THE ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE XHOSA IN THE CISKEI : PAST AND PRESENT.

By

Vincent Zanoxolo Gitywa, B.A.(Hons.) (S.A.).

University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

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University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

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CONTENTS.

TABLES.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS.

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

The research for this thesis was largely carried out in the years 1963 and 1964, at the end of which the investigator was absent from the Republic of South Africa for a period of two years. The writing up of the material for this thesis was started in 1967.

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VINCENT Z. GITYWA.

Department of African Studies,
University of Fort Hare,
Republic of South Africa.

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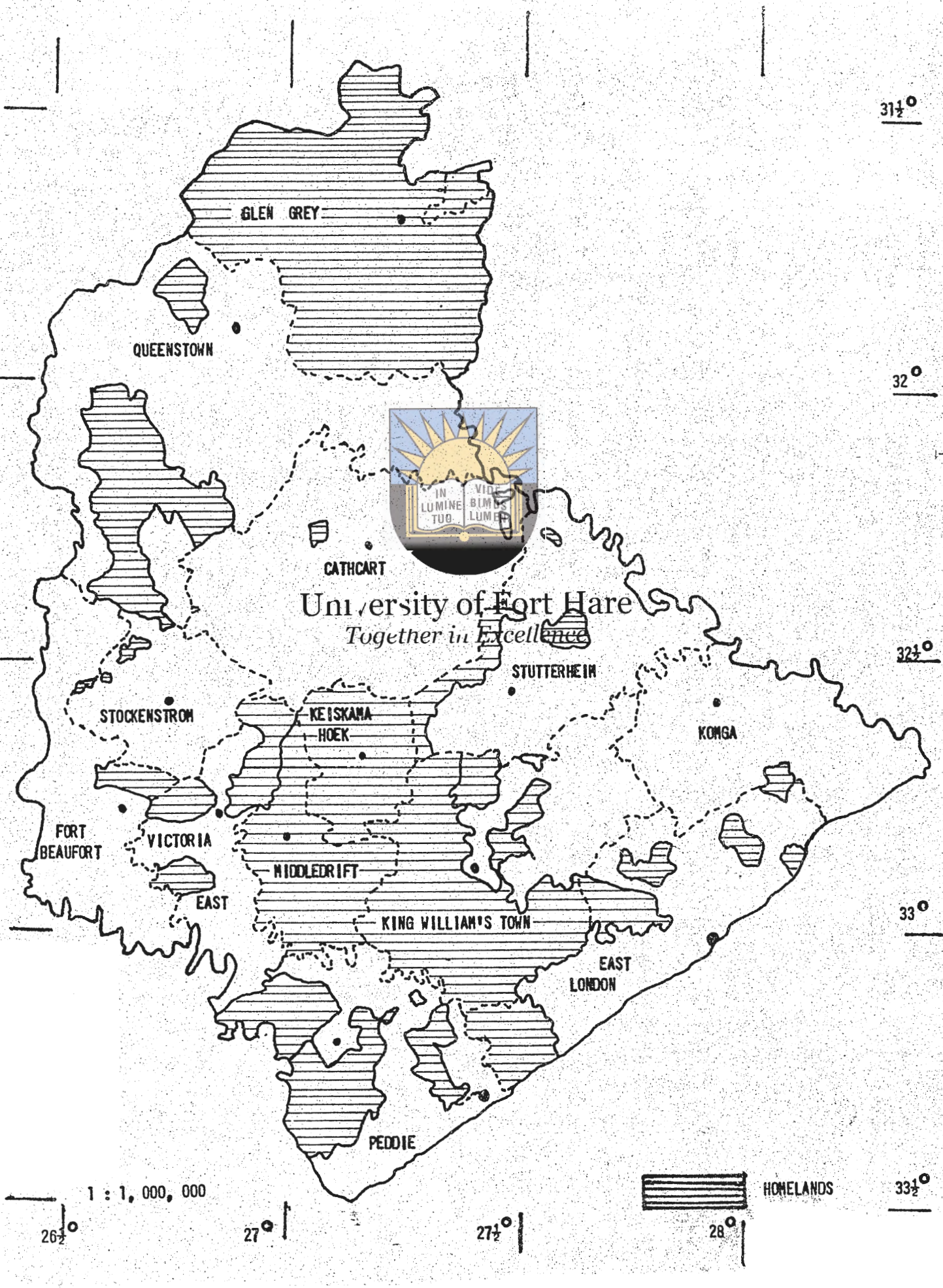
CISKEI.



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

The purpose of this study is the investigation of certain major Xhosa arts and crafts in the Ciskei, past and present. It was felt that a fairly detailed review of historical background of Xhosa arts and crafts in the Ciskei, from as far back as the eighteenth century, could provide a valuable background to the study of the present day conditions.

Information on Xhosa arts and crafts in the past centuries is scattered over a large number of books and other publications, and is very often of a fragmentary and biased nature mainly because they are quoted out of context without attention to their socio-cultural significance. This study seeks to :-

(a) collate this information and correct wherever possible wrong interpretations;

(b) describe and analyse the arts and crafts of the Xhosa as they exist today, and

(c) show the link between the arts and crafts and the culture of the Xhosa in general, in order to gain a fuller understanding of its essence.

Since these three main purposes of this study are inter-related, they will not be attempted each separately but as they occur in the inter-related context.

In the absence of sufficient scientific reference material on Xhosa culture in general,* and material culture

* For a bibliography see de Jager, E.J.: A Select Bibliography of the Anthropology of the Cape Nguni Tribes, Johannesburg, 1966, and Schapera, I.: Select Bibliography of South African Native Life and Problems, London, 1941.

in particular, it was felt that an investigation of the material culture of the Xhosa could be a good starting point and is also very necessary. This becomes even more so in a culture contact situation if we think of the situation of culture contact and change to which Xhosa culture has become subject during the last hundred years and more. The material aspect of a culture is invariably the first to be affected by change in a culture contact situation. Evidence of this may be seen in the dearth of historical exhibits on Bantu material culture in museums of this country. From Xhosa culture for instance, smiths' double bellows and warriors' oxhide shields are rarely met with in museums of this country. It is assumed that this may have been caused by the fact that the Xhosa in the Ciskei have been exposed longer to contact with Europeans than other ethnic groups in the country. Under such conditions crafts may change or die. It is therefore of anthropological interest to investigate :

(a) which arts and crafts have survived among the Xhosa and why;

(b) the causes for the decline and disappearance of certain arts and crafts, and

(c) the fusion of traditional and borrowed features in Xhosa arts and crafts.

No ready list of craftsmen that could be used for interviews was available at the start of the study. To overcome this, circulars were sent to school principals in the Ciskei for information about the occurrence of craftsmen in their localities. The craftsmen often live in remote villages from whence the schools get some of their pupils. A striking feature of the replies to the circulars was the absence of smiths as practising craftsmen, and a paucity of women practising pottery. The craftsmen were

also asked for the names and addresses of fellow craftsmen in other villages.

It was possible to make the interviews with the craftsmen of an intimate nature. The clan system and the kinship structure of the Xhosa, the tribe to which the investigator belongs, enabled him to identify himself with informants where possible paternally, maternally or through marriage. A number of obstacles in the field were overcome in this manner, especially the obstacle of doubt and suspicion on the part of strange villagers and informants with whom a classificatory relationship could not be established. Re-visits to related informants and the customary practice of bringing something with (tea, sugar, sweets or tobacco) improved relations even further. Suspicion and doubts are especially aroused at first because informants cannot understand why a professed Xhosa should ask so much about matters he is supposed to know. Strangers are also treated with a certain amount of veiled suspicion until it can be reasonably established that they are genuine.

Having established an intimate footing with the people, it was also possible for the investigator to participate, whenever possible, in their activities. Informants felt amused but grateful for help thus given because educated Xhosa are believed to have drifted from traditional economic practices. Very often the investigator tried carving a pipe in the presence of the craftsman. By deliberately making a mistake, it was possible to elicit a remark from him that would otherwise not have been adequately or clearly answered when put in question form.

The material collected in the field has been treated under the different arts and crafts. An attempt has been made to give the historical background of the craft first, followed by present day practices. It is assumed that this way of presentation will bring into focus whatever changes

and innovations have come into being. Crafts that are no longer practised, for instance smithwork, are treated in the same manner with more reliance on historical sources and what informants remember about them. Beadwork, although not an original craft, has been included as a traditional as well as a "new" craft because it is not to be doubted that beads have assumed important new roles, unknown in the donor culture, among the Xhosa as well as other South African Bantu. Cosmetics existed traditionally as an art which has been greatly subject to innovation, especially as it also touches on individual fancy and taste.

It has been found that at present the larger proportion of those still practising traditional crafts are old men. This is in contrast to traditional times when crafts were also practised by younger men and women. The younger men and women are attracted to town life, and are mostly away from home. The pride of craftsmanship and the idea of carrying on a craft that could be a family tradition is easily outweighed by more remunerative work on the mines and in urban areas. The old men who are still practising traditional crafts have no apprentices, again in contrast to former times, and this results in the craft dying with them since it offers little attraction to the younger generation.

The present spatial distribution of the craftsmen and their products is sparse. Consequently would-be customers for the craftsmen's products have to resort to ready-made shop sold substitutes. Where a village and its neighbourhood has no pipe maker, for instance, the tendency is for the people to buy European pipes or Xhosa pipes which have been hawked to shops. The quality of the latter is very often poor, since the craftsmen concerned are not faced with the criticisms of the customers who often reject poor quality work. With the increase of the spatial distance between

the craftsman and the customer, the inducement to find a substitute for the craftsman's products becomes stronger. Under such conditions the natural tendency for the craftsman is to abandon his craft for work in the mines or urban areas. In this can be seen a conflict between generations, also as they represent the old and the new.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORICAL RETROSPECT.

The present chapter is the result of an investigation into evidence on Xhosa arts and crafts collected from various historical sources dating back to the eighteenth century.

The arts and crafts of the Xhosa functioned to meet practical everyday needs, labour being divided between the sexes which devoted themselves to their particular tasks.[1] As is the case with all "primitive"(pre-literate) societies, the division of labour was a principle of prime importance in Xhosa traditional, economic and subsistence activities. We will, throughout the thesis, emphasise the principle. Discussing the division of labour on the basis of sex, Barrow[2] made the following observation with reference to women :

> the women are engaged in the affairs of the house, and in cultivating the ground. These, with the manufacture of baskets with the Cyperus grass, and of earthen pots for boiling their meat and corn, ... furnish sufficient employment for the women.

The men, on the other hand, were the warriors and the hunters and consequently the manufacturers of weapons. In all these activities, artefacts and implements were needed and provided for in traditional Xhosa culture.

One of the main tasks of women was that of hut building. The survivors from the wreck of the Grosvenor in 1782 reported[3]

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1) Carter George and van Reenen: The Wreck of the Grosvenor, pp. 39, 74-75; cf. Barrow,J. : Barrow's Travels in Southern Africa, p. 204; Alberti L.: De Kaffers aan die Zuid Kus van Afrika, p. 106; Godée Molsbergen E.C.: Reizen in Zuid-Afrika IV, pp. 48, 317.

2) Barrow,J. : op. cit., p. 204.

3) Carter George and van Reenen: op. cit., pp. 38-39; cf. Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 75.

that "the construction of their houses is a work in which the women employ themselves". In the years 1797 and 1798 Barrow [4] reported that the huts were constructed from a wooden framework which was daubed all over with a mixture of cowdung and mud, the whole structure being afterwards covered by mats. The shape of the huts is round, although between 1772 and 1776 Sparmann [5] reported "square and small" huts. His was, however, a second hand report. De Jager and Walton [6] give a detailed account of the shape, arrangement and construction of these dwellings. They trace the development of the hut from a simple circular structure, the ngquphantsi, thatched to the ground and outwardly giving the impression of a flattened beehive, to an intermediate dwelling with an earth or stone wall built around the framework of the ngquphantsi type. This is followed by a rondhavel type of hut with earth walls reinforced by saplings and having a dome-shaped or conical thatched roof. The dome-shaped, rondhavel type of hut has been in use for well over a century and was regarded as a typically Xhosa hut before the true conical-roofed rondhavel, urontawuli, appeared. Both these structures can be widely seen in the Ciskei and Transkei. The rectangular dwelling is now a common sight in the Ciskei.

The division of labour on the basis of sex in the construction of these dwellings is interesting. In the construction of the ngquphantsi and the dome-shaped roof hut, the men only put up the framework of saplings after which the thatching and plastering is left to the women. The conical-roofed rondhavels with mud brick or stone walls and

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4) Barrow, J.: op. cit., pp. 199-200.

5) Sparmann, Andrew: A Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope, Vol. II, p. 111.

6) De Jager, E.J.: "Settlement Types of the Nguni and Sotho Tribes", pp. 19-29 in Fort Hare Papers, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1964.
Walton James: "South African Peasant Architecture, Nguni Folk Building", pp. 70-79 in African Studies, Vol. 8, 1949.

the rectangular huts are entirely erected by men including the thatching of the roof, where this is the case, which is done in the European manner.

The making of household utensils such as baskets, mats and clay pots was also the task of women. A particular type of basket seems to have attracted the attention of travellers regarding its ingenuity and clever workmanship. Constant reference to it has been made by various authors, and it has been variously described as a "basket" or "bowl".[7]

> These baskets were made from a species of Cyperus, a strong reedy grass that grew in the springs of the Zuureveld. The workmanship was extremely clever and neat, and the texture so close that they were capable of containing the thinnest fluid. The women informed us that the making of these baskets was [illegible] of their employment.....

In addition to Barrow's description of this basket, Alberti[8] gives the following interesting details :-

> De kringvormige omtrek dezer Korven is bovenaan, doorgaans, tusschen 10 tot 16 Duim middellijn, van onderen naar evenredigheid iets ruimer; de wand is 1 tot 2 Lijnen dik, zelden dikker; naar beneden zijn zij eenigzins kegelvormig. De Vrouwen bereiden die zeer kunstig van Rietgras, en weten ze zoodanig te vlechten, dat zij, vooraf met Talk besmeerd, volkomen waterdigt worde.

The technique of rendering the baskets water-tight seems to have changed, however, because the Mpondo of today instead of using tallow, dip the woven basket into a thin fluid of porridge. The baskets were used as milking vessels as

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7) Barrow, J.: op. cit., p. 170; cf. Carter and van Reenen: op. cit., p. 60; Paterson, W.: A Narrative of Four Journeys, 1777-1779, p. 91.

8) Alberti, L.: op. cit., p. 36; cf. Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., pp. 84-85.

well as to drink milk from and Kropf [9] states that they were about half a bucket in volume. Kropf [10] describes the method of making these baskets as follows :-

> Wenn sie zu dieser Arbeit nötigen Binsen geschnitten und getrocknet sind, so werden die Besten ausgelesen, nass gemacht und gespalten. Aus diesen werden wieder die Besten herausgesucht, vom Marke befreit und zum Flechten der Körbe gebraucht. Die anderen gespaltenen werden in fingerdicker Rolle zusammengefast und zum Einlegen benutzt. So wird dann immer an einem Stricke fort eingelegt und eine Reiher durch die andere genäht. Je nach der Grösse der Körbe ist auch die Näherei verschieden, aber durchgängig sehr akkurat und schön aussehend. Der Grösste itala fasst ungefähr zwei Scheffel, dann kommen amagindiva, zwei Eimer fassend, zum Aufbewahren von Kleinigkeiten; dann inzwazwa, einen Eimer haltend; dann amatunga, wohinein gemolken wird, etwa einen halben Eimer fassend, und [illegible]tya, woraus gegessen und getrunken wird, und kleine, wie Becher, werden benutzt, aus denen die Säuglinge getränkt werden. Diese Arbeit verstanden beinahe alle Frauen.

In addition McLaren [11] mentions light winnowing baskets called iminyazi, grain storage baskets called izilulu and a smaller grain basket, ingobozi. Somewhat peculiar is the ingindwa for storing clothes and household goods.

Two kinds of mats seem to have been made. There was a coarse type which, according to Kay, [12] was not artfully done as they were used for the most common purposes, and a

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9) Kropf, A.: Kafir-English Dictionary, p. 434 under it'unga.

10) Kropf, A.: Das Volk der Xosa-Kaffern im östlichen Südafrika, nach seiner Geschichte, Eigenart, Verfassung und Religion. Ein Beitrag zur Afrikanischen Völkerkunde, p. 116.

11) McLaren, J.: "Arts and Crafts of the Xosas, a Study Based on Philology" in Report of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science, p. 446, 1918.

12) Kay, S.: Researches in Caffraria, p. 147.

fine type, the workmanship of which showed "both industry and genius". This latter type is made of the rushes of the finest quality, neatly stitched together with thread from the bark of trees. McLaren [13] confirms these statements by Kay.

A fairly extensive account is given here of Xhosa trade relationships. This throws valuable light on various aspects of their arts and crafts, for example value concepts, types of artefacts traded, etc.

The Xhosa subsisted partly on livestock and partly from their hoe culture economy. There was also a fair amount of inter-tribal trade which was carried on to secure valuables such as iron, beads and copper. This was especially the case between the Xhosa and the Thembu. Soga [14] mentions that cattle, goats, fowls and grain provided the Xhosa with a means of bartering for such other things as they had need of. He mentions that "assegais were the current coin" [15] when discussing gifts given during marriage negotiations. Unfortunately he does not give the exchange value of the assegai.

Important information on the value of manufactured articles can be obtained from the writings of early travellers. Between the years 1776 and 1805 Godée Molsbergen stated that "Assegaaien gelden ook als betaalmiddel" [16] and Alberti in 1810 reported that "De Werpspiesen hebben bij de Kaffers eene onderscheidende waarde. Men ruilt daarvoor vee en ander noodwendigheden". [17] A clear picture was painted by Brownlee, [18] who recorded in 1823 that "a triangular piece of

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13) McLaren, J.: op. cit., p. 446.
14) Soga, J.H.: AmaXosa Life and Customs, p. 381.
15) Soga, J.H.: op. cit., p. 211.
16) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 321.
17) Alberti, L.: op. cit., p. 98.
18) Brownlee, C.: Reminiscences of Kaffir Life and History, p. 372.

iron, from one to two pounds in weight, served as an axe, and its equivalent in barter was an ox". Iron in the form of spears and axes was thus a primary form of currency for bartering. Yet other forms did exist. Unqualified by a scale of value, shells were used as currency in 1776, though yellow copper and small red beads were valued more.[19] In 1803 :[20]

> waren kleine kralen mode, die ze den stam „Imbo's" kregen. Voor twee kleine strengen kon men een koe en een kalf kopen. Ze geloven de ze als wormen uit de grond komen en met assegaaien door de Imbo's afgemaaid worden.

The "Imbo's" referred to were the Thembu, presently occupying the Queenstown district. The value of the beads was enhanced by their supposed mystical appearance out of the earth in the form of worms and these beads may well have been the copper beads mentioned by von Winkelmann [21] between 1788 and 1789. This [illegible]en explain the mystical appearance out of the earth since the copper used in their manufacture must have been obtained through mining activity.

Recording the mode of barter between the Xhosa and the Thembu in 1809, Moodie [22] gave the following account :

> The messengers informed us that the object of their journey was to exchange copper chains for cattle. This barter is conducted in a very gallant manner. The messengers deliver the compliments of their Chiefs, and throw the chains round the necks of the favorite ladies. They ask nothing in return, but when they choose to terminate their visit, which was this time to last a week or ten days, they were presented with the supposed value of their gifts. The amount seems, however, to be perfectly well understood by both parties; for they said they should receive a cow for each chain.

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19) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 12, footnote.

