: 	Venda: 15 hoes & other, 3 metal spear heads *Description* 10 paddle-shaped hoes made of flattened metal, with blades in various states of repair from almost complete to only tang remaining. [**none are included in tally of KZNM hoes due to origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
× Cat. No. 90/298: 	Venda: 15 hoes & other, 3 metal spear heads *Description* 5 paddle-shaped hoes with spiked tangs, mostly with blades worn out and 2 with broken tangs, 1 is bent. [**none are included in tally of KZNM hoes due to origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
Cat. No. 92/2: 	Eastern Shores State Forest 2832AD 70: iron hoe fragment *Description* L 121mm W 30mm Tang 78mm

KwaZulu Cultural Museum - Ondini *Artefacts are kept in metallurgical storage area*	Heritage KwaZulu-Natal / Amafa AkwaZulu Natali Ondini Complex Ulundi Museologist: Zameka Yamile
C3234 (loc. CR1C20/7): 	Hoe / Zulu *Description* L 308mm W 137mm Tang 185mm Ikhuba / Igeja Formally used at Nodwengu, bought from Mr Sibiya of Ndlangubo / Eshowe. Made +/- 1840-1850; obtained September 1993. L: 31cm; H 14cm. "Said to have belonged to Princess Nokwendaka [*sic*] Mpande [who] lived at Nodwengu before moving to Ngoye near Louwsburg. Sister of Prince Mbuyazi [kaMpande]. Received hoe as wedding present from people of Ondini. Married Mtshe."
C3326 (loc. CR1C20/7): 	Hoe blade *Description* L 307mm W 120mm Tang 178mm "Metal"
C3480 (loc. CR1C20/8): 	Hoe blade (Iron) *Description* L 245mm W 144mm Tang 179mm "Obtained 1991. L: 24cm; H 14cm; blade H 7cm Iron tool, obtained 'Collection day'"
C3858 (loc. CR1C20/8): 	Hoe blade / Zulu *Description* L 368mm W 77mm Tang 265mm "Igeja; obtained June 1994. L: 36.2cm; H 7.6cm; blade H: 10c C3841 – C 3862 might have been collected at Ondini or Mgungundlovu. Donated by (late) A. Harris, Melmoth."

Phansi Museum *Artefacts are kept on unmarked shelves in gallery storage area*	Paul Mikula collection 500 Esther Roberts Road (formerly Frere Road) Durban Collections Manager: Phumzile Nkosi
× Unaccessioned hoe: 	Igeja / hoe *Description* L 452mm W 209mm Tang 250mm Almost perfectly round, finely made and unused hoe blade, although fairly corroded, with a short ridge extending 50mm into blade. Caption contains following information: Area: Phongola Clan: KwaMaBophe Date: 1920s Owner Mkhipheni Mazinga [**not included as an example of a Phansi Museum hoe due to probable origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]

Fugitives' Drift Lodge *Artefacts kept in dining room, in drawers of a large wooden cabinet.*	Fugitives' Drift D44 district road Rorke's Drift Owner: Nicky Rattray
Loose hoe on table: 	*Description* L 327mm W 145mm Tang 180mm Blade damaged on left side, possibly used as hammer?
× Loose hoe on table: 	*Description* L 304mm W 182mm Tang 190mm Remainder of large, thin hoe with blade worn away and long sharp tang. [**not included in tally of FDL hoes due to probable origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
Loose hoe on table: 	*Description* L 175mm W 77mm Tang 130mm Remains of hoe blade with right side chipped away, surface pock-marked.
Drawer 7; on left: 	1 of 4 hoes in drawer *Description* L 370mm W 100mm Tang 255mm Large rusted hoe with cracks in lip; left edge broken. Tang is 50mm wide at blade: "Very old and primitive Nguni hoe – Tjankaza family"
Drawer 7; on left: 	1 of 4 hoes in drawer *Description* 231mm W 53mm Tang 150mm Small chisel-shaped remainder of a hoe; rusted surface and edges of blade lightly beaten: see caption below
Drawer 7; on left: 	3 of 4 hoes in drawer *Description* L 250mm W 63mm Tang 190mm Small chisel-shaped hoe with lip of blade badly damaged from use as spike anvil an improvised anvil? Surface of metal pock-marked: "Two Nguni implements, one very old (note pitting) Ngcobo family, Mangeni"
Drawer 7; on left: [two spear blades]	Additional caption: "Two beautiful stabbing assegais from Umnandi Nghobese, whose father was the illustrious Mehlo-ka-zulu. Note the shiny surface of the lower blade"
Drawer 7; on left: 	4 of 4 hoes in drawer *Description* L 192mm W 78mm Tang 145mm Small, badly damaged remainder of a hoe, right edge missing with both sides showing signs of damage from hammering; surface rusted: "Nguni implement from Umnandi Nghobese"
Drawer 9; on left:	1 of 2 hoes in drawer *Description* L 250mm W 85mm Tang 190mm