20) Ibid., p. 320.

21) In Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 66.

22) Moodie : The Record, p. 39 v.

The barter between the Xhosa and the Thembu seems to have been a fairly general affair since "Three of the Kaffirs were at Opato's, for the same purpose, at the time of Mr. Stockenstrom's visit to that Chief 18 months before".[23] Shaw erroneously recorded that the Xhosa and the Thembu "traded in wives",[24] misunderstanding the exchange procedure noted by Moodie. However, he definitely stated that the two tribes traded "in small quantities of iron".[25]

It can be deduced from the foregoing that trade was an established practice between the Xhosa and the Thembu, though Pringle[26] puts it as having been an occasional occupation. This may well indicate a decline in inter-tribal trade at the time at which he wrote in 1834 because European wares and traders' waggons were then common.[27]

Kropf[28] gives detailed equivalents for Xhosa wares in barter. A [illegible] smith was paid a cow for six to eight [illegible] brass smith producing rings, bangles, ornamental belts which consisted of many smoothly hammered, well rounded off rings threaded to a thong, would dispose of two such belts for a cow. The brass was obtained from the Cape Colony and, according to Kropf, three to four hundred rings[29] were required for the making of such a belt.

Shoe making was not a lucrative craft. Few people needed shoes, and then only for use in war or on long journeys.

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23) Ibid.
24) Shaw, B.: Memorials of Southern Africa, p. 41.
25) Ibid.
26) Pringle, T.: Residence in South Africa, p. 282.
27) Buck Adam's Journal : van Riebeeck Society Publication, pp. 61, 67, 96.
28) Kropf, A.: Das Volk der Xosa-Kaffern, pp. 112-117.
29) The rings are called iinqwemesha.

However, for the material for two pairs, the customer would get only one pair and pay in addition a goat kid for the services rendered.[30)]

The pottress sold a claypot with the volume of two buckets for an oxhide, and occasionally rich people would give a cow in payment.[31)]

That Xhosa-European contact along the southern-eastern coast of South Africa started off bartering in 1702 between the Gamtoos and the Kei rivers, according to Robertson,[32)] is an over-simplification. Rather could this be regarded as an intensification of the contact situation between the Xhosa and the European Colonists, as well as a redirection and emphasis of trade practices.

Trade between t[illegible] and the European is reported as early as 1688 when the crew of the Hooker Centaur were rescuing survivors of the wrecked Stavenisse. They took aboard nineteen men "and a fat ox bartered from the Kafirs there, for an arm-ring, value one rixdollar".[33)] This happened on latitude 32° 50" S, between the Kei river and the present East London. The "King of these Kafirs" had promised to barter two other oxen for copper. When the rescuing crew returned for these, they brought with them the following items as presents to the "King" :- red beads, a neck ring and two arm rings in addition to two more arm rings as payment for the bartered cattle.[34)]

Despite the decided preference for European wares such as red beads and copper rings, the survivors of the Stavenisse

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30) Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 114; cf. Shaw, B.: op. cit., p. 37.
31) Ibid., p. 117.
32) Robertson, H.: "150 Years of Economic Contact between Black and White" in The South African Journal of Economics, Vol. 2, 1934, p. 404.
33) Moodie : op. cit., p. 425.
34) Ibid.

reported that "no one must presume to barter anything without the King's consent".[35] This was to allow the chiefs to obtain tribute from the trade.

The Colonial Governments on various occasions prohibited trade between the Colonists and the Xhosa. Proclamations to this effect were promulgated as early as 1774 by von Plettenberg and continued up to Sir John Cradock's proclamation of 1812.[36] Despite these, trade with the Xhosa continued. The Colonists and the Settlers found themselves initially faced with insurmountable difficulties in opening up the country as farmers, while their neighbours the Xhosa, possessed valuable and marketable commodities such as ivory, hides and cattle. These could be obtained by bartering a few pounds of beads, copper, neck and arm rings and other trinkets which captured the fancy of the Xhosa. Commerce and trade with the Xhosa was thus inevitable especially since Xhosa chiefs perceived that such trade could be turned into a source of revenue for them. By modern standards the rate of exchange was an unfavourable one for the Xhosa. In about 1782 a bullock could be bartered for the insides of a watch.[37]

The Xhosa set a very high price on white beads during the time of von Winkelmann (1788-1789) and he wrote :[38]

> Unter allen Gütern lieben sie keine so sehr, als weisse Korallen; alle andern haben unter ihnen keinen so hohen Werth. Wenn man aber indessen in ehmaligen Zeiten gegen ein Pfund solcher Korallen einen Oschen oder eine Kuh erhandeln konnte, so hätte man deren jetzt mehr als 2 - 3 Pfund nöttig, und müsste noch oben drein eine kleine Zugabe beilegen.

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35) Ibid.

36) Cory : Rise of South Africa, Vol. II, p. 174.

37) Carter and van Reenen : op. cit., p. 57.

38) von Winkelmann, F.: in Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 67.

The evidence given by a Hottentot, Piet, in 1778, stated that it was true that the burgers (Colonists) bartered cattle with the Xhosa giving for each head of cattle "four bunches of beads and two copper plates, and a string of beads for each calf".[39] It is therefore evident that there was much price fluctuation in the bartering. The Colonists were in need of cattle while the Xhosa on the other hand set a high value on the glittering articles of the Colonists. This demand by both the Colonists and the Xhosa strengthened the trade relationships between them and resulted in an increased supply of European wares. This view is supported by von Winkelmann[40] in the following statement :

> Der Grund davon liegt in dem starken Verkehr der angrenzenden Bauern mit den Kaffern, wodurch teils der Werth jener Güter vermindert. teils der st[illegible]e Werth ihres Viehes vergrössert wird.

Ivory bracelets were also valuable barter commodities :

> Die Kaffern verfertigen diese Ringe mit vieler Mühe, und können dazu nur die dicksten Elephantenzähne gebrauchen. Eben diese daran verwendete Mühe und die Beschwerigkeit immer die grössten Zähne zu bekommen erhöhen eben darum ihren Werth, daher fordeten sie auch von mir für 2 solcher Ringe so viele Güter, als gewöhnlich für ein Stück Vieh erhaltern.[41]

Three price trends, according to the situation applicable, emerge from the above quotations :-

(a) When there was a demand for cattle by the Colonists the value of the trinkets they gave in exchange depreciated;

(b) The demand for European goods by the Xhosa tended to raise their value and depress the value of the cattle;

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39) Moodie : op. cit., p. 73 iii.
40) von Winkelmann in Godée Molsbergen : op. cit., p.67.
41) Ibid.

(c) Elaborate craftsmanship was acknowledged in proper payment, i.e. commensurate values in so far as the Xhosa were concerned.

With the inevitable convergence of the Colonists and the Xhosa along the eastern frontier, trade between them intensified. Illicit bartering was rife, for instance the non-commissioned officers at Fredericksburg in the ceded territory traded in ivory and cattle with the Xhosa.[42] Such practices led to a relaxation of the policy of non-intercourse between the Colonists and the Xhosa by the institution of a fair in 1817 in Grahamstown. For various reasons the fair failed. It was revived in 1821 by Sir Rufane Donkin on the banks of the Keiskamma river. This again failed. By a Proclamation dated July 23rd, 1824, barter was to be carried on at Fort Willshire by persons who had a special licence from the landdrost of Albany. The fairs were to take pl[illegible]ednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays every week with strong restrictions on the sale of fire-arms, ammunition and liquor.[43]

An important aspect of these attempts to institute fairs was the consultation of chiefs, e.g. Ngqika, who willingly gave his consent. The fairs were instituted to regulate trade as well as to transform "the Kaffirs from a nation of thieves to an honest and civilised people".[44]

By 1830 the intended transformation was looked upon as having been accomplished, and licensed itinerant traders were allowed into Xhosa territory.

Dugmore [45] gives the following description of the Fort Willshire fairs :

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42) Robertson : op. cit., p. 410.

43) Cory : op. cit., pp. 177-178.

44) Ibid., p. 177.

45) Dugmore, H.: Reminiscences of an Albany Farmer, pp.34-35.

> The traders were there with their beads, buttons, and brass wire; and the Kaffers were there from mountain range and sea coast lowland, from the Keiskamma to the Kye. Long files of women, headed by their lords and masters, and laden with ox-hides, horns, and gum, and here and there in the more precious merchandize of elephant's tusk among them, threaded the bush-paths in single file, or converged down the hill sides towards the centre of attraction under the guns of the fort.

Thousands attended at these fairs from far and wide. Keppel-Jones [46] reported that the natives tested the quality of the beads by biting on them, and if they broke they would be refused. Of the mode of bartering he [47] wrote as follows :-

> the Kaffirs would sit down with their wares in front of them. The buyer comes with his beads and lays down what he considers ample payment for the wares. The sellers bargain in addition for knives, hatchets and another bunch of beads.

Other items of barter were mimosa gum, uluzi cordage from the bark of the Ficus ingens, hides and skins. King [48] reported that the Xhosa went in for the storing of large quantities of hides and horns for future trading [49] and possibly for the manufacture of cloaks.

Ivory was by far the most valued commodity sought after by the Colonists because of the high price it fetched on being resold on European markets. The following figures give an idea of the importance of ivory over other items of barter: [50]

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46) Keppel-Jones, ed.: Phillips 1820 Settler, p. 218.

47) Ibid., p. 293.

48) King, W.R.: Campaigning in Kaffirland, p. 114.

49) cf. Dugmore, H.: op. cit., p. 35 and King, W.R.: op. cit., p. 114.

50) Cory, G.: op. cit., p. 179.

> From August 18th, 1824, to January 11th, 1825, 38,424 lb. of ivory were obtained in barter, and from January 12th, 1825, to March 12th, 1825, 12,017 lb. - or in about seven months, 50,441 lb. (about 20½ Cape tons). Besides this about 16,800 pounds of gum and 15,000 hides were also obtained.

A certain portion from the proceeds of the sale of ivory was claimed as tribute by the chiefs. Ngqika is reported to have been "watching the sale of ivory for he claims tribute upon all sold for the privilege of passing through his territory".[51] Before the buying of ivory by Colonial traders it was customary among the Xhosa for the elephant tusks to be sent to the chief's place. Armrings made of these were used as royal insignia and as medals disposed of by the chief to his councillors and warriors.

Besides the fairs held weekly at Fort Willshire, there were the so-called Clay Fairs sanctioned by the Colonial government. The Clay Pits were in the Albany district near the settlement of Mahony. The first reported contact of these Settlers with the Xhosa was in 1821 when a party of about six hundred Xhosa men and a thousand Xhosa women, permitted by Colonel Willshire to procure their highly prized clay from the Clay Pits, approached Mahony's location.[52] No evidence of any commercial transaction is recorded for this occasion. This indicates that the Xhosa knew of the existence of the Clay Pits, had exploited them before and organised expeditions to collect the clay.

The Settlers near the Clay Pits took the initiative and began to barter with the Xhosa the clay for ivory and hides. The government stepped in to regulate these illicit transactions, failed to do so and then sanctioned the bartering.

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51) Keppel-Jones : op. cit., p. 293.

52) Cory, G.: op. cit., p. 114.

Thus [53]

> in July, 1822, the chief Nqeno with 300 men and women arrived at the clay pits, and after remaining four days took away a quantity of clay which was estimated as three waggon loads. They gave in return forty skins (of cattle), two tusks of ivory and two buffalo horns.

The Clay Pits fairs ended with the murder of Mahony by the Xhosa in 1834, This apparently arose from Mahony behaving "aggressively towards them".[54] The demand for clay by the Xhosa and the demand for ivory and cattle by the Settlers were causative factors in this episode.

The trade relations of the Colonists and the Xhosa, including the Clay Pits fairs, fit in very well with Robertson's analysis of Bantu-European contact.[55] The trade between the two groups represents an indirect co-operation of the two groups, a complementing of one another's economic resources as befits contiguous cultural groups. The elements of friction were essentially competitive, a struggle for the control of the natural resources of the country. This latter aspect is well exemplified in the Clay Pits affair.

Bartering between the Xhosa and the Colonists was dominated by a desire on the part of the Xhosa to obtain, at first, the quantitatively limited attractive wares of the Europeans, for example, beads, copper and trinkets. These were more of aesthetic value to the Xhosa than utilitarian and economic value. The Europeans, on the other hand, obtained marketable and economic valuable commodities from the Xhosa : ivory, hides, skins, gum, etc. With the institution of trade fairs, commercial bonds between Xhosa and

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53) Cory : op. cit., p. 140.
54) Ibid.
55) Robertson : op. cit., p. 403.

Europeans were channelised with the definite aim, on the part of the Europeans, of converting the Xhosa to European established economic practices, i.e. to become permanent trade partners. The fairs, in fact, did very little to stimulate Xhosa art and craft productions. Nevertheless, with the intensification of trade relations between the Xhosa and the Colonists, more European wares were brought onto the market by itinerant traders and finally by the permanent settlement of traders among the Xhosa. Implements of agriculture, domestic utensils and clothing now formed the main attraction for the Xhosa, who in doing so allowed their own crafts to deteriorate, resulting in great loss in this sphere of their culture.

Leather clothes, especially trousers, were introduced during the Dutch Colonial regime. These continued in vogue even during the [illegible] regime in the early nineteenth century, but they were gradually superceded by cloth materials.

Up to 1824 the process of change in dress was not directed. Those few who acquired odd items of European clothes got them from missionaries and farmers. Brownlee [56] definitely states that in those early days before the institution of regular fairs, no article of European manufacture was to be seen among the Xhosa except a few beads, brass wire and buttons. However, in 1824 the regulations controlling trade between the Xhosa and the Colonists stipulated that in exchange for Xhosa articles the Colonists should give cloth materials of any description, blankets, leather trousers and a limitation was placed on beads, buttons and trinkets as exchange media.[57] From 1830 this process was accelerated

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56) Brownlee, C.: op. cit., pp. 371-372.

57) Cory : op. cit., Vol. 18, pp. 179-181;
cf. Theal, G.M.: op. cit., Vol. 35, p. 253.

by allowing itinerant traders into Xhosa territory. At this stage the clothing of both sexes among the Xhosa was still predominantly skin.[58] In 1825, Rev. W.R. Thompson[59] reported that European clothing was still resisted by the Xhosa, but that blankets were steadily becoming common in use.

In addition to the Colonial Government's attempts at changing the dress habits of the Xhosa, the missionaries expected all their converts to adopt European clothing as a symbol of their conversion and to discard their "heathen costume". Freeman relates an interesting case. "She had renounced her Kaffir dress and heathen customs, put on European clothing as a sign of the change and attended instruction".[60] The woman referred to here was a convert at the Peelton mission station near King William's Town. Her brother's reactionaries to force her to a "heathen dance" which she refused. As a last resort the brother "covered her with some heathen dress, and she wept and sobbed bitterly, as though she was returned back to heathenism".[61] Thus in some cases at least, the desire to become Christian could be equated with a willingness to discard traditional costume for European clothes. In 1875, sixty thousand blankets which displaced the skin kaross, were sold in King William's Town alone.[62]

Missionaries and administrative officials exerted much influence on chiefs in changing the traditional costume of the Xhosa. The earlierst recorded instance of missionary influence on a chief was in 1799 when Chief Tshatshu attached his son to Dr. Van der Kemp. The

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58) Pringle, T.: op. cit., p. 283.
59) Cory : op. cit., Vol. 21, pp. 177-178.
60) Freeman, J.: A Tour in South Africa, pp. 108, 523-525.
61) Ibid.
62) Robertson, H.: op. cit., p. 424.

young prince was taught and converted to Christianity by the missionary for whom he acted as interpreter.[63] Alberti reported Ngqika dressed in European clothes in 1810 parading himself in front of female admirers;[64] the same chief in about 1823-24 changed into European clothes before going to a fair.[65] Perhaps the best example of the winning over of a chief is that of Chief Kama who was a Christian convert. Dressing in European clothes thus came to be associated with status among the converts and the chiefs.

The Cattle Killing episode of 1856 was a great setback to traditional clothing customs. It struck at the source of the raw material of the Xhosa skin costumes, and led to a mass migration to the Cape Colony in search of food, clothes and work, thus eliminating much resistance against the adoption of European clothes. This national disaster had left the people who had been ravaged by the seventh frontier War. Sir George Grey timeously introduced his civilising policy just when Xhosa resistance to any enforced acculturation was at its lowest ebb.

It was also accepted government policy to direct the change in the dress of the Xhosa towards adopting European clothes. Act 25, Section 125, of 1886, reads :-

> Whoever indecently exposes his person or[66] appears in any street or public thoroughfare without such articles of clothing as decency requires shall be punished with a fine not exceeding two pounds, and in default of payment with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one month, unless such a fine be sooner paid.

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63) Kay, S.: op. cit., p. 39.

64) Alberti, L.: op. cit., p. 50.

65) Phillips : 1820 Settler, p. 290.

66) Statutes, Proclamations and Government Notices in Native Territories 1907, p. 112.

It was under these circumstances that the traditional Xhosa costume of today, made of cloth material, was accepted. Skin skirt and kaross are items of dress rarely met with in the Ciskei today, and where such is the case, it is normally on ritual occasions such as traditional weddings.

The Xhosa smith, famous for his spears, axes and metallic ornaments, has disappeared from the ranks of the specialist craftsmen together with ancillary crafts such as the construction of a bellows, furnaces, etc. His role prior to contact with the European was a highly respected one for the spear was a weapon of defence and offence, a ritual instrument used, for example, in circumcision, and it was used as a form of currency in trade and barter.

As a specialist craft, however, spear-making had very little scope of expanding into the proportions of an industry which purposefully exploits raw materials, skill and labour. It is doubtful that the Xhosa ever mined iron ore, but some writers assert that ore was abundant between Lovedale and the Buffalo river, the Kommetjie Flats around Debe Nek being evidence of their having mined the ore.[67] Thus the scarcity of iron ore was an additional limiting factor to the expansion of this craft.

Xhosa-European contact resolved itself into conflict and subjugation. It expressed itself in the Kaffir or Frontier Wars which proved the superiority of the European gun over the Xhosa spear and leather shield, and resulted in the subjugation of the numerically stronger Xhosa. Consequently the Xhosa sought after European guns, and the trade between them and the Colonists afforded

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67) Moodie's South Africa, Vol. II, pp. 258-260, 267.

the opportunity for such illegal bartering. So prolific was the gun-trafficking that traders imported what was then known as "Kaffir Muskets".[68] Inside Sandile's deserted hut at Burnshill in 1834 was found, among other things, a musket;[69] Chiefs Siyolo and Umhala deliberately planned an attack on Trumpeter's Post to get a supply of arms and ammunition;[70] Pato and Kama, during the war of 1834-5, had with them thirty mounted men with guns and four hundred with assegais.[71] Previous to the departure of Sir Peregrine Maitland (1844-1847) the hostile tribes were required, as one of the conditions on which peace was to be granted them, to surrender their arms and to present themselves for registration as British subjects; on the 13th March, 1847, it was stated by Sir H. Pottinger that about 4,000 stand of fire-arms and 8,000 assegais had been surrendered by the Gaikas, and 120 guns and 4,206 assegais by the Tambookie and Tlambes.[72] The spear-maker thus lost his prestige with the acquisition of guns by the Xhosa, and the Cattle Killing Episode and the final subjugation of the Xhosa by the Europeans marked the end of the spear-maker as a specialist craftsman.

The situation regarding pottery can be summed up in the words of Schönland [73] that

> Unfortunately, whenever the natives come into very close contact with the White man their arts and industries disappear to a very large extent. It does not pay even a Kaffir to make a water-tight basket (or clay pot) when he can use an old biscuit tin for the same purpose.

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68) Dugmore, H.H.: op. cit., p. 25.

69) Moodie : History of the Battles etc. in South Africa, Vol. II, p. 8.

70) Ibid., p. 25.

71) Ibid., p. 295.

72) "The Journal of Thomas Baines, Vol.I".

73) Schönland, Dr. S.: "Arts and Crafts of the Natives of South Africa" in British and South African Associations for the Advancement of Science, Vol. III, 1905, p. 131.

CHAPTER III.

POTTERY, BASKET AND MAT-MAKING.

Very little has been reported on pottery in early records of travellers and missionaries in South Africa. However, a few authors did make observations on this craft.

Lichtenstein [74] who visited the Colony between 1803 and 1806 reports that for keeping liquors and cooking the Xhosa "make pots of fine clay, which are hardened in the sun, without being glazed". Beyond this information, he gives very little detail regarding the techniques employed.

Kay, [75] who seems to have had a poor impression of Xhosa pottery, states

> they are a very rude description of earthenware. They are clumsily moulded, and exceedingly inconvenient, having neither handles nor coverings. A comparatively small degree of attention is paid to the preparation of the clay, which in all probability is far from being the best; and hence many of these unsightly vessels are very porous.

These early authors contradict one another. As pointed out Lichtenstein spoke of "fine clay". In contradiction Kay, in referring to the clay, stated that it was "far from being the best". Obviously the authors saw only the finished product, never having witnessed the process of manufacture. They thus report negatively on the glazing and the firing of the pots. They did not mention either that pottery was a specialist craft. Kropf, [76]

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74) Lichtenstein, H.: Travels in Southern Africa, Vol.I, p. 279.

75) Kay, S.: op. cit., p. 147.

76) Kropf, A.: Das Volk der Xosa-Kaffern, p. 116.

however, noted that only a few women understood the craft. He then goes on to note how these women made, fired and glazed their pots.

Fritsch [77] noted that the clay pots were made out of clay which was obtained in a fairly pure state from termite heaps. This is one of the first references to the source of the clay used by the Xhosa.

The clay pots satisfied the requirements and needs for which the Xhosa made them. Various forms of pots were made. They were, however, all characterised by the absence of a "foot".

> Die verbreitetste Form ist die einer Bowle [78] mit gar nicht oder nur wenig markierten Fuss; von dieser Grundform finden sich aber je nach Zweck, Ge[illegible]der Laune des Verfertigers mannigfache Abweichungen, besonders hinsichtlich der Gestalt und Weite der Mündung, welche entweder gerade aufstehend, von mässiger Weite und mit einem Kupferringe oder einem thönernen Deckel verschliessbar sein kann (Kochgefässe), oder von mittleren Durchmesser mit umgelegten Rande (Wasser- oder Biergefässe), oder die Mündung wird ganz weit, das Gefäss selbst niedrig und nähert sich mehr einer Schüssel. Viele haben gar keinen Boden, sondern laufen nach unten stumpf kegelförmig zu, so dass sie nicht aufrecht stehen bleiben. Solche Gefässe sind dazu bestimmt, auf dem Kopfe getragen zu werden, und ruhen dabei auf einem dicken, von Bast geflochtenen Ringe, in den sie die tiefste Theil einfügt.

The Xhosa had no knowledge of the potter's wheel so that the whole process of making a pot was done by hand. Wooden or bone tools were used as modelling implements.[79] In addition to these sea shells were also used for smoothening the inside and outside of the pot.[80]

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77) Fritsch, Gustav : Die Eingeborenen Südafrikas, p. 75.
78) Ibid.
79) Ibid.
80) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 274.

Contrary to Kay's statement that "A comparatively small degree of attention is paid to the preparation of the clay", other authors seem to hold a different opinion. So, for example, Godée Molsbergen [81] wrote :

> Ook maken de vrouwen vrij netjes aarden vaten uit voor gieting vatbare klei, die zij uitgraven en mee naar huis brengen; en ze verdeelende in stukjes zoo groot als okkernooten en op een huid leggende, terwyl zij ze nu en dan met eenig water besprekelen, om ze niet al te droog te laten worden, stellen zij ze twee of drie dagen aan die zon bloot. Daarna ze gekneed hebbende maken zij er cylinders van als worten, van een ellenboog elk;

Also, though in less detail, Kropf [82] mentions that "Der Thon, trocken gegraben [illegible] Pulver gestossen, wird nass gemacht und geknetet". Thus in the whole process of preparation, the craftswoman would need a variety of tools - a digging instrument, a container to carry the clay home, stones to pound the clay into powder if dry, and to kneed it to the required consistency when moistened, and finally a hide on which to put the prepared clay. The clay was also allowed to stay for two or three days before use.

Two methods were employed in the construction of clay vessels : the coil technique as mentioned by Godée Molsbergen [83] in which successive coils are added to a base. The second method is mentioned by McLaren : [84]

> The potter, usually a female, took a lump of this and with her hands and a piece of wood laboriously moulded, bumba, the clay into the shape desired, giving it a thickness of from a quarter of an inch to half an inch.

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81) Ibid.
82) Kropf, A.: op. cit.
83) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit.
84) McLaren, J.: loc. cit.

The "vrij netjes aarden vaten" seem to have been produced by using the former technique. The form of the pot was governed by the use it would be put to, or as Fritsch [85] states, the fancy of the craftswoman.

In all cases the vessels were sun-dried with this added precaution : [86]

> Zijn de potten klaar, dan laten zij ze op dezelfde plek, met een vel of strooien mat een paar dagen lang wel bedekt, opdat zij niet door de werking van lucht en wind te snel droogen en dus spleten krijgen.

The sun-drying was followed by the firing of the clay vessels in the open kiln. According to Kropf, [87] the vessel was filled and surrounded with dry cowdung. This was set alight and the firing was stopped only when the pots were thoroughly burnt. Molsbergen [88] records that even before the firing of the pot, it is treated with red colouring on the inside and outside. This is the only instance of the use of a colouring material that has been noted. The pots normally get their reddish-brown colour from the firing.

On the glazing of pots, Kropf [89] made the following observation :

> Ist er kalt geworden, wird Kafferhirse gerieben, das Mehl mit Wasser angefeuchtet und in den Topf getan, Wasser zugegossen und das Korn zu einem trocknen Brei gekocht. Hiermit wird der Topf innen und aussen bestrichen. Was übrig ist, wird wieder hineingetan, Wasser zugegossen und so lange gekocht, bis nach vielem überkochen nichts mehr darin ist. Das ist die Glasur, die aber kein Aussehen hat.

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85) Fritsch, Gustav : loc. cit.
86) Godée Molsbergen, E.C.: op. cit., p. 274.
87) Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 116.
88) Kropf, A.: loc. cit.
89) Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 440.

The present-day technique of pot-making does not vary much from what has been described above. The following is a description of the techniques used by a number of potters observed in the Amatola Basin in the Middledrift district of the Ciskei.*

Preparation of the clay :

The clay, udongwe, is obtained dry or wet mostly from the vicinity of a river, stream or anywhere where suitable clay is obtainable. If obtained dry, the clay is ground, ukusila, on a flat stone to remove small pebbles and other vegetable impurities before mixing it with water; if obtained wet, the clay is thoroughly "wedged" on a flat stone to a plastic consistency. Although this was not acknowledged by the informant, the "wedging" is to remove air bubbles which would cause cracking of the finished vessel when fired.

The prepared clay is wrapped in damp sacking, to allow for thorough softening as well as keeping it at the same state of dampness. Sufficient clay is prepared for the number of pots envisaged. The clay is tempered with ground red or white sandstone called isabhunge or intlatywa. When sandstone is not available, potsherds are ground and used for the same purpose. This is called ukuqinisa udongwe. The clay is allowed to stay for a day or two covered up in this manner in a store hut, or the potter's workroom.

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* This must be read in conjunction with the plate illustrating the making of a pot.

Construction of the pot :

As far as possible the construction of the pot should be done inside a hut, unless the day is calm and fine.[90] This precaution is taken to prevent the clay from cracking through unequal drying.

A lump of clay is rolled between the hands into a cylinder, umsundulo,[91] of about twenty centimeters in length. This is then coiled in an anti-clockwise direction on a flat surface, usually a piece of cardboard. More coils are added, the tips of succeeding coils overlapping about four centimeters, until the desired diameter of the base is attained. The ribbed coils are smoothed with the blade of a knife.

Brown paper is [illegible] with fat and then lined along the inside bottom of an enamel dish. The smoothed clay base on the cardboard is inverted into this greased paper-lined dish and the cardboard removed revealing the reverse side. It is smoothed similarly, care being taken to exert equal smoothing pressure as the clay base assumes the contoured shape of the inside of the dish.

Successive coils are added in the manner described inside the dish which is easily pivoted on its smooth base as the coils are being added. The dish serves as a "potter's wheel" and as a mould for building up a symmetrical base. The greased paper lining prevents the sticking of the clay base to the dish when it is ready to be removed. Both the dish and the greased brown paper are important innovations which are not part of the traditional technique. The smoothness of the enamel dish enables it to swivel more evenly than when a potsherd, mat or stone is used for the same purpose, the latter three being unevenly balanced.

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90) Cf. Grossert, J.W.: Arts and Crafts for Africans, p. 72.

91) So called because of its similarity to an earthworm which is known by the same word, as well as the tendons along the back of the neck.

Further, the geometrical shape of the bottom of the dish allows for a better base for the finished clay vessel which would rest steadier on the ground than when it was moulded on a sherd or mat. [92] Traditionally an old sherd or piece of matting was used as a base on which to construct the vessel. [93]

When the sides of the clay pot being constructed protrude eight to nine inches above the rim of the dish, they are gradually turned inwards by the addition and smoothening of further coils. The mouth of the pot is carefully made, and the outside of the pot is smoothed with any suitable instrument available. Linear decorations of the sickle moon and chevron patterns, are incised with a pointed stick on the outer wall of the pot about one or two inches below the rim while the clay is still soft. The pot is now finished, and will [illegible] out of the dish only when it is dry enough to be lifted off bodily without distorting its shape.

Drying of the pot :

For the first few days the pot is kept inside a hut to allow of a slower and regular rate of drying. Too rapid drying and baking in the sun outside would result in cracks which have to be avoided by all means. It is only when the pot is partially dry, xa inqumile, that it is dried outside in a sheltered place during the day. It is also at this stage that it is removed from the dish to smoothen the bottom. The pot at this stage is called ingqayi ekrwada, a "raw pot", i.e. one which has not yet been baked.

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92) Two flat stones, one on top of the other thus forming a crude turntable, are used in the Herschel district. Cf. also Battis and Grossert: The Art of Africa, p. 91.

93) Schapera, I.: Bantu Speaking Tribes of South Africa, p.5

Baking :

The baking, ukoja, is done when the pots are completely dry, about two weeks in good weather. The "kiln" is a hole dug in the ground. Any member of the family may prepare the "kiln", but the potteress herself must do the baking since she has the necessary experience in laying the pots and the amount of fuel necessary. In addition, it is taboo for anybody else to do the firing.

The pots, arranged mouth to mouth in the "kiln", are filled and surrounded with dry grass, firewood and dry cowdung. This is to ensure that every pot is well baked inside and outside. The whole pile is set alight in the morning, a calm day being chosen so that the heat is not dispersed by the wind. With a strong big fire, the process lasts for the whole day, and if sufficient fuel was laid on at the beginning, there is usually no need for replenishing the fire. By evening the pots are ready,

zivuthiwe, a condition recognised from the reddish brown colour the pots acquire, and from the metallic ring they give when tapped. They are removed from the "kiln" [94] when they are completely cooled, usually on the next day.

Glazing :

If the pot is to be used for the storage of water, amarewu,[95] or beer, utywala, the pot is glazed by a process called ukukhangula. After baking, and the pot has been cooled off, it is filled to the brim with hot, soft mealie meal porridge, isidudu, which is allowed to remain in the pot overnight. It is emptied on the following day,

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94) The Hlubi in the Herschel district construct their "kiln" with stones forming a circular enclosure open at the top. The stones are not cemented.

95) This is a non-intoxicating beverage made from mealie meal.

and after allowing the porridge layer lining the inside of the pot to dry, it is peeled off. An alternative method is the cooking of fat meat in the pot.[96] This necessitates the slaughtering of a goat for the purpose. Although this was not acknowledged by our informants, this may have been a ritual slaughtering in the past. Informants, however, acknowledged the slaughtering of a goat or chicken whose meat was boiled in new clay pots in the workshop hut, and served in clay dishes to the family; the bones would be collected and burnt in the cattle kraal. This always took place in November. The village people who knew the family well supported this statement.[97]

Pot-making is a seasonal occupation punctuated by the ploughing, hoeing and harvesting seasons; the potteress is in no way exonorated from these economic activities because of her specialist c[illegible]

Taboos observed in pot-making :

Several taboos govern the making of clay pots. Some of these can be explained by cause and effect, the potteress having learnt the disastrous effects of non-abstention from the past; some are based on magico-religious notions.

All informants claim that clay is "fastidious", udongwe lunochuku, and selective of persons handling it. The clay cracks and splits when handled by persons "unsuited" to do so. Such a person is described as a woman in her menses, a physical condition which renders her unclean according to Xhosa custom; a pregnant woman, a person possessing or dealing in evil medicines, amayeza amabi, one who has had

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96) The practice of boiling meat in a new clay pot has been transferred to the three-legged iron pot when new. It is claimed to "remove" the rust from the pot.

97) Certain aspects of this slaughtering are characteristic of Xhosa rituals, especially the burning of the bones, ukutshiswa kwamathambo.

contact with a corpse without ritual cleansing thereafter, or anybody who was not born to work with clay. In their explanations, the informants draw a parallel between a diviner and clay : the diviner, igqira/umntu omhlophe, does not deal with evil medicines that being the province of the herbalists, amaxhwele. The diviner in other words is a ritually clean person who "feels" any evil in his presence. Clay is said to behave in a like manner; it is described as pure or chaste, udongwe lunyulu. The parallel drawn may stem from the fact that most clay is associated with rivers, the same as diviners are connected with them. The latter have to perform their purification and initiation rites at the river side, [98] from whence they derive their ritual cleanliness.

To support her statement that clay is "opposed" to the ritually unclean or those who are not meant to work with it, one informant cites the case of a maternal aunt who tried her hand at pot-making with no success. If the pot did not foul up during the construction or drying stages, it would certainly crack or turn black [99] when it was baked. These failures were indications that the maternal aunt did not agree with clay work, akangqinelani nodongwe.[100]

The fastidious nature of clay not only exists in the world of the potteress, but also in that of children. Herdboys believe that passing wind, ukusuza, while a clay ox is in the making, or while it is drying in the sun, cracks

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98) de Jager, E.J. and Gitywa, V.Z.: "A Xhosa Umhlwayelelo Ceremony in the Ciskei" in African Studies, Vol. 22, No. 3, 1963, pp. 109-116.

99) The colour black is an indication of a badly fired pot and is thus rejected. Cf. Theal, G.M.: Kaffir Folklore, p. 83.

100) It is not clear whether the "unsuitability" of the aunt was congenital or ritual. All questions probing this were tactfully avoided by the informant who volunteered the information herself.

the clay model; careless sitting with the private parts showing, ukubhentsa, has the same effect on their models. If such a transgression is made, the owners of the clay oxen immediately spew spittle all over their models to counteract the cracking. All these taboos cease to operate when the clay vessel or ox is completely dry.

The "workshop" of the potteress is taboo to all strangers and the ritually unclean; this includes family members with the exception of the pre-pubescant. She does no clay work when she or her apprentice is menstruating or pregnant. Should a stranger or prohibited person be forced to come to the workshop, such a person is given a pinch of the clay worked with to suck.[101] This is believed to counteract any possible damage to the pot resulting from the presence of the "prohibited" person.

The clay pots are never baked at midday; pots will turn a black colour or crack if this taboo is not observed. The taboo is explained as being related to the practice of never burying a corpse at midday :[102] funerals are either held in the fore- or afternoon. Thus clay pots may be fired only at these times of the day. The "burying" of the clay pots in a ditch for baking is equated with the burial of a corpse in a grave.

Clay pots may not be constructed or baked when there is a death in the village. Should this not be observed, the pots would crack during the construction or turn black during the baking. One informant related an incident

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101) Before crossing an unfamiliar river, or bathing in it, the Xhosa apply a patch of mud from the river on the forehead. This is to prevent ukusolwa, the appearance of a rash believed to be caused by the river.

102) The belief is that violent hailstorms will result if a corpse is buried at midday.

where she had trouble with her pots which split and cracked as she was constructing them. She gave up her attempts for the day, only to receive a message announcing a death, umbiko, in the village later. In other words, clay is credited with a special sensitivity. All these abstentions are called ukuzila. In the case of death in the village, not only the potteress observes ukuzila but all activities are suspended in the whole village to be resumed after the burial, normally on the following day.

The mother of one of my informants claimed that nobody taught her pot-making. She acquired her skill when her mother took ill in 1916. During her illness her mother had a "vision", umbono, [103] in which she was told by her ancestors not to discard Xhosa customs and traditions, and particularly that she should revert to the use of skin cloaks and clay utensils, izitya zodongwe. The ancestors further demanded that the patient's grandchildren should not be sent to school as they would thereby easily lose contact with Xhosa customs and tradition in this manner. The patient herself was a school teacher. After the patient's death, her daughter (my informant's mother) began making clay pots in conformity with her mother's vision. She passed the craft on to her daughter, my informant. Her children were also given a limited education, her daughter having only passed through standard two. My informant's mother claimed that she and her children were gifted with the powers of prophecy and that they could see into the future. In her own words they were "white people", abantu abamhlophe, i.e. they were like diviners.

The mother of my informant showed me a skin skirt and cloak which she claimed to use as a member of the Zionist Church. She stated that the whole family would on occasion be dressed in skins for a ceremony she would not

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103) The apprentice daughter and her mother and family are members of the Zionist Church.

disclose. This sounded more like a family affair than a sect ritual.[104] I correlated this statement with the ritual slaughtering mentioned by her daughter.

A "back conversion" to traditional living is evident in this incident, especially since the grandmother of the apprentice daughter was a school teacher and not a potteress. The revival of the craft and the use of skin garments is here, however, leavened with the religious ideas and practices of a sect.

Of the schools visited in the Ciskei, only one was found to engage in pottery as part of the school's craftwork. A number of interesting features were noted. The instructor was the principal teacher, a male, of the school; traditionally pottery is a craft for females, but the female teachers on the staff of this school knew nothing about pottery. This illustrates how the influence of education can break through the barriers of sex imposed on the division of labour in traditional life.

The principal teacher found himself in the fortunate position of lodging with a Sotho family for nine years in the Orange Free State. The women of this family were pot-makers, and he observed and learnt the craft from them. He is now imparting his knowledge to the pupils of his school in the Ciskei.

The construction techniques he teaches to his pupils are the same as the traditional Xhosa ones, with the exception of two innovations :

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104) The old villagers described the family as skin garment wearers, abantu bezikhumba, which they wear on certain occasions attended by a feast to which nobody was invited. They related this to the pot-making craft of the family.

(a) finely ground brick is used as tempering material instead of sandstone or potsherds;

(b) after firing, the pots are polished with brown boot polish giving the finished article a reddish brown glossy surface.

They did not, however, treat the pots against porosity, because the pots they made were ornamental and would not be used for storage of liquids or for cooking purposes.

As part of the school's handicrafts, the best pots were displayed at school shows in the circuit, after which some would be sold to Enid's Music Bar (a European Gift Shop) in King William's Town. The instructor had received a Sotho training, and naturally the pots also had a Sotho appearance. What was striking, however, was the fact that despite the school's attempts to re-establish pottery as a craft, the local people in the village showed no interest whatever in it, since none of them offered any help to the school or the pupils when asked for it, nor did they support and encourage the effort by buying and using the pots.

CONSTRUCTION OF A CLAY POT.

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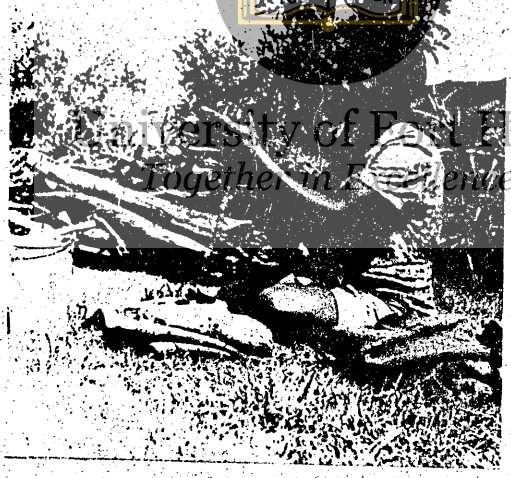

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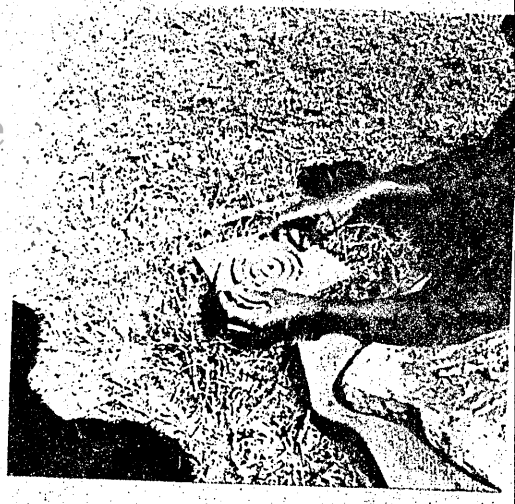

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CONSTRUCTION OF A CLAY POT.

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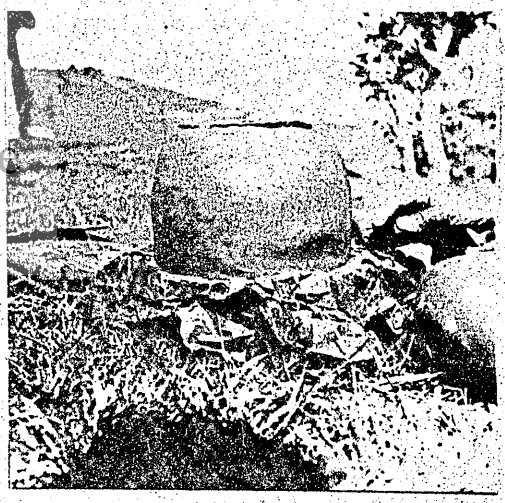

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Basketry :

Basketry is traditionally the task of women. The Xhosa never excelled in this craft, but a particular type of basket seems to have attracted the attention of early travellers and missionaries regarding its ingenuity and clever workmanship. Constant reference to it by different authors has been made; it has been variously described as a "basket" or "bowl".

> These baskets were made from a species of cyperus, a strong reedy grass that grew in the springs of the Zuureveld. The workmanship was extremely clever and neat, and the texture so close that they were capable of containing the thinnest fluid. The women informed us that the making of these baskets was one part of their ... They were nearly all made after one model, which in shape was that of a common beehive. 105)

And

> De kringvormige omtrek dezer Korven is bovenaan, doorgaans tusschen 10 tot 16 Duim middellijn, van onderen naar evenredigheid iets ruimer; de wand is 1 tot 2 Lijnen dik, zelden dikker; naar beneden zijn zij eenigzins kegelvormig. De Vrouwen bereiden die zeer kunstig van Rietgrass, en weten ze zoodanig te vlechten, dat zij, vooraf met Talk besmeerd, volkommen waterdigt worde. 106)

The technique of rendering the baskets watertight seems to have changed, however, because the Mpondo people of today who still make these baskets instead of using tallow, dip the woven basket into a thin fluid of porridge. The baskets were used as drinking vessels for milk and beer.

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105) Barrow, J.: op. cit., p. 170; cf. Carter George and van Reenen: op. cit., p. 60; Paterson, W.: A Narrative of Four Journeys, 1777-1779, p. 91.

106) Alberti, L.: op. cit., p. 36; cf. Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., pp. 84-85.

According to Kropf [107] these were about half a bucket in volume.

The art of making baskets is called inzwazwa or uzwazwa. [108] Another basket called umzwazwa [109] made of small sticks was used for the storage of corn. Small food baskets, sleeping mats and eating mats were also made. Rushes were split in half with an awl or a thorn, moistened and the pith removed. The best of the split rushes were selected for the making of these artefacts; the plaiting was mostly accurate and fine looking. Kropf reports that the largest basket, itala, [110] held about two bushels, the amaqindiva [111] had a capacity of two buckets for holding trifles. After the inzwazwa came the amatunga [112] with a volume of about half a bucket was used for milking. In addition to these, grass dishes called izitya [113] were made and used for drinking purposes, small ones like mugs being used for feeding infants. McLaren [114] also mentions light winnowing baskets called iminyazi, grain storage baskets, izilulu, and a smaller grain basket, ingobozi. Somewhat peculiar is the ingindwa for storing clothes and household

The baskets enumerated above are no longer in use and have as such not been met with in field research. The practice of storing grain in grain pits in the cattle kraal is largely responsible for the weak development of basketry among the Xhosa, and whatever little basketry they did was destroyed by the flood of many and varied receptacles from the West.

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107) Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 116.
108) Kropf, A.: Kafir-English Dictionary, p. 493.
109) Ibid.
110) Ibid., p. 402.
111) Ibid., p. 334.
112) Ibid., p. 434.
113) Ibid., p. 439.
114) McLaren, J.: op. cit., p. 446.

Mats :

Two kinds of mats seem to have been made. There was the coarse type which according to Kay [115] was not artfully done as they were used for the most common purpose, and a fine type the workmanship of which showed both industry and genius. This latter type is made of the rushes of the finest quality, neatly stitched together with thread from the bark of trees. McLaren [116] describes the techniques of making these sleeping mats as follows :

> The rushes, imizi (Cyperus textilis) of which they were made, were laid side by side, and sewn together by piercing the rushes with holes, through which a long thread was drawn, or laced together by threads crossing each other at every other rush or so.

The two techniques seem to accord with those mentioned by Kay.

Traditionally, uncircumcised men, amakhwenkwe, had no mats nor were they expected to sleep on them since they were dogs, izinja, who could sleep anywhere. It is only on being circumcised that the youth are introduced to the use of mats. They are caused to sit on new, unused mats at the ukuyala [117] custom which takes place at the end of their seclusion. It should also be noted that sleeping mats were buried with the owner, especially in the case of the death of the kraalhead, before the use of coffins. Today, though to a much lesser degree than before, mats are used to screen off a corpse in a hut before the burial. For this reason it is regarded as a bad omen to put an unrolled mat on end against a wall when airing it; it should be spread flat on the ground for this purpose. Bed sheets are now increasingly used for screening corpses.

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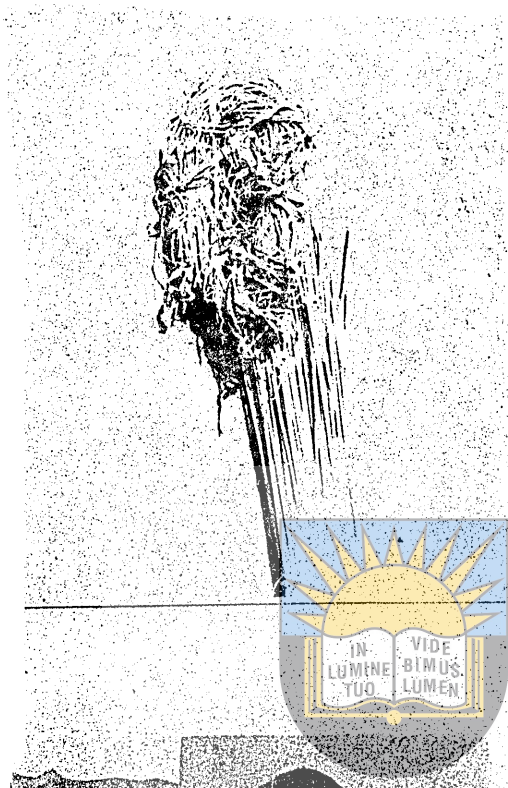
115) Kay, S.: op. cit., p. 147.

116) McLaren, I.: op. cit., p. 446.

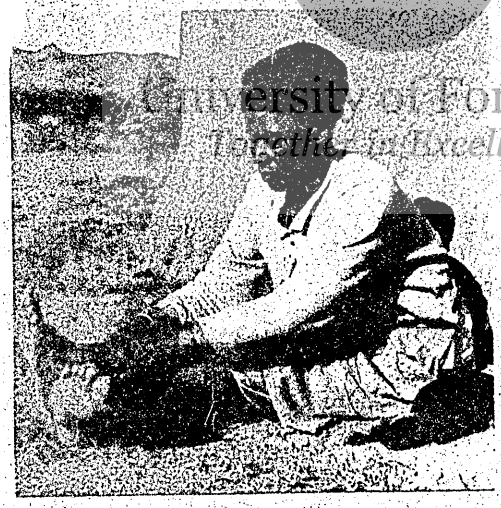
117) Gitywa, V.Z.: "Initiation among the Xhosa at Ncera near Alice" in Fort Hare Papers, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1970, pp. 11-24.

Small mats, izithebe, on which to serve food and receive meal from a grinding stone, were also made. The material used was the same as for sleeping mats, but the technique of making was different. A twined weave was employed where two wefts, one passing behind and one before each warp twisting on themselves between each of the warps. The warps and the wefts were of the same material, excepting that the wefts were split. Basket and mat-making was not a specialised craft as it was known to almost every woman.

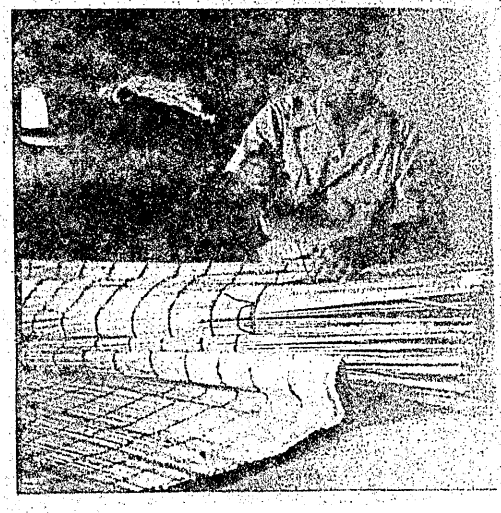
The demand for sleeping mats, food and meal mats has declined considerably because these have been displaced progressively by beds, mattresses and dishes. They are, however, still being made to supply the dwindling traditional market where they were used as presents, amabhaso, at traditional weddings. European household utensils are more popular now.



Bast cordage and rushes.



Rolling the bast fibre into twine.



Making of a mat.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MAKING OF CLOAKS.

The making of cloaks is another important female craft. The Xhosa were not acquainted with the art of weaving cloth, and the use of barkcloth, as elsewhere in Africa, was foreign to them. For clothing they used the hides of cattle and skins of animals. The women manufactured clothes for both sexes: "De vervaardiging der kleederen voor beide Sekse behoort tot den Arbeid der Vrouwen".[118]

The preparation of hides :

The Xhosa reached such a high standard in the preparation of hides as to command the attention and praise of early travellers and missionaries. "Allein die Haut ist so gleichmässig bearbeitet, wie es ein Gerber hier kaum mit seinem Falz zu Stande bringt".[119] Though the manufacturing of cloaks was the work of women, the initial preparation of the hide was the work of men. The following is a description of the process of tanning as observed by Kropf:-[120]

Two forked poles are planted in the ground apart from one another in such a way that the forked ends are uppermost and leaning against the cattle kraal fence. A third pole is laid across the slanting forked uprights in the forks. The fourth pole is tied along the bottom end of the leaning poles by means of wooden hooks, thus creating a leaning rectangular frame.

The hairy side of the raw hide which had been previously

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118) Alberti, L.: op. cit., p. 60; cf. Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 317; Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 115

119) Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 114.

120) Ibid.

stretched and pegged to the ground, is wetted and smeared with cowdung; the flesh side is thoroughly moistened with warm water after which it is tied with thongs and stretched across the wooden frame with the flesh side upwards. The moistened flesh side is then scraped with axes, amazembe, till the hair roots show. Two men have to work hard at this in order to have the scraping completed in one day. This ends the part of the men's work.

The scrapings, amanyama, were boiled and eaten as a delicacy by the Xhosa.[121] Although not recorded by Kropf, there are two more uses to which the scrapings are put by the Xhosa :

(a) The scrapings while still wet, were moulded into a ball and allowed to dry. It was called imbhumbha yamanyama,[122] used for smoothening the earth floors of huts by the women. So hard and durable was the ball that it often outlived its maker.

(b) The wet scrapings were mixed with a bit of earth and ground to as fine a pulp as was possible. The pulp was then smeared layer by layer to a previously made sunbaked clay model, allowing each layer to dry before the succeeding one is applied. If a cow was modelled, the final layer of pulp, while still tacky, was picked with an awl to make the hair of the beast. After drying, the model was cut between the horns to make an opening for the future container; the soft clay core was then carefully picked out with an awl leaving a tough container used for snuff.[123]

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121) Kropf, A.: Ibid.

122) Figuratively this expression is used to denote unity; the ball of scrapings has now been replaced by a smooth, rounded river stone used for the same purpose.

123) Cf. Balfour, H.: "Tandu Industry in Northern Nigeria" in Essays Presented to C.G. Seligman, pp. 5-14. Such containers may be seen in the F.S. Malan Museum, Fort Hare, the East London Museum and the Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg.

The part played by men in the preparation of the hide is complementary to the actual tanning process performed by women, as without this further treatment, the cloaks would not have attained their high standard of finish. Here we also have an instance of the division of labour based on sex.

The initial scraping having been done by the men, the hide is passed on to the women who treat it as follows :-

(a) The hide is again moistened and rubbed with a granite stone on the flesh side. This done, the hide is stretched on a wooden frame, as by the men, and scraped with dried aloe leaves [124] which have sharp and fine spines along both edges. The scraping raises a woolly and fibrous pile. In this condition it is hung in a warm part of the hut to dry.

(b) The next day, the hide is moistened with old sour milk, amasi, after which it is again scraped with the dried aloe leaves. All the women of the home help in this.

(c) When the hide is dry, it is trampled under the feet and rubbed with both hands (as when washing clothes) to render it soft and pliable; at the end of this the hairy side is smeared with fat, rolled, tied up and put away.

(d) On the following day the hide is again rubbed with the hands to rid it of superfluous grease. It is then moistened with warm water and scraped with aloe leaves for the third time. It is again rolled up and put away.

(e) On drying, it is opened up and scratched with the aloe leaves a fourth time until it is properly woolly and soft. The pouring of tepid water on the flesh side of the hide when it is to be scraped with aloe leaves to raise a nap is called ukugcaba and the resultant fibrous nap umhlapho. At this

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124) The aloe from which these leaves are obtained is called umhlaba. Its juice is also used for weaning a child from the mother's breast.

stage, the edges of the hide are removed, the hide trampled and rubbed. It is now ready for the making of a cloak or a kaross.

Allowing one day for each of the processes enumerated above, the preparation of the hide must have taken from one to two weeks at the most, allowing for the other domestic chores of the women as well as for bad weather.

Cutting up the hide for a kaross :

According to the size of the hide, three to four pieces are cut out, each with a broad and narrow end. The pieces are sewn together lengthwise with the narrow ends on the same side to form the waist of the garment. Sinew, usinga, obtained from the front and hind legs of a beast, is used as thread with the aid of an eyeless needle, isilanda. The sewn article is again moistened and cut in order to straighten the seams. Is is then rubbed with the hands when dry, smeared with fat,[125] and sprinkled with sour milk, amasi. Charcoal from soft wood is then ground to a fine powder which is strewn on and rubbed into the greased hide giving it a black colour.[126] A hide garment finished and powdered in this manner is known as igcabe. The use of mimosa bark, ixolo lomnga, for dying the karosses black is recorded by King.[127] Red karosses were also made by rubbing red ochre into the greased garment.[128]

In successful operations, the whole kaross is made and completed in three to four weeks. The hairy side is worn against the body.

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125) The fat would in all probability be unmelted, i.e. used in the raw state. The fatty stomach covering, umhlehlo, and the fat surrounding the kidneys is usually kept for greasing the riems.

126) This is the ibiba, a decomposed substance from the hollow of a tree. It is burnt in a pot to char it.

127) King, W.R.: Campaigning in Kaffirland, p. 265.

128) Alberti, L.: op. cit., p. 31; cf. Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 67.

According to early authors [129] the karosses were generally made of calf skin. This is, however, doubtful when it is viewed against the background of the importance of cattle to the Xhosa. If the use of calf skins was observed, it was incidental rather than general; the Xhosa when and if forced to slaughter a beast, slaughter an older beast whose draught power or milk-giving capacity is expended. The only exception to this is the issue of the original herd, iinkomo zomgquba, which is kept for ancestral ritual slaughtering if they do not die of their own. The hides are usually used for the making of riems, iintambo.

According to Steedman, [130] the cloaks are renewed annually in winter, when there is more need for them. The activity was also heightened by the ceremony held at the end of the initiation school, ukuphuma kwamakhwenkwe.

> Gewöhnlich werden sie (the abakhwetha) [131] entlassen, wenn die Ernte vollendet, das Vieh geschlachtet ist, die Weiber ihre Karosse angefertigt haben und so alle Arbeit beendet ist, ...

Tanning and cloak making were thus winter occupations. The women's hide skirts were called izikhakha and the cloaks (for both sexes) ingubo. [132] The cloaks, in contrast to the women's hide skirts, were made from one piece of tanned hide. [133] This means that to finish an ingubo after the tanning, ukusuka, all that was needed was cutting it to shape. The men's cloaks were left plain whereas those of the women were decorated with buttons. [134] In addition

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129) Barrow, J.: op. cit., p. 208; cf. Kay, S.: op. cit., p. 115; Patterson, W.: op. cit., p. 93.

130) Steedman, A.: loc. cit.; cf. Kropf, A.: op. cit., p.100.

131) Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 126.

132) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 319.

133) Alberti, L.: op. cit., p. 319.

134) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: Ibid.

a leather thong decorated with ornaments of various kinds, was suspended from the shoulder end of the women's cloaks. [135]

The socio-economic aspects of the cattle complex amongst the Xhosa manifests itself very strongly in their leathercraft. The hides are themselves a by-product of cattle rearing. The use of cowdung, [136] ubulongo, and sour milk, amasi, [137] in the tanning process can hardly be passed unnoticed as part of the cattle complex.

Animal skins :

Animal skins, as a by-product of the hunt, were also used for the manufacture of clothing.

> Their apparel, like that of the ancient Britons, in the days of Julius Caesar, consists wholly of beasts' skins, curried and prepared in such a manner as to render them perfectly soft and pliable. [138]

Chiefs wore leopard skin cloaks exclusively as a symbol of their rank; commoners wore these only as a favour from the chief.

> Alleen de Opperhoofden der Horden dragen tijger-vellen, en geven die ook nu en dan aan hunne Gunstelingen ten Geschenke, omdat alle deze huiden, waar ook bekommen, aan de eersten eigendom behoren. [139]

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135) Shaw : Memorials of South Africa, p. 37.