	Rusted rectangular blade; left side showing damage from use as hammer: “Two Nguni Iron Age implements from the Nkobhese family. The descendants of Sihayo and Mehlokazulu that live in in the Sikhubhutho valley. May 1990”
Drawer 9; on left: 	2 of 2 hoes in drawer *Description* L 263mm W 120mm Tang 163mm Paddle-shaped hoe with slight hammer damage to left side and very thick tang, 18mm thick at blade with ridge extending into blade.
× Drawer 10; on right: 	1 hoe in drawer *Description* L 192mm W 157mm Tang 103mm Rusted and pock-marked old hoe blade: “Extremely old Zulu keja-mbazo from Ngcobo family, Mangeni” [**not included in tally of FDL hoes due to probable origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
Drawer 11; on left: [*Additional caption - contents of drawer*]	<u>Late Iron Age Nguni Artefacts</u> The implements were made in this area by the Zulus before white traders appeared. Iron was smelted from the dolerite, converted to steel and fashioned on primitive anvils. Some of these tools were in use a few years ago.”
Drawer 11; on left: 	1 of 8 hoes in drawer *Description* L 205mm W 44mm Tang 160mm Tiny triangular nub of a little hoe blade with fairly long tang.
Drawer 11; on left: 	2 of 8 hoes in drawer *Description* L 304mm W 117mm Tang 195mm Large hoe with very thick tang, 21mm thick at blade with signs of hammer damage to left edge: “This implement was given to David Rattay, March 1990, by Mqombothi Mpanza, one of George Bunting’s indunas, Fugitives’ Drift” [*see below*]
Drawer 11; on left: 	3 of 8 hoes in drawer *Description* L 270mm W 101mm Tang 215mm Small fan-shaped remainder of hoe blade with long thin tang.
Drawer 11; on left: 	4 of 8 hoes in drawer *Description* L 325mm W 197mm Tang 213mm Large, buckled hoe blade with broken lip and rusted surface. Long thin tang and ridge extending 60mm into blade: “This broad hoe was given to David Rattray by Sithela Mpanza, Mzonjani’s mother. It had belonged to her grandmother who in turn had inherited it. This is extremely old – the paper thin blade indicating that.”
Drawer 11; on left: 	5 of 8 hoes in drawer *Description* L 265mm W 104mm Tang 185mm Heavy paddle-shaped hoe with broken lip and very thick tang 19mm thick at blade: “Nguni dual purpose hoe / axe. Given to David Rattray by James Mjale, April 1990.”

Drawer 11; on left: 	6 of 8 hoes in drawer *Description* L 340mm W 129mm Tang 257mm Heavy fan-shaped hoe with very long and thick tang, 24mm thick at blade: "This implement was one of a pair given to David Rattray by Mqombothi Mpanza in March 1990." [*Apparent reference to artefact 2 of 8 above*]
Drawer 11; on left: 	7 of 8 hoes in drawer *Description* L 204mm W 78mm Tang 180mm Tiny crescent-shaped remainder of a little hoe, blade edge apparently destroyed by use as an improvised spike anvil?
Drawer 11; on left: 	8 of 8 hoes in drawer *Description* L 231mm W 65mm Tang 190mm Tiny triangular nub of a little hoe with long tang, showing rust damage at base of tang.
Drawer 11; on right: 	1 of 5 tools in drawer: HOE *Description* L 225mm W 100mm Tang 190mm Small crescent-shaped remainder of a little hoe, with long thin tang. Blade edge apparently destroyed by use as an improvised spike anvil: "Nguni 'geja-mbazo' from Mjale home in Sikhubhutu"
Drawer 11; on right: 	2 of 5 tools in drawer: HOE *Description* L 216mm W 85mm Tang 117mm Unusual square-shared hoe blade: "Excellent example of Nguni hoe from Nkobhese homstead in Sikhuthu valley" [*All spellings as per original caption*]
Drawer 11; on right: 	3 of 5 tools in drawer: AXE *Description* L 138mm W 114mm Tang 91mm Locally forged *mbazo* with square-shaped base where blade joins short tang: "Nguni axe from Mchunu home opposite iShiyane, downstream from Rorke's Drift"
Drawer 11; on right: 	4 of 5 tools in drawer: AXE *Description* L 129mm W 108mm Tang 100mm Locally forged *mbazo* with short tang: "Excellent example of Nguni axe from Mjoko family who live on banks of the Manzimyama River near Isandlwana"
Drawer 11; on right: 	5 of 5 tools in drawer: CHISEL *Description* L 192mm W 55mm "Implement used for fashioning wood e.g. into wooden buckets or pestles [*sic*]. This was found among rocks being moved for stone wall – May 1990 – Probably from Mpanza family."