136) Otherwise used for smearing hut floors, mixed with mud for plastering the walls, and used as fuel and as a source of light before the use of candles. A certain class of diviners extract poison from the body of a patient with cowdung.

137) Amasi forms part of the main diet of the Xhosa and played an important role in purification rites. Dung was used to extract "evil" from patients by oonobumbha, a class of diviners.

138) Kay, S.: op. cit., p. 111.

139) Alberti, L.: op. cit., p. 53; cf. Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 91.

Barrow [140] reported Ngqika (Gaika) to have had his cloak "faced with skins of leopard", while Steedman [141] met Maqoma at Fort Willshire wearing over his shoulders "a leopard's skin kaross". It is not recorded whether women were the manufacturers of these cloaks as was the case with the hide cloaks for both sexes. It can be safely assumed that this was the case. Animal skin cloaks were called umnweba. [142]

Preferences for particular animal skins were shown :

> Sie nähen aber auch mehrere Felle nach [143] Maasgabe ihrer Grösse und Stärke von erlegten Wildprett als Elensthieren (Eland); Springbökken, Antilopen oder Kuttus und dergleichen zusammen, weil sie an dem schönen Kolorit dieser Felle vergnügen finden.

The women seem to have had more animal skin cloaks or articles of clothing than men did. They used a kind of skin bodice [144] called imbeka as recorded by Kay. [145] Another item of animal skin clothing was the headdress [146] often

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140) Barrow, J.: op. cit., p. 199.
141) Steedman, A.: op. cit., p. 245; cf. Kay, S.: op. cit., p. 115.
142) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 319.
143) Ibid., p. 67.
144) Ibid., p. 320-321.
145) Kay, S.: op. cit., p. 115; cf. Kropf, A.: op. cit., p.104
146) Barrow, J.: op. cit., pp. 169, 199. The use of a bodice and headdress by women was and still is customary among the Xhosa. This is demanded of all married women by ukuhlonipha*, whereby a married woman shows respect to her father-in-law and her husband's relatives by wearing ankle-length skirts and keeping her head covered. She is also not allowed to pronounce or use words which have for their main syllable any part or syllable of the names of her husband and his relatives, especially of her father-in-law with whom she must also keep at a distance. This respect is also extended to the deceased of her in-laws by forbidding a married woman to go near their cattle kraal. Sons-in-law also carry out avoidance behaviour and show respect towards mothers-in-law, but they are not to the same rigid extent.
* The custom.

described as the most expensive of the whole apparel because it was heavily decorated with beads, buttons, pieces of iron, etc.

> Great taste is frequently displayed in their caps, or head-dresses, which are generally the most expensive part of their costume. [147]

This was also observed and recorded by Barrow : [148]

> their heads were covered with leather caps ornamented with beads, with shells, and with pieces of polished copper and iron, that were disposed of in a variety of forms.

Hutton [149] describes this cap as a piece of fine thin leather about two "ells" long, and in the middle half an "ell" wide, the ends finishing in a point. It was either wrapped round the head like a turban or was sewed to a cap from which the ends hung down on either side. [150] The following is a description given by Godée Molsbergen : [151]

> Het hoofdsieraad der vrouwen is een soort tulband, van gelooid leer, om het hoofd gedraaid, gemaakt van het vel van de bosbok. De lap leer is twee el lang en in het midden een halve el breed. Soms is dit middengedeelte al in mutsvorm. Maar altyd hangt in het midden een kwastje von kralen.

The following animal skins were preferred for the making of this headdress: the iphuthi (blue buck) and the imbabala (bushbuck), the last mentioned being, according to McLaren, the choicest material.

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147) Kay, S.: op. cit., p. 114.

148) Barrow, J.: op. cit., p. 169.

149) An "ell" is the equivalent of 1.14 metres.

150) Hutton, C.: op. cit., p. 61; cf. Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 116.

151) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 320.

The caps consisted of four bush buck skins with the hair intact. Three such skins were, after due preparation, sewn together like a frock, open at both ends. This bag is bent in the middle, one half being turned inside out to form a flap which hangs down in front like a "Zipfelmütze". From the fourth skin a long scarf, ten centimeters broad, is cut and attached to one side of the cap. The whole cap is then buried in the ground for some time so that it can toughen. When taken out it is sprinkled with sweet milk and a few wooden pegs are fitted into the flaps so that the flaps get the proper square shape. The cap is again placed in the ground, and when taken out, it is stretched, dried, rubbed soft and trimmed. It is now ready for wear.[152]

It is interesting to note that a girl earned her first cloak by joining her brothers and others in a hunt.[153]

While married women had to have their heads covered according to the custom of hlonipha, the men mostly went bare-headed. Male headdress when worn, was more decorative than a head covering. It consisted of a leather band about twenty-six millimeters wide decorated with copper plates, beads or cowrie shells, ingcaca.[154] A headband decorated in the latter fashion, was worn on the occasion of a traditional wedding.

On long journeys, or when out on the hunt, the men wore simple oxhide sandals, iimbadada, which were fastened by means of a leather strip to the ankles and the big toe.[155]

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152) Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 116; cf. McLaren, J.: op. cit., pp. 447-448.

153) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: Ibid.

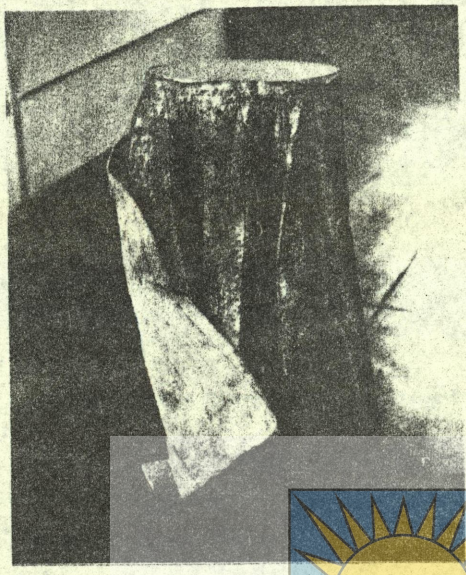
154) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 320.

155) Alberti, L.: op. cit., p. 56.

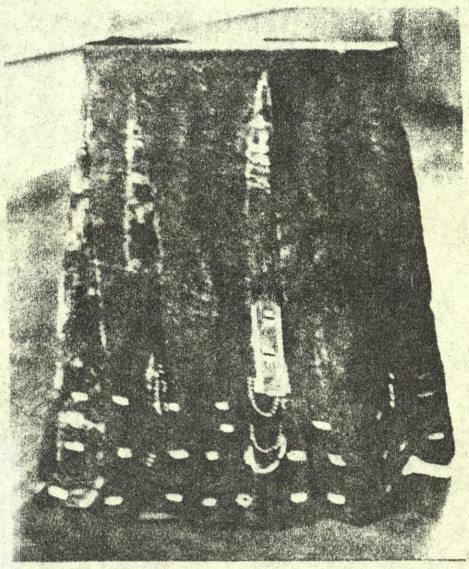
Sometimes the sandals had a piece of leather covering the top of the foot with the exception of the toes.

The manufacture of skin garments has virtually disappeared among the Xhosa, yielding place to garments of European manufacture. Of the two sexes, the men were first to discard their traditional costume, the skin blanket (umnweba, ingubo), for European made blankets, shirts, jackets and trousers. The men made little attempt to give these adopted garments a traditional touch, for example by dying them in red ochre. European garments were used as they were obtained from the trader. The reason for this is probably the fact that men had to leave their traditional homes to sell their labour to neighbouring farmers, traders and later in urban centres where they had to present a "civilised" front in order to be acceptable for employment.

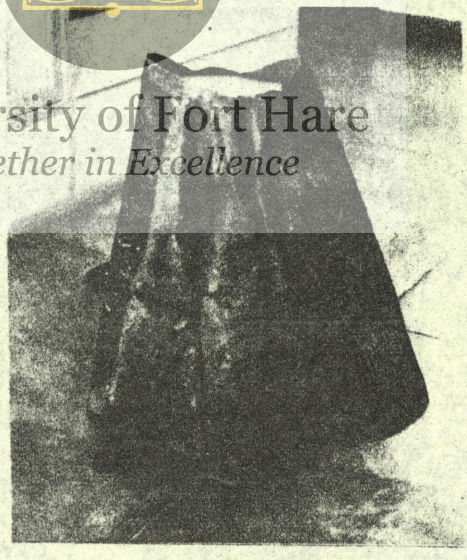
Women have shown a different tendency. Those of them not converted to Christianity, adapted materials of European manufacture to suit their traditional tastes. Excepting for the materials used, there is no drastic departure from the traditional patterns. Their "modern" traditional costume still consists of the skirt (umbhaco), bodice (incebetha), shoulder wrap (ibhayi) and headdress (iqhiya), with beads, buttons and black braiding as the most common forms of decoration. The material most favoured for the costume has come to be known as "kaffir-sheeting", (ibhayi), by the traders. It is a soft, white, flannel-like material which, after the desired garments have been made, is "dipped" into an infusion of red ochre, ucumse, to give it the traditional stamp. This is the costume that has given its wearers the designation "Red Natives" in contrast to the so-called "School" people and Christian converts.



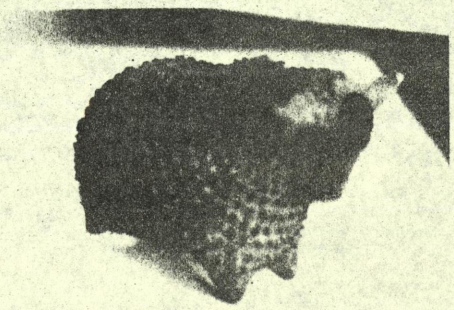
Skin dress
(c.a. 1910)



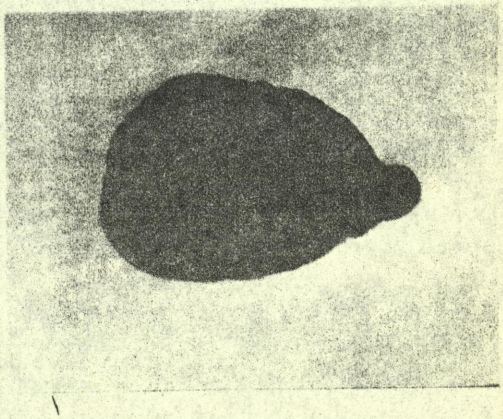
Decorated skin
dress (c.a.1901).



Skin dress
(c.a. 1910)



Snuff container



Snuff container

CHAPTER V.

BEADWORK.

Prior to the introduction of glass beads through trade, the Xhosa used the canine teeth of animals, especially leopard teeth, strung on fibre to form necklaces. Wooden slats such as sandalwood, umthombothi, and roots of plants such as the Cyperus, indawa, were similarly used. As the latter two were aromatic they were largely used as medicines and deodorants. Tufts of animal skin and fur, as well as small duiker horns, were also used for a similar purpose. From the nature of the traditional material used, no patterns were evolved through the mixing and blending of colours as in beadwork, nor was it possible to make very intricate items.

With the introduction of beads into South Africa, first by the Portuguese, followed by the Dutch and finally the English, the decorative talent and the love of colour of the Xhosa found expression, even if these were hemmed in by tradition. The beads were used to decorate all sorts of garments for everyday use and for special occasions.

Beadwork is a fairly general craft among the Xhosa. It is a female craft which is passed on from elder sister to younger sister, and in some cases from mother to daughter. The post-pubescant age groups are, however, the best "school" for beadwork as this is done within the age group and among its members. It is the age group that preserves the traditional patterns and colours, and yet again it is this very age group which is responsible for new ideas, innovations and changes in beadwork. This is so because the whole activity of beadwork is largely under their control, the beadwork itself being made for boy friends of the corresponding age group. Thus, although beads and beadwork are originally foreign elements in Xhosa culture, it has become so

accepted and adapted that beadwork is today universally accepted as a traditional craft not only of the Xhosa, but also of all the Bantu in South Africa. It features prominently in the life of the tribe, regulating,for example, the love life of the sexes. It is also of ritual importance, finding its best expression, in this regard, with diviners. It also features at the installation of chiefs, etc.

Ornamental beadwork normally passes from the woman to the man as a love token, but unlike among the Zulu and the Swazi, the beadwork exchanged in the love life of the Xhosa has no coded messages, the interpretation of which is based on colour combinations which have to be decoded by the recipient. The entire bead ornament is the love token, with traditionally blended colours for the specific age groups. The various colours are only used because the colours do not swear at one another (imibala ayithukani). They are used individually or in combination to indicate a particular status or ritual condition. Each sex and age group has its formal bead ensemble to wear on social occasions.

> These love letters are peculiar to the Zulu people. I have tried to trace them among the Transkeian natives, but, with a few exceptions, was told it was white man's nonsense and, scornfully, something indulged in by the Zulus. The very few I saw in the Transkei were probably obtained from the Zulus. [156]

Although bead love letters are unknown among the Xhosa, it is quite singular to observe that the Zulu and the Swazi refer to a pale blue bead as ijuba (dove), and the Xhosa describe the same bead as ihobe with the same meaning. Such a bead colour contained in an ornament conveys no specific

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156) Catalogue of the Estelle Hamilton-Welsh Collection, compiled by Juliet Louw, p. 19.

message of faithfulness among the Xhosa as it does among the Zulu and the Swazi. These tribes coincide again linguistically in connection with the white bead which the Swazi regard as a symbol of all that is good, and which they believe has cleansing and purifying powers called inkanyiso. For this reason the beads are believed to appease the ancestors when offered to them, and to bring luck to the wearer. Thus Xhosa diviners have all their ornaments made of white beads, intsimbi emhlophe, so that they have inkanyiso, some form of illumination, from the ancestors. The beads are also used when the diviners make offerings to the river spirits, abantu bomlambo. Non-diviners may not wear pure white bead ornaments only since they are not "white people", abantu abamhlophe, as the diviners call themselves. However, in the normal day to day life of the Xhosa, white beads have no significance in matters of love as with the Zulu and the Swazi.

The word ubuhlalu in Swazi, Zulu and Xhosa is used in reference to beads. In addition the word in Xhosa has come to signify a royal necklace of red beads, while all other beads are in general referred to as intsimbi, literally meaning iron. Kropf [157] gives the following definition of ubuhlalu :

> Generic term for beads, especially red ones which are considered to be the prince of beads; hence a necklace composed of large reddish beads worn by principal chiefs as a sign of royalty. This necklace is put round the neck of a chief at his inauguration either by a principal chief or by a person who is deputed by the ama-Tshawe and ama-Pakati, to perform this ceremony. Tshiwo put the ubuhlalu round the neck of Kwane, ...

In the case of the Swazi, the royal necklace is pink.

The Xhosa distinguish between two types of beads, the

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157) Kropf, A.: Kafir-English Dictionary, p. 152.

small variety, intsimbi, and the large variety, amaso, so called because the large white round beads resemble the eyeball.[158] With reference to both types of beads the word intsimbi is used, as also when referring to the bead items themselves. The process of threading the beads to make the various ornaments is called ukuhlohla, for which purpose sinew, usinga, and plant fibre were originally used. Today ordinary sewing cotton thread is used where sinew is not available.

The vocabulary used for the various coloured beads is also an interesting feature. The following are the vernacular names for the colours :-

Naples yellow	intsimbi emthubi[159]
Sage green (opaque)	incaluka, igqabi
Red (opaque)	igolomi (the Knysna Lourie)
Pink	intsimbi epinki, murgwana
Light blue	intsimbi ehobe, ufathuse
Deep blue	intsimbi eluhlaza
Royal blue	ulwandle, inkankane
Leaf green (transparent)	intlaka kagqabi
Transparent red	intlaka kagolomi
Transparent orange	intlaka kabhasela
Transparent yellow	intlaka kamthubi
Black	intsimbi emnyama
White	intsimbi emhlophe.

The transparent shiny beads are also referred to as ookhanyi, a word derived from ukukhanya, light or shiny. Shiny is also implied in the word intlaka which means gum. Colours for the larger beads, amaso, are also described as above.

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158) Ibid., p. 394.

159) Kropf, A.: Kafir-English Dictionary, gives additional names for white beads, viz., igalawe: a white bead, and inkuluko: a species of white bead. For red beads he gives umbhovu, unyiwa and umgazi. With the exception of umgazi the other words are no longer in use. This indicates a change in the colour vocabulary.

Beads used as social distinctions :

In the growth of the individual, the stage of childhood (from birth to about six years), is marked by the wearing of a single string of amaso around the waist by both sexes. The bead string is called ungcenge for which there is no particular colour preference, although it is repeatedly asserted that white is favoured. The difference between the sexes at this stage is only marked by the girls wearing a pubic covering, inkciyo, with a fringe of plaited Kaffir-sheeting, ibhayi eliphothiweyo, in front, and a fringe of beads, isidimba, at the back.

Age grading among uncircumcised Xhosa youth, amakhwenkwe, is based on stick fighting. No ceremony marks the passing of one age group to the other. This only obtains on advancing from boyhood to manhood by the rite of circumcision, ukwaluka. Throughout manhood those initiated together advance as a group through the various stages of manhood to that of old men, amaxhego. Counting from puberty to circumcision, four grades are recognised in boyhood.

1. The first age group, umbutho wokuqala, consisting of pubescant boys.
2. The second age group, umbutho wesibini, post pubescants.
3. The third age group, umbutho wesithathu, boys between roughly the ages of eighteen and twenty.
4. The big boys, amakhwenkwe amakhulu, boys beyond the age of twenty who are ready for circumcision.

In the old days this last group was initiated together with the son of a chief. For purposes of convenience, age groups three and four are treated as one in this investigation because there is no essential difference in their bead ensembles. In this text they are collectively referred to as age group three. Girls and women assume the age grades of their boy friends and husbands respectively.

It is not until after puberty that bead making and the wearing of bead ornaments becomes a serious matter, and then only for the second and third age groups, umbutho wesibini nowesithathu for the uninitiated boys (amakhwenkwe) and for the young unmarried initiated men, abafana. The first age group, umbutho wokuqala, which is the group immediately before puberty, are traditionally not allowed to wear bead ornaments in the age-grading system of the Xhosa.

The gift which passes as a love token between the sexes of the first age group is a white cloth bag decorated with pins and coloured handkerchiefs for the boys. This is reciprocated with a gift of two towels, six coloured handkerchiefs, a penknife, hand mirror, a brooch and sweets for the girls. In either case the messengers receive a sum of one rand from the recipient for the delivery of the gifts. Graduating from one age group to another is attained through organised stick-fighting. It should also be noted that these presentations, throughout the age group system, pass between members of the opposite sex who have formally accepted one another as lovers, a fact which is also known by the rest of their society.

Bead ensemble for male age groups two (umbutho wesibini) and three (umbutho wesithathu) :

(a) Umgxashe : This is a bead band about four to five centimeters broad made of pink, white, blue and black beads. No other coloured beads may be used in the making of this head band.

(b) Umsosobala : A head band narrower than (a) and made of green, white and black beads.

(c) Iveyile : (from English veil) : A bead band with a fringe (imingqi) hanging down at the back of the head.

The beads used are white, blue, green, black and red called ubhasela. This bead ornament is buttoned round the head whereas (a) and (b) are unbroken bands and need no buttoning.

(d) Isinqandabunzi (that which stops the forehead): A head band so arranged that two flaps, iziqweqwe, meant for the side of the head when worn, are joined by about eleven strings of beads, amabanga. Buttons and loops are provided for fastening the band round the head. The bead strings joining the flaps are each made of the following coloured beads :- one string of black beads, two of green, one white, two black and white mixed, two white, two green and one black string of beads. As the name implies, this band is worn across the forehead to prevent the other head bands from slipping down the forehead.

Neck Ornaments :

(a) Umkhinxo : Neck band worn tightly round the neck like a collar with long pendant strings of beads attached by means of buttons and loops to the band. White, black and green beads are used mixed with large white beads, amaso. The top and bottom of the pendant strings of beads are tipped with black beads to set off the white colour of the rest of the string. The band is fastened by means of buttons round the neck.

(b) Ithumbu elingqukuva elineminggi : Strands of beads plaited together, the strands being alternate black and white beads. This neck ornament is also provided with pendant bead strings as in (a) above.

(c) Ithumbu elikhulu or Icangci : A necklace of black, blue and white beads worn flat over the collar bone and buttoned at the base of the neck. The necklace may or may not have pendant bead strings.

(d) Ithumbu elincinci : This necklace is similar to (c) but smaller in size.

Chest Ornaments :

(a) Isifilifili : A bead ornament with a double string of beads crossing at the chest and the back diagonally over and under both shoulders and armpits with flaps worked on to the strings below the armpits and against the ribs. Smaller patches of beads are used to cover the points where the bead strings cross over one another. The beads used are opaque red, white, opaque green, blue, transparent red, yellow and transparent green. The transparent beads, ookhanyi/ intlaka, predominate in this ornament.

(b) The pendants of the neck ornaments are also arranged around the chest and over the shoulders in addition to (a).

Waist Ornaments :

(a) Ukhotso : There are three varieties of this ornament all worn at the same time. These are :-

(i) Waist band of white, black and blue beads worn against the body. White is the predominant colour distinguishing this band from the other two.

(ii) Waist band of light blue beads decorated with single lines of white and royal blue beads. Light blue is the distinguishing colour. This is worn over (i).

(iii) Waist band of pink (murgwana) beads as the dominant colour decorated with single rows of light blue and black beads. This is worn on top of waist band (ii) above.

(b) Ugingqi : There are six of these waist bands worn one above the other below (a) above. Shiny pearl buttons are sewn on to a strip of sheepskin about fifteen millimeters wide and long enough to go round the waist. Short fringes of beads, about thirty-five millimeters long, are sewn on to the entire length of the skin strip, the green, yellow, red and orange transparent beads being mostly favoured. Again a predominant colour will be used with each belt.

Ornaments for the arms :

The only bead ornaments for the arms, the upper arm, are strings of the large variety of beads, amaso, each string differently coloured. There are no bead ornaments for the legs and the ankles.

Circumcision initiates the boys of the third age group, umbutho wesithathu, into manhood, a stage at which, before marriage, they are called abafana as distinct from married men. The wearing of bead ornaments is less emphasised and less important at this stage since socially and traditionally circumcised men are expected to take life more seriously. The following are the few bead items ascribed to them :-

Head Ornaments :

(a) Isibhanxa, literally meaning a mad person: This is a head band of closely strung beads with loose strings dangling over the forehead in front of the eyes. Royal blue and light blue are the dominant colours used. It is from the dangling of the bead strings in front of the eyes that the bead ornament has received its name.

(b) Isiqweqwe, a band of white and black beads with no pendants.

Neck Ornaments :

(a) Istokfele : bead flaps joined by loose bead strings and buttoned round the neck at the back. The dominant colours used are white, royal blue and light blue.

(b) Ithumbu elingqukuva : A semi-circular broad necklace made of pink, pale blue and royal blue beads with a button and loop to fasten it at the back.

(c) Icangci : Same as (b) above.

(d) Inkefane : A collar of white and black beads with long bead pendants of the same colour.

(e) Iphoco : White and black beads with a single flap hanging in front.

(f) Isidanga : Strings of sky blue beads hung around the neck to fall down the chest. This ornament is specifically worn for dancing, ukuxhentsa, by men.

Waist Ornaments :

(a) Igqesha : Two strings of the large variety of beads amaso, black and white, used as a girdle, with tassels of small beads at both ends.

(b) Ukhotso : A waist band of white amaso which may not be included in a similar waist band for boys, and pink, light blue and royal blue beads. The men, amadoda, have only one kind of ukhotso whereas the boys have three varieties.

Ornaments for the ankles :

(a) Izitsaba : A pair of broad ankle bands, buttoned or laced to the ankles with a royal blue, light blue or black

diamond or triangular pattern in the centre on a white background. The band for the right ankle has a diamond pattern and is broader than the band for the left ankle which has a triangular pattern. These are specifically used at traditional weddings, imidudo.

(b) Amanqashela : strings of many coloured beads round the ankles. The number of bead strings depends on the fancy of the wearer.

Bead ornaments for girls :

The three age groups for boys, continuing on to manhood, have their equivalents among the girls and women. Though occasionally the girls would stage stick fights, these are not specifically meant as a basis for grading the girls into groups. The girls are graded according to the age grades of their boy friends, and the women according to the grading of the husbands. Among the girls, therefore, it is only those girls who are equated with the second and third age group of boys who will wear bead ornaments.

Head Ornaments :

(a) Idiliza : A head band of black and white beads with a short fringe of light blue beads right round.

(b) Amatikiti entloko : A head band with a white and light blue background mixed (evangwe) with black beads.

(c) Isinqandabunzi : A white and black head band which is the same as that worn by boys of the same age group.

(d) Izibhanxa : Two strands of beads with flaps (amatikiti) one on each side of the head. No specific colours are used for this bead ornament. The word izibhanxa actually means 'mad people'.

Neck Ornaments :

(a) Imiphotho : Strands of beads twined together and fastened round the neck. No specific colours are used.

(b) Umbhobho : A tubular neck ornament made of the transparent bead variety. Any single colour may be used.

(c) Ithumbu lekati : A necklace of royal blue beads.

(d) Amatikiti : Bead flaps joined by a single or double string of beads. Any combination of colours is used for the flaps, but the edges are trimmed with royal blue large beads, amaso ankankane.

(e) Inkefane : Long string of large beads wound round the neck. Any colour may be used for this.

Chest Ornaments :

(a) Imixwayo : Strings of varied coloured beads worn diagonally across the chest and the back over each shoulder. The number of strings worn depends on the taste of the wearer.

Waist Ornaments :

(a) Ungcenge : A double string of coloured beads worn as a girdle round the waist.

(b) Inkciyo : A pubic covering consisting of :-

(i) a girdle of two or three thongs or thick twine strung with small brass rings, iingwemesha;

(ii) a fringe of plaited Kaffir-sheeting, ibhayi eliphothiweyo, superimposed with a fringe of beads, isidimba, for covering the pubes. The pre-

dominant colour of the beads is white, decorated with triangular patches of black along the closely beaded top, isiqweqwe, of the fringe. The tips of the white bead fringes are black;

(iii) an extension of the girdle, iinqwemesha, hanging down the side of the body to below skirt length, with a tassel of leather, inkatshaza, at the end. A small bell, ikloko, is sometimes added to the tassel. The bell rings at every movement of the wearer.

Arm Ornaments :

(a) Amaso : Strings of large beads worn on the upper arm. The beads may be of any colour chosen by the wearer.

Married men and women have no particular bead ensembles peculiar to their status. When they do wear beads, it is always borrowed from the oldest unmarried age group, or they have their own made after that age group's patterns. In other words, beadwork and bead ornamentation is more intimately associated with the unmarried age-groups. The only exception to this is in connection with diviners, amaggira, who wear bead ornaments as status symbols. Diviners are believed to be 'white people', abantu abamhlophe, who commune with the ancestors, iminyanya. In order to be able to do this, tradition demands that they have inkanyiso, illumination, on them. This is done by using white beads, intsimbi emhlophe for their ornaments. Whether the diviner is an accomplished one or a novice, he always wears his intsimbi yecamagu of white beads on his neck, for the reason stated above. This is a string of beads tied round the neck with two pendants hanging down to the collar bone. In addition to this, when divining, the diviners have to wear their string of white arm beads, iwatsha,

covering the whole forearm for a full diviner and half the forearm for a novice. A string of white beads is also wound round the ankles and is called amanqashela. When divining a full diviner will also wear an isiyaya, a band of white beads with a fringe right round worn in such a way that the fringe partly obscures the face of the diviner. This ornament is sometimes sewn on to the animal skin head dress, isidlokolo. Novitiates, however, do not have this bead ornament. Instead they wear the intshinga on the head. This is a tuft of aardwolf hair, inchi, bound with a string of white beads at the base and tied on with a similar string round the head.

Pins decorated with flaps, iziqweqwe, of white beads fringed with small tufts of red wool are common to both sexes, boys, girls and women. A most recent innovation is the bead tie, ighina, which is like the European tie from the knot downwards and provided with a narrow band to tie it round the neck. It is, however, shorter than the European tie in length, and is worn only by boys and men. There is no traditionally specified colour or colours for this bead ornament as yet, although it is common to see orange, royal blue, light blue and green bead ties. A tabular summary of the bead ornaments discussed above appears in Table I.

Design in Xhosa beadwork :

Bantu beadwork is noted for its beautiful applied geometric designs. The beauty comes from the colour and texture of the beads, since the same patterns worked out on paper with water colours would not appear nearly so interesting.

No preliminary designs are made for the beadwork; the patterns are worked out directly on to the bead ornament. This gives the craftswoman more feeling for harmony between the material and the design she has in mind. Within

the limits of traditional acceptance, the woman expresses herself in the pattern, form and colour of the beadwork which must be pleasing to her to make it a worthy present to pass on to a loved one.

The designs worked on to the bead ornaments are based on the principle of rhythm which involves :-

(i) the repetition of a single motif, especially the chevron with its many variations and the triangle; the straight line; and superimposed colour bands. The line and or band design occur in both the horizontal and vertical context.

(ii) The alternation of two or more motifs, and

(iii) the alternation of two or more sizes of the same pattern or colours.

Colours that contrast well give the designs a bold relief.

Three words referring to form and shape are always used in the description of bead ornaments. These are :-

(a) Isiqweqwe : A band or flap densely strung together with the rows closely superimposed on one another.

(b) Amabanga : Separate bead strings joining two or more bands or flaps together.

(c) Imingqi : Pendant strings of beads which are attached to a band or flap at one end.

The mixing of the various colours is called ukuvanga.

ITEM	VERNACULAR NAME	BOYS	MEN	GIRLS	WOMEN	MAIN COLOURS
Single waist string	Ungcenge	x (1-6 yrs)		x		White.
Head band	Umgxashe	x				Pink, white, blue & black.
Head band	Umsosobala	x				Green, white and black.
Head band with fringe at back	Iveyile	x				White, green, blue, black and red.
Head band	Isinqandabunzi	x			x	Black, green and white.
Neck band with pendants	Umkhinxo	x				White, black and green.
Neck band with pendants	Ithumbu elingqukuva	x	x (pink and blue)			White and black.
Neck band with pendants	Icangci or ithumbu elikhulu	x				White and black.

TABLE I.

ITEM	VERNACULAR NAME	BOYS	MEN	GIRLS	WOMEN	MAIN COLOURS
Neck band without pendants	Icangci or Ithumbu	x	Pink & blue x			white & black.
Chest beads	Isifilifili	x				Transparent red, transparent green, red, green, blue, white and yellow.
Waist bands (3 varieties)	Ookhotso	x	x (Pink)			a) Light blue b) Pink and c) White.
Waist bands with skin strips (6 varieties)	Oogingqi	x				a) Green b) Transparent green c) Light blue d) Transparent yellow e) Transparent orange f) Transparent red.
Waist band	Ikhala	x				Transparent green, royal blue & light blue.
Single arm strings	Amaso	x	x	x		Various colours.

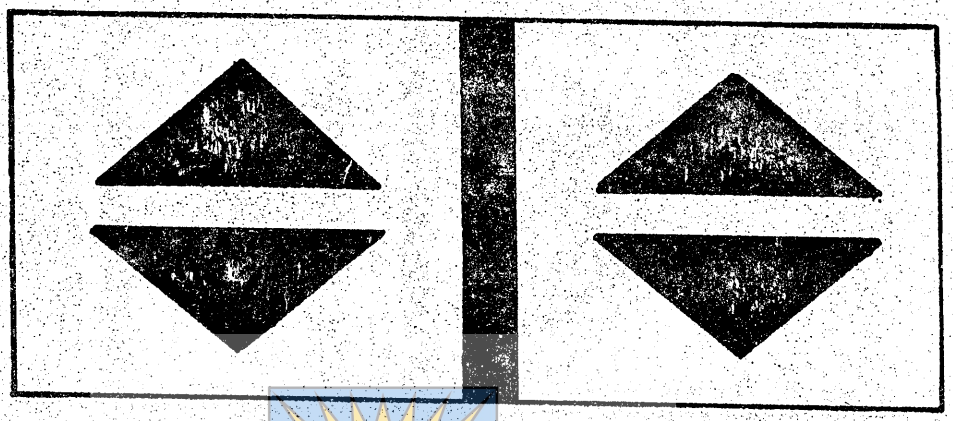
TABLE I. Continued

ITEM	VERNACULAR NAME	BOYS	MEN	GIRLS	WOMEN	MAIN COLOURS
Neck band	Istokfele		x			White, royal and light blue.
Neck band	Isidanga		x			Light blue.
Girdle of large beads	Iggesha		x			Black and white.
Ankle bands	Izitsaba		x			White and black or royal blue.
Anklet strings	Amangashela				x	Various colours.
Beaded pin	Isipeliti	x	x	x	x	White with fringe of red wool.
Bead tie	Ighina	x	x			Orange, royal blue, light blue, green.

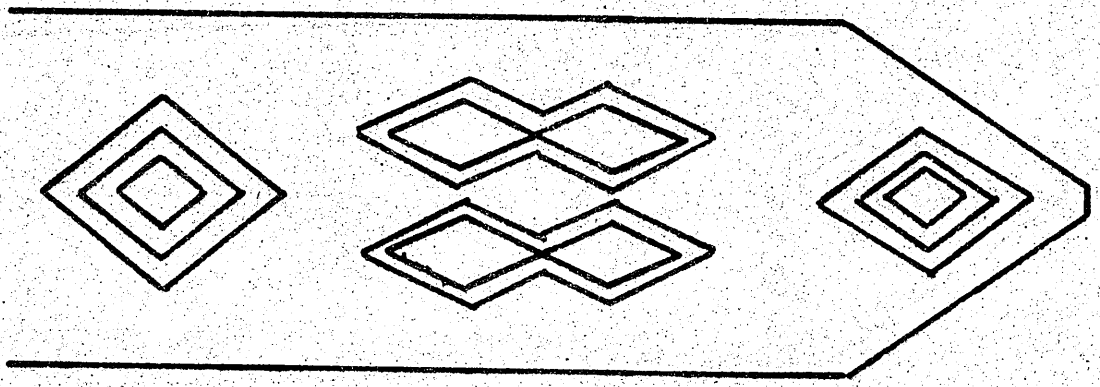
TABLE I. Continued

ITEM	VERNACULAR NAME	BOYS	MEN	GIRLS	WOMEN	MAIN COLOURS
Head band with short pendants	Idiliza			x		White, black or blue.
Head band with flaps	Amatikiti entloko			x		White, light blue and black.
Head band with flaps	Izibhanxa		x (Light blue) (royal blue)	x		Various colours.
Neck band	Umphotho			x		Various colours.
Necklace	Ithumbu lekati			x		No specified colours.
Neck band with flaps	Amatikiti			x		Royal blue.
Long string of large beads	Inkefane			x		Any colour used.
Chest beads (strings)	Imixwayo			x		Various colours.
Pubic covering	Inkciyo			x	x	White and black.

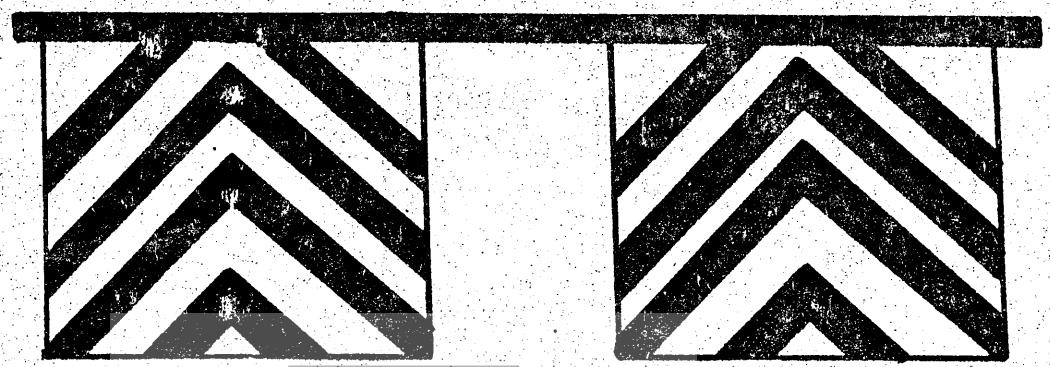
TABLE I. Continued



Triangle and line designs on anklets.
Top: for right ankle.
Bottom: for left ankle.

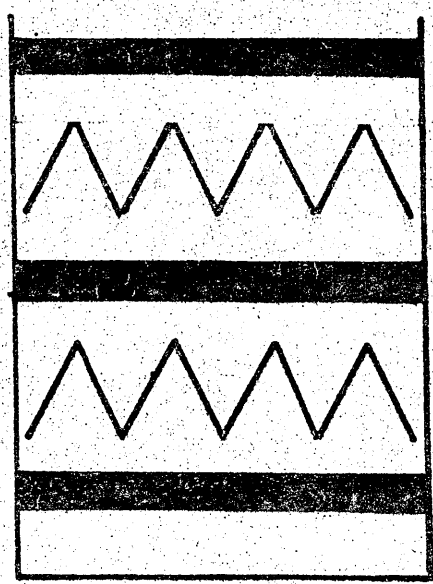


Repeated diamond design on a bead tie.

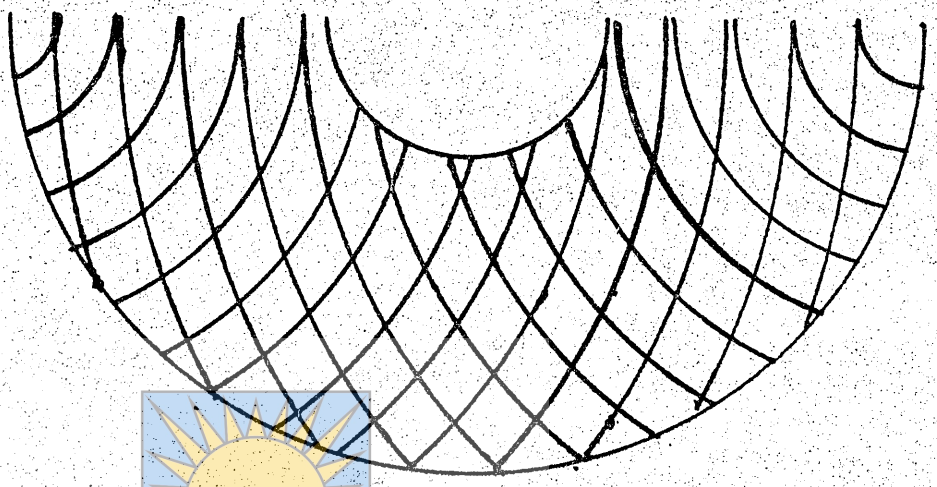


Chevron design on a necklet.

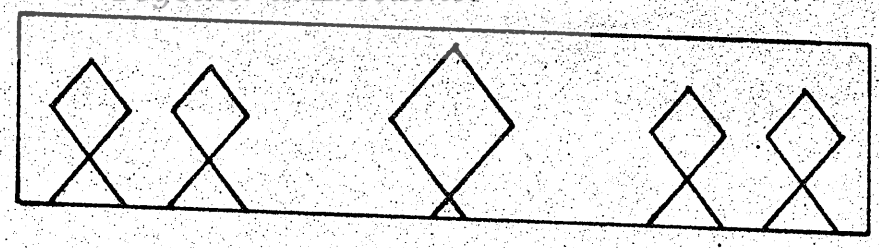
Repeated zig-zag design on a necklet.



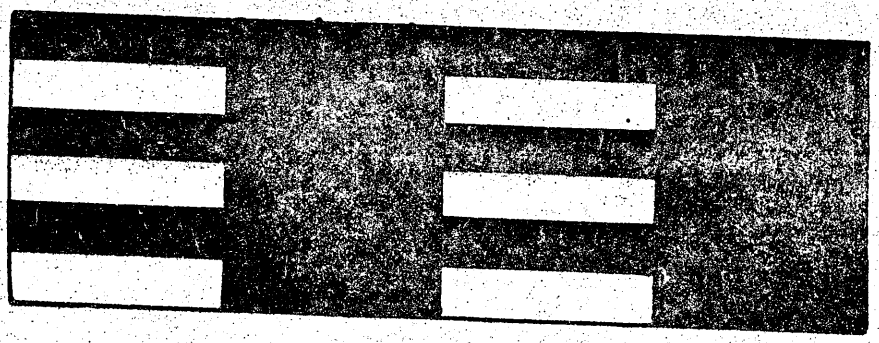
Alternate band and zig-zag designs on a bead tie.



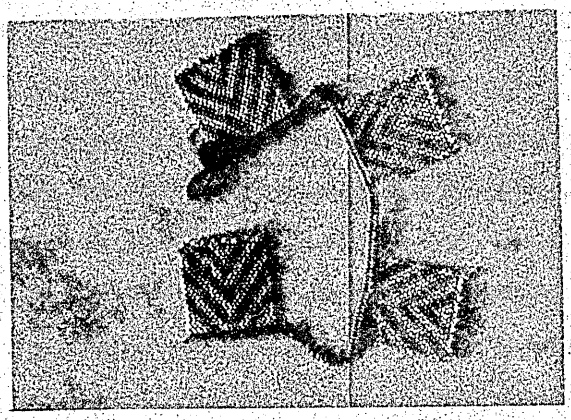
Open diamond design on necklace.



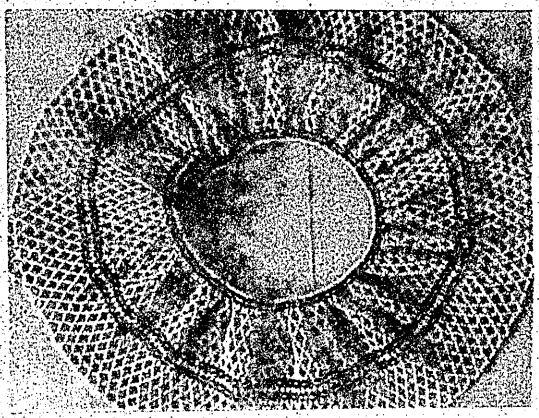
Diamond and triangular designs combined on a bead band.



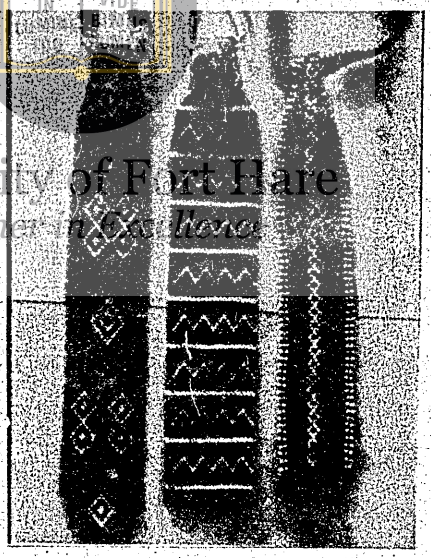
Horizontal and transverse open bead strand work .



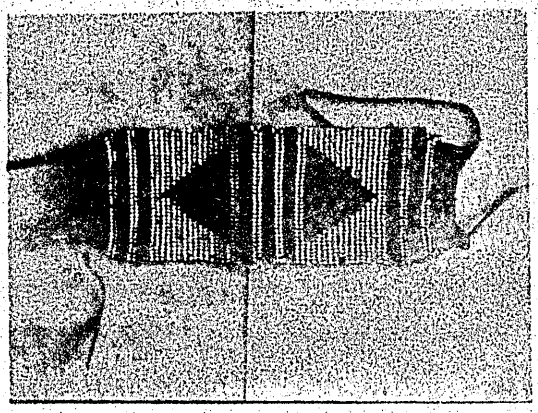
Necklet



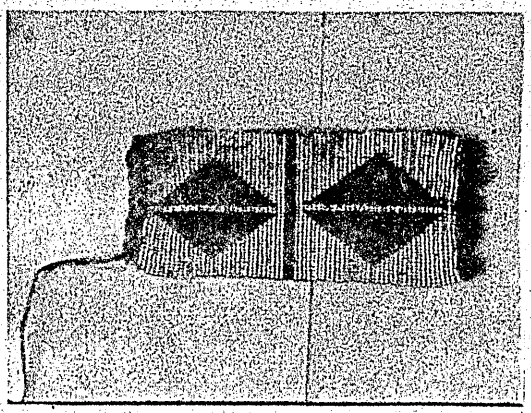
Necklace



Beaded ties



Left anklet



Right anklet

CHAPTER VI.

THE MAKING OF PIPES.

Pipe making is a specialist craft among the Xhosa of the Ciskei, pursued by men. Acacia caffra, umthole[160] and the roots of the umnyamanzi[161] tree, a kind of Dracia, are used.

A mature tree, umthi ovuthiweyo, recognised from the thinness of the inner bark, inxozi, is always preferred. Both craftsmen and pipe smokers agree that the root of the umnyamanzi tree makes better pipes, is more durable and gives a rich dark colour when polished. This is regarded as the ideal. However, it is more common in the Ciskei to find pipes made of the stem of the Acacia caffra which has a reddish brown finish and only darkens with use and periodic greasing with fat.

Ritual observance governs the felling of the tree. It should be felled, for instance, when the moon sets before sunrise, the belief being that when the moon shows during the day, xa inyanga iselwe, the tree becomes waterlogged, a condition which renders it unsuitable for carving as the wood is prone to crack. On the other hand, when the moon does not show during the day, the water level is believed to be low in the tree, rendering it most suitable to work with. For one thing, such wood takes a shorter time to dry.

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160) Kropf, A.: Kafir-English Dictionary, p. 417, gives this as umtolo; cf. Palmer, Eve and Pittman, Norah : Trees of South Africa, p. 150.

161) Palmer, Eve and Pittman, Norah : loc. cit.

The felled tree is allowed to dry in the forest if possible, otherwise it is carted home in stumps to be dried inside a hut, which takes about two weeks. Except for the fact that a man's axe is never used by his wife and children, or lent out to neighbours, there is no ritual observance regarding the instrument used for felling the trees or for carting them home.

The actual making of the pipe starts after the logs are dried out. Depending on the size of the pipe to be made, the craftsman nowadays cuts the log with a saw. The round log is split in the middle if this could not be done while it was wet. The intention is :-

(a) To have the pith, umongo, of the wood on the outside where it will be whittled away in the making of the pipe, and

(b) to try to get as many as four pipes out of the stump, each half yielding two.

By means of an axe each rough pipe is whittled, ukuxoza, to shape, the stem of the pipe following the direction of the grain of the wood. The craftsman may make a number of these rough shaped pipes before he goes on to the next stage.

Each roughly shaped pipe is bored, ukubhola, right through along the stem, intungo (literally meaning the shin bone), by means of a home-made wire bore, ibhola. The tip of a thick plain wire is hammered flat, sharpened on both sides and then twisted in the same manner as a European bore by using, if available, a vice grip and a pair of pliers. An ordinary file is used for the sharpening.

The bores used vary in length, the shortest being the first used. When it has gone its full length into the stem, the bore next in length is used. This continues

until the whole bore of the stem, ijelo, is made. Should the craftsman have a vice grip, he uses it to hold the pipe and have his hands free to exert maximum pressure on the bore, thus making the work faster. If, however, he has no vice grip, he holds the pipe in his left hand and bores with the right. At intervals he greases the tip of the bore with fat, amafutha, to allow the bore to pass easily through the wood. A condition of ritual significance is that the fat must have no salt, nor should it be lard. Contravention of this is likely to develop cracks in the wood.

The bowl of the pipe is next chiselled out. Those craftsmen who possess carpenters' chisels use them, but otherwise home-made chisels, izixholo, are used. The process of hollowing out the bowl is called ukuxhola which continues until the opening of the bowl converges with the hole in the stem. The bowl, imbiza or ipheko, is always round in shape.

The size of the bowl, depending on whether the pipe is for a man or a woman, is gauged continually by inserting a wooden peg, isikhonkwane, into the bowl as it is being hollowed out. Both ends of the peg are used, one end for the bowl of a male's pipe, and the other for the bowl of a woman's pipe. An alternative method of gauging the size of the bowl is by using the thumb of the right hand in the same manner as when a smoker presses tobacco into his pipe bowl. This method is used by customers when buying pipes. Sometimes the craftsman asks to see the thumb of a customer who orders a pipe, noting whether the customer is right or lefthanded.

When the bowl and the bore of the stem are finished, the craftsman shapes his pipe to the normal size. This is done by whittling with a knife which is occasionally sharpened

on a soft stone which is ready at hand. While whittling the pipe, the craftsman sights along the stem at intervals to check against crookedness and possible over-whittling on any one side of the bowl or stem. The mouth end tip of the stem is left at a slightly larger diameter than the rest of the stem in order to take the mouth piece which is usually separate. The bore of the stem is thus made wider to receive the pointed end of the mouth piece. The whole pipe is then scraped smooth with pieces of glass and finished, nowadays, with fine sandpaper.

The bore of the stem opposite to the mouth end is plugged with a piece of the same wood as that from which the pipe is made. The plugging is so well done and smoothed that in many cases it cannot be detected. Some craftsmen, however, do not bore the whole length of the stem to necessitate plugging the farther end of the bore. There is no particular reason for this except that it is the preference of some individual craftsman. As a precaution to boring right through the stem, the pipe-maker often first makes the bowl and then the bore of the stem. When, by measuring the extent to which the bore has gone into the stem against its length, he finds that the bore and the bowl are about to meet, he continually sucks air through the bore to determine when it converges with the bowl. This method is more time-consuming than that of boring right through the stem, but it has the definite advantage of eliminating all possibilities of leakage of air through the plugged end, especially when the pipe is new. Most craftsmen, however, resort to the first method.

The notching of a bur, inkaba, meaning the navel, at the bottom of the bowl is another feature left to the taste of the craftsman. It is claimed that this feature gives the pipe a typical characteristic, distinct from the European pipe.

When the pipe is finished in the manner described, the inside of the bowl is protected from charring when being smoked in the following manner. The inside of the bowl is lined with a piece of tin, usually from a condensed milk or jam tin. The size of the tin inlay is obtained by bending it round the wooden peg or gauge, allowing for a slight overlap of the metal. Ordinary tin snips are used for cutting the tin. With the metal still round the gauge, the tin is fitted into the bowl with a piece of the metal, as broad as the rim of the pipe bowl, jutting above the bowl. This protruding metal is flanged over the rim resulting in a V-shaped cleft called inkonjane, literally meaning a swallow. The cleft will be on the right hand side for a left handed smoker and on the left for a right handed one. This protects the uncovered part of the rim from being charred when one is lighting up the pipe. The whole tin inlay is called ibhekile from the Afrikaans "beker", and the capacity of the bowl, umbilini. The completed pipe is then greased and is now ready for sale.

The craftsman is not obliged to make a mouth piece for his pipes. Such mouth pieces are usually made from sneezewood, umthathi, by the customer himself on acquiring the pipe. A sneezewood twig is bored with an awl, isilanda, along the pith. One end of it is pointed to fit into the mouth end of the stem bore. The length of the mouth piece which is variously called ingcaphe, inxindeba, iximheya or inximbheya, depends on the taste of the owner. The bark of the wood is scraped off.

Social usage governs the pipe maker in the manufacture of his pipes. The basic differences in the pipes used by the two sexes and the various age groups are to be found in the length of the stem and the height and capacity of the bowl. The general rule is that the old people of both sexes use long-stemmed pipes, about forty-four centimeters

long without the mouth piece, and the bowl about ten centimeters high. This pipe is called umlolombela or umngcongo. Those used by elderly men have shorter bowls with a bigger capacity than those used by elderly women. Another class of women using the umlolombela are diviners, young and old. To them it is more of a status symbol than an indication of age. The umlolombela pipe of the diviners differs from that used by ordinary people by being richly decorated with white strings of beads round the stem. Other people use coloured beads for decoration. A married elderly man buys an umlolombela pipe for his wife, and if he happens to be wealthy, he would pay as much as a she-goat for the pipe.

A pipe of such length entails the use of a goat-skin bag, ingxowa yebhokhwe, to carry it in. Thus the further expense of slaughtering a goat for making of this bag devolves on the owner, which can only be afforded by the wealthy. It can therefore be seen that the long-stemmed pipe is expressive of age, wealth and status. A Xhosa thus regards it as ridiculous and presumptuous of a younger man or woman to smoke this pipe. Censure from the older generation as well as the offender's own generation would soon put a stop to the practice.

The pipe smoked by women, abafazi abakhulu, who rank in status next to the old women, amaxhegokazi, is descriptively called inqawa ende yabafazi, the long pipe of women. This is about thirty centimeters long without the mouth piece and the bowl stands about eight centimeters high. Younger women and maidens would smoke a pipe still shorter in length than the above. Its length would be about eighteen to twenty-five centimeters with a bowl of about six centimeters high. No specific name is given to this pipe; it is merely called inqawa yabantu abancinci. Girls of the second and third age groups are allowed to use this pipe,

although they prefer one still shorter which they can easily tuck away into their small cloth bags as they may not smoke in the presence of their seniors.

Old men, amaxhego, and their immediate juniors, amadoda amakhulu, smoke a pipe called inqawa yamadoda which varies from eighteen centimeters to twenty-five centimeters in length. The men next in rank, amaqina, amadodana and abafana, smoke a pipe called umbhekaphesheya whose bowl stands out at an angle of more than ninety degrees to the stem. In other words, it points across from the smoker hence the name of the pipe. The difference in the pipes of the three groups is only in size, especially that of the bowl.

The umbhekaphesheya differs from the ordinary Xhosa pipe in that it combines European and Xhosa pipe features :

1) The bur, inkaba, and the flanged proximal end of the stem is absent.

2) The craftsman is obliged to make the umbhekaphesheya with its mouth piece. This is made in two ways :

   (a) From the tip of a cow's horn, uphondo lwenkomo, from which the mouth piece, uphondo, derives its name;

   (b) the stem and the mouth piece may all be in one piece, wood.

3) The stem of the pipe is either cylindrical or rectangular. In either case the mouth piece, uphondo, assumes the shape of the stem.

4) A novel form of decoration distinguishes this pipe from others. Backs of coloured combs, iinkcaza, are fitted between the stem and the mouth piece, where it is made of horn. This type of pipe is never decorated with beads.

The making of the horn mouth piece and its decoration with combs needs explanation :-

(a) The mouth piece : The tip of a black cow's horn is usually preferred. The tip is sawn off at the point where the hollowness of the horn ends, a position which is marked by the difference in colour between the tip of the horn, incam, and the rest of the horn, isigodlo. A sharpened thick plain wire is burnt red hot and used to bore through the horn from the broad end. When this is done, the horn is whittled straight with a knife in relation to the direction of the bore, care being taken to make the sides as equal as possible. Before the horn is whittled down to its desired size, a tennon, uphondlo, is made on the horn and fitted into the already made mortice in the pipe stem in the same manner as the two parts of a European pipe are fitted.

(b) Decoration : The back of a comb is used for this purpose, two or more different coloured combs being necessary to achieve the desired effect. A hole big enough to fit the tennon of the mouth piece is burnt through the combs and put in position on the tennon. A layer of soot, umle, is placed between the different comb rings to act as a cement after heating the combs in hot water. When the various parts are fitted into position, the comb decorations are planed down to the size of the pipe stem. The tip of the mouth piece is made similar, but thicker, to that of a European pipe.

The umbhekaphesheya is midway between the Xhosa pipe and an imitation of the European pipe, upexe. This pipe, however, retains the traditional tin inlay of the bowl, and may or may not be decorated with the coloured comb backs. These pipes are usually described as iinqawa zamanene, pipes

for gentlemen. Preference for these pipes by the "gentlemen" is expressed in the statement that European pipes are fragile, and that the bowl chars and burns out too soon. The "gentlemen" are usually the traditional rural Xhosa who work in urban areas.

Uncircumcised boys, amakhwenkwe, in Xhosa society are looked upon as unclean, inqambi, as a result they have no special pipes as an age group. They use any convenient means of smoking which may be a European pipe, new or old, or by simply rolling up the tobacco in brown paper, the so-called "zoll". Since most of them go out to work on the mines and in urban areas, they normally come back with European pipes, oopexe, out of which they may be bullied by circumcised men at home. Traditionally a boy is a "dog", inkwenkwe yinja, and as such is treated with a minimum of respect.

Ritual and symbolic uses of the Xhosa pipe :

The use and popularity of the traditional Xhosa pipe is still rooted in certain Xhosa customs. As such the Xhosa pipe is of social as well as ritual significance standing its ground against the invasion by newer types of pipes. Four examples of this will be given.

(a) Umhlwayelelo ceremony : [162] This is a propitiatory rite to the "river people", abantu bomlambo, on the banks of a river pool as part of the treatment of prospective diviners undergoing their initiation. After the address of the master diviner to the "river people", he gives a pinch of tobacco to each of the members of the procession. These

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162) Cf. De Jager, E.J. and Gitywa, V.Z.: "A Xhosa Umhlwayelelo Ceremony in the Ciskei" in African Studies, Vol. 22, No. 3, 1963, pp. 109-117.

in turn fill their long-stemmed pipes and smoke in silence. The importance of their smoking may be explained by the fact that social interaction, even with complete strangers, is always centred round asking for a pipeful of tobacco, ingxawa, and smoking together. The action of asking for tobacco is called ukuncaza. A warm social feeling then prevails and questions are answered unevasively because friendship, in the case of strangers, has been established. In this context the Xhosa pipe can thus be seen as a means of befriending the spiritual world in the same manner as it would have been done if the spirits were in the flesh. At this river side ceremony, the spirits of the river are today given both tobacco and matches.

(b) Ukulungiswa komzi : This is a rite performed by a diviner at the purification of a kraal after it has been struck by lightning. Family members are instructed by the diviner in charge to smoke their Xhosa pipes. Tobacco had been bought and preserved for the purpose and may on no account be shared with anybody else. For correctness and thus effectiveness of the ritual the pipes must be Xhosa traditional pipes.

(c) Diviners use the long-stemmed pipe as a symbol of their profession. Because of their special relationship with the ancestral world and their possession of special knowledge, they are not tied down to normal social usage. Young as well as old diviners use the long Xhosa pipe, the stem or part of it being covered with white beads as an additional symbol.

(d) When a Xhosa man or woman is dressed in traditional style for a festive or other social occasion, the individual is always obliged to have a Xhosa pipe if he or she is a smoker. It is looked down upon to wear traditional dress and smoke a European pipe.

Sale and disposal of the pipes by the craftsmen :

The craftsman disposes of his pipes in three ways :-

(a) His clients come to his home to buy or place an order for a pipe. Since he is surrounded by clansmen and relatives, as well as by ordinary village people, two principles guide him in the sale of his wares. These are the ties of kinship and neighbourliness, both of which work in a reciprocal manner. Because of these obligations, the craftsman loses on his sales which are not strictly regarded as economic transactions. When a pipe is made to order for a kinsman or neighbour, the craftsman would normally leave the choice of payment to the buyer who may or may not give something commensurate in return. Normally a chicken or a goat kid would be given. Payment is usually deferred over a long period of time. One crippled pipe maker who could not work as a labourer or plough his fields was under the constant obligation to dispose of his pipes for next to nothing in the village. Investigation showed, however, that these were the people who helped him and his wife during the ploughing, hoeing and harvesting seasons, so that there was actually remuneration.

(b) Middlemen : The craftsman makes a whole batch of pipes which he sends through a middleman from the village. This is usually a trusted neighbour or relative. The middleman has a double incentive in selling the pipes. The first is that he enjoys a commission of a free pipe from the craftsman, and secondly, that he raises the marked price of the pipe so that he earns a cash commission as well. The rural craftsman is usually aware of this, but seldom concerns himself with it as long as he gets his return. Different prices are charged for the different pipes, the prices varying according to the length of the pipe. The basis of charge, although not standard, is the amount of material used

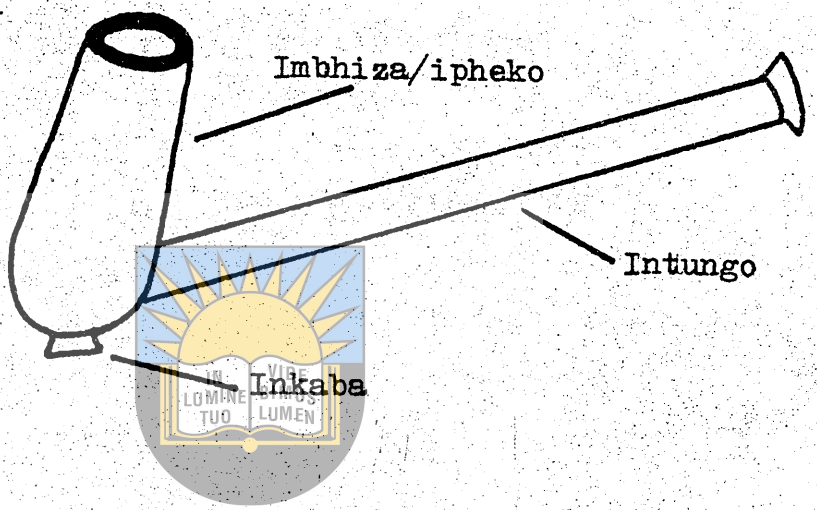
and the labour involved. Thus an umbhekaphesheya or upexe would cost more than a Xhosa pipe of similar length because of the horn mouth piece and the labour involved.

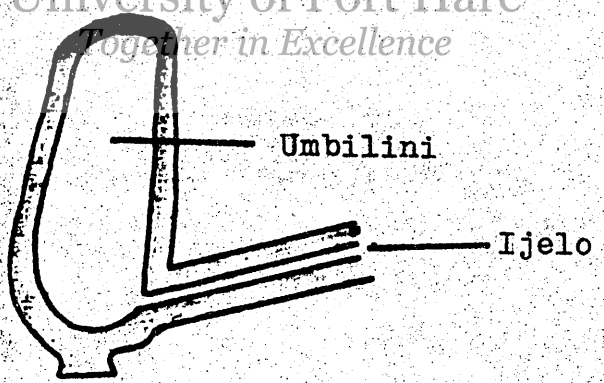
(c) The trader : Some craftsmen attach themselves to local village traders for the sale of their pipes. In all cases the craftsman does not tie himself down to delivering a specific number of pipes at specified intervals. However, buyers prefer to buy their pipes direct from the craftsman. Reasons for this are the following.

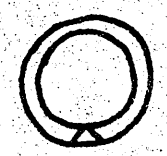
(i) Pipes made for retail by traders are usually inferior to pipes made to order by the craftsman. The stem and the mouth piece are usually all in one piece, wood, which means that over a period of time the tip of the mouth piece gets bitten through and becomes irreplacable.

(ii) The finish of the pipe sold by the trader is not always of sufficient standard. The pipe maker invariably hurries to make the required number of pipes in order to get his assured pay for his labours since he will not be faced with the dissatisfaction of the customers.

PARTS OF A PIPE.

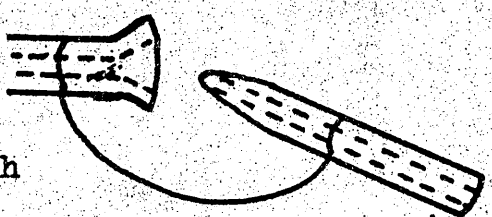






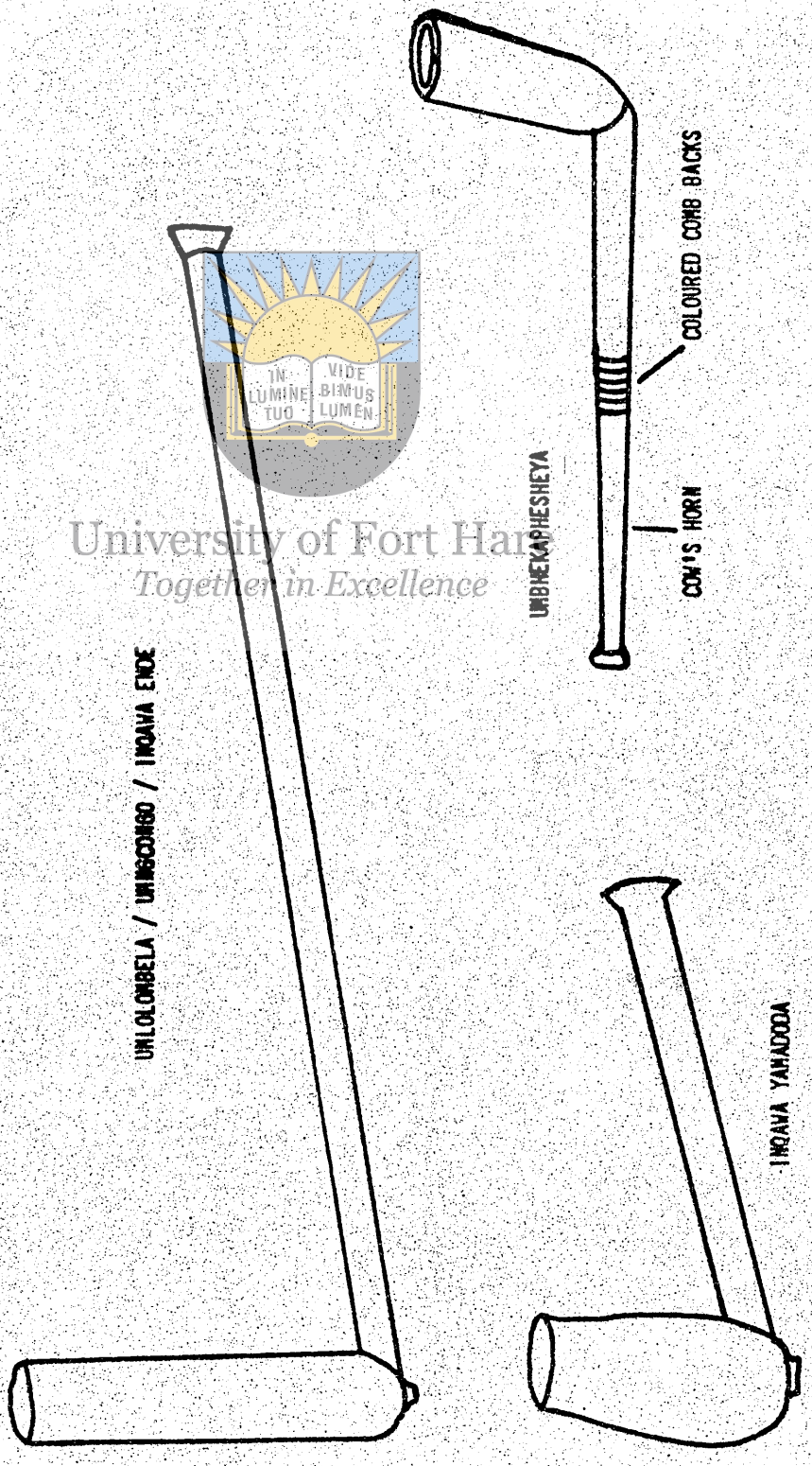
Inkonjane
(on rim of bowl)

Portion of stem with string attached for mouth piece.

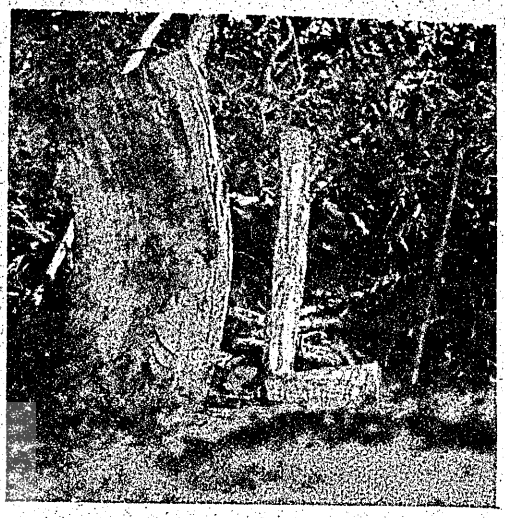


Ingcaphe

MAIN PIPES USED BY THE XHOSA IN THE CISKEI.



SCENES FROM PIPE MAKING.



CHAPTER VII.

SMITHS.

Smithwork among the Xhosa comprised the manufacture of implements of war, husbandry and metallic ornaments; it was a craft carried on by men who became specialists in it. Smithwork, especially the manufacture of weapons, is a craft in which the Xhosa male has received best acknowledgement, although the craft has been developed to a far higher degree elsewhere in Africa. Presumably they had to get the iron in a malleable state [163] either from shipwrecks along the coast or by barter from African tribes in the North. [164]

No record exists of the Xhosa ever having mined iron ore. Theal [165] records the legend about Tshawe (ca.1610) who is regarded by the Xhosa as having introduced the use of iron assegais which were not known to them before. He argues correctly, however, that the Bantu knew the use of iron long before Tshawe. Admittedly the legend is not factual for no trace of its claim exists today even in the praise songs of the amaTshawe, a royal Xhosa clan. Further, if it is accepted that the Bantu tribes emigrated from the North-Eastern parts of Africa, it should be expected that they brought along with them some knowledge of the use of iron from these parts where the working of metals [166]

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163) Kay, S.: op cit., p. 133; cf. Fritsch G.: Die Eingeborenen Süd-Afrika's, p. 72.

164) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., pp. 70 and 322.

165) Theal, G.M.: History and Ethnography of South Africa, Vol. III, p. 67.

166) Cf. Phillipson, D.W.: "Early Iron-using Peoples of Southern Africa" in Thompson, L. (ed.), African Societies in Southern Africa, Heinemann, London, 1969, pp. 42-45.

was far in advance of that of the Xhosa.

The implication contained in Godée Molsbergen that the Xhosa could not work iron except when it was in a malleable state is contradicted by Baines [167] who asserts that

> Among those on the Colonial frontier the general adoption of fire-arms, and the facility with which iron and ..... assagai heads of British manufacture are obtained, has caused so great a declension in this branch of native industry that few travellers indeed are favoured with an opportunity of witnessing it.

The implication here is that Baines witnessed the smelting or iron ore by the Xhosa. He [168] reports further that

> The Kafirs formerly manufactured their own assagais from iron found either in native state among the mountains or obtained in ore a short distance from the surface.

Iron was a metal most prized by the Xhosa, and in all their encounters with strange people, they minded nothing but iron as it is shown by the massacre of Heupenaar's hunting party by the Xhosa in order to obtain the iron parts of their wagon.[169]

Fritsch [170] doubts the fact that the Xhosa could smelt ore with a furnace. Baines and Kropf report the use of a furnace in the smelting of iron ore. In both instances the furnace is described to have been a clay cylinder or

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167) Baines, Thomas: Journal of Residence in South Africa, Vol. 1., p. 52.
168) Ibid.
169) Ibid.
170) Fritsch, G.: op. cit., p. 72.

hollow mound perforated to receive the nozzle of the bellows. The following is Kropf's [171] description of it.

> Nachdem Kohlen gebrannt sind, wird die Esse aus einem kleinen Lehmhügel von zwei Fuss Breite und eineinhalb Fuss Höhe hergestellt, rund, hohl, mit zwei Löchern versehen.

Baines [172] reports that to melt the iron ore it was "piled in alternate layers with charcoal, enclosed by a wall of clay, and subjected to the action of two bellows". Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the Xhosa manufactured their own weapons, and according to Kay their smiths were [173]

> by no means the most contemptible artisans. Had they but proper tools and a little instruction as to the use of them, their abakhandi (smiths) would in all probability soon excel.

The implements used for smithing were very simple and primitive. The hammer and anvil were always a stone of the hardest type they could get. The fire to heat the iron was kept aglow by a very arduous method. A man sat between a pair of bellows and alternately pulled them up and pushed them down, thus forcing a current of air through the cow's horn fitted on to the bellows for the passage of the air to the fire. The heat thus produced was not sufficiently strong, but was enough for the purpose for which it was designed.[174] The following is a description of the kind of bellows used :-

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171) Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 112.

172) Baines, Thomas: op. cit., p. 52.

173) Kay, S.: op. cit., p. 133.

174) Baines, Thomas: op. cit., p. 52; cf. Fritsch, G.: op. cit., p. 70.

> De blaasbalk zelf is een zagt bereid, bij wijze van eenen zak toegenaaid, Kalsvel, en het Mondstuk een Koehoren, waarvan de punt afgesneden en waaraan de hals van het vel met eenen riem is vast gebonden, zijnde dit vel van agteren geheel open. [175]

Kropf [176] divides the smiths into weapon smiths and brass smiths, and according to Fritsch [177] the iron used was a red variety of differing thickness.

Trying to find an explanation why native metal articles did not rust readily, Wood [178] postulates that this freedom from rust may be obtained by a process similar to that which is employed in the manufacture of geological hammers, namely, that while the metal is hot, it is plunged into oil and then hammered. This is significant in that an old assegai smith of Dikidikana Location, Middledrift, volunteered similar information, but in his case the red hot iron was immersed in a salt solution after it was hammered. An alternative explanation for the absence of rust is that the iron was hammered for a long time while it was slowly heated, so that a very resistant oxidised layer was produced on the surface. The Xhosa weapons were for that reason not bright but of a dull grey colour, since only at the edges the metal appeared as a result of sharpening. The edges became blunt quickly, but could easily be resharpened. [179]

An assegai consisted of an iron blade sharpened on both sides and fitted on to a wooden shaft, the whole measuring

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175) Alberti, L.: op. cit., p. 150.
176) Kropf, A.: loc. cit.
177) Fritsch, G.: loc. cit.
178) Wood: A Natural History of Man, p. 97.
179) Fritsch, G.: op. cit., p. 72.

between 1.50 m to 1.80 m in length. Eight different types were made,[180] four of which are described by von Winkelmann in his journal (1788-1789). The commonest type according to him[181] consisted of an iron spit, one and a half to ten centimeters broad in the middle. It was sharpened on both sides, and beaten into a groove on one side and into a ledge on the other. The length of the lance proper was from ten to twelve centimeters extended to a polished iron staff twenty-four to twenty-eight centimeters long, which was cylindrical and of a uniform thickness. This was then burnt into a wooden shaft which was about one and a half meters long. To ensure the firmness of the joint, it was tied over with sinew or thongs.

The second type of assegai had the lance proper, twenty to thirty centimeters long, inserted by means of an iron tang into the wooden shaft in such a manner that the blade proper began just above the wooden shaft.

The third type of spear is described as most elaborate, being beautiful and yet most dangerous. Like the first one it had an iron staff which, however, was square in cross section, and along the four edges many sharp barbs turned downwards had been cut in at regular intervals. This was the most expensive type since its manufacture cost so much trouble.

The fourth type of spear had no cutting edge being only a cylindrical pointed iron spike fitted on to a wooden shaft.[182] Soga[183] and Kropf[184] both cite the vernacular names of the

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180) Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 112.

181) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., pp. 70, 321.

182) Godée Molsbergen E.C.: op. cit., p. 70; cf. Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 112; Soga, J.H.: op. cit., pp. 78-79.

183) Soga, J.H.: loc. cit.

184) Kropf, A.: loc. cit.

various assegais, Soga giving two more than Kropf. Their lists are otherwise identical. The following is the list of names of the various assegais as given by Soga :-

1) Isinkempe. A stabbing assegai, for use at close quarters. It has a blade attached to a short handle or shaft. It is also called uDini.

2) Ijozi. A stabbing assegai, with a blade as broad but longer than the isinkempe.

3) Irwana. A small-bladed weapon for throwing either in war or in hunting. It is also used as the surgical instrument in circumcision.

4) Intshuntshe. Typical throwing assegai with a longish blade but narrow.

5) Isigixi. Carrying a long blade but with a short stem.

6) Irwantsa. A short blade with a long rectilineal stem, the latter serrated along the whole course of its four edges.

7) Izaka. The blade, somewhat long, is barbed towards the base.

8) Ingcola. A very short blade and a long stem.

9) Ingqanda. This is a four-sided spear point. A piece of iron about a quarter of an inch thick; instead of being round is rectilinear. At one end it is filed away to a point. It sometimes has nicks cut into the edges to give it a better hold on piercing objects.

10) Irwantsi. This is like the rwantsa mentioned above except that the stem or iron shaft which is also four square has no serrations but while hot, in the process of formation, is given one or two twists by the blacksmith so that the stem is fluted.

Kropf gives all the assegai names except for the isinkempe and the irwantsi.

Fritsch [185] describes two assegais as basic to the

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185) Fritsch, G.: op. cit., pp. 62-63.

Xhosa armoury. Between these two types, he states, are a number of transitions and variations which, together with the two basic types, dominate so strongly that all others have arisen as curiosities through fancy or foreign influence.

The technique of fixing the assegai head to the wooden shaft is described by McLaren [186] as follows :-

> The shaft was split open at the end, and the head inserted into the cleft to the depth of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. It was then fixed in position by smearing it with resin, itywina, obtained from the candlewood tree, ibolo, or from a species of hypoxis, ixalanxa, and was tied very tightly to the shaft with a fine thong made from the shoulder sinews of the ox.

An informant of the amaBamba clan, Dikidikana Location, Middledrift, described a similar method whereby he, as a practising assegai maker, fixed the assegai heads to their shafts. He used the roots of the itywina tree (Pterocelastrus variabilis Sond.) [187] which were burned and ground to a powder. The bore previously made in the wooden shaft is filled three quarters with this powder, and the heated tang of the assegai head is inserted into the powder filled bore. The powder smoulders, and before it burns out, it is quenched with water. In the absence of itywina soot, umle, from the roof of the hut could be used in a similar manner. Another alternative is the use of sulphur. The joint is then reinforced with sinew thread tightly wound round it.

The weapon smith also manufactured simple axes, amazembe or izixengxe and awls, izilanda, from iron. The axe

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186) McLaren, J.: op. cit., p. 444.
187) Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 426.

was a triangular piece of metal with a sharpened cutting