Campbell Collections *Artefacts are kept on an unmarked shelf in outside storage area*	University of KwaZulu-Natal 220 Gladys Mazibuko Road Durban Museologist: Luleka Jakeni
MM905: 	Lynn Acutt collection - Zulu hoe of Native iron. Very old. *Description* L 723mm W 85mm Tang 450mm Faint ridge raised on one side of blade. Accessioned incorrectly - not recorded in Ethnography Accessions register.
MM1943: 	Found by H.C. Lugg, Eshowe 26/11/1950 *Description* L 356mm W 70mm Tang 255mm Sides of blades show damage from hammering "Donated by estate of H.C. Lugg 10.1979"
MM1944: 	Found near Shaka's Bulawayo kraal, Eshowe dist. 1952 *Description* L 290mm W 119mm Tang 195mm Lip of hoe blade badly rusted. "Donated by estate of H.C. Lugg 10.1979"
MM3039: 	Zulu 19th Cen. Dlomodlomo, Zululand. Hoe of iron. *Description* L 247mm W 65mm Tang 187mm Possibly used as an improvised field anvil? Varnished black. "Small hoe used for chopping up bulbs in stony places. Donated by Mr. S.B. Bourquin, was in Port Natal Admin. old"
MM3040: 	Zulu 19th Cen. Dlomodlomo, Zululand. Hoe of iron. *Description* L 350mm W 105mm Tang 250mm Corrosion on the lip of blade "Medium size. Donated by Mr. S.B. Bourquin, was in Port Natal Admin. old"
MM3041: 	Zulu 19th Cen. Dlomodlomo, Zululand. Hoe of iron. *Description* L 464mm W 140mm Tang 270mm Slight damage on lip of blade from use as an improvised anvil? "Large size. Donated by Mr. S.B. Bourquin, was in Port Natal Admin. old"
× MM3042: 	Zulu 19th Cen. Dlomodlomo, Zululand. Hoe of iron. *Description* L 420mm W 231mm Tang 153mm Very thin, well-made leaf-shaped blade 5mm thick at tang to 1mm at tip of point, with a prominent spine extending 110mm into the blade. "Large size. Donated by Mr. S.B. Bourquin, was in Port Natal Admin. old" [**not included in tally of KCAL hoes due to probable origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
Not Accessioned: 	*Description* L 450mm W 205mm Tang 220mm Large locally forged hoe with crack in blade, possibly formerly of tear-shaped pattern before shape changed due to wear?

× Not Accessioned: 	*Description* L 480mm W 183mm Tang 220mm Very shiny hoe with diamond-shaped blade, as well as tang, roughly same thickness, approximately 8mm at thickest. [**not included in tally of KCAL hoes due to origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
× Not Accessioned: 	*Description* L 442mm W 179mm Tang 195mm Very shiny hoe with diamond-shaped blade, as well as tang, roughly same thickness, approximately 6mm at thickest. [**not included in tally of KCAL hoes due to origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]

The 3 artefacts below are on display to the public in the Mashu Ethnography display:

MM109: 	Hoe – iron. Original collection. *Description* L 320mm W 170mm Tang 220mm In glass case with other locally forged metal objects, showing badly damaged blade, possibly from use as improvised anvil?
× MM110: 	Hoe – iron. Original collection. *Description* L 471mm W 173mm Tang 165mm Lying on floor beside two grindstones in exhibition area, an exceptional example of a carefully made but unused leaf-shaped hoe. [**not included in tally of KCAL hoes due to probable origin outside Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region**]
MM1931: 	Zulu Axe – iron. *Description* L 159 W 72mm Tang 111mm In glass case with other locally forged metal objects, badly corroded remains of a small hoe: “Iron mined in Msibe, Nongoma district during Dingane’s reign. Presented to H.C. Lugg by Dukuza Mdletshe of Ngobamakosi regt. 1946. Donated by estate of H.C. Lugg 10.1979”

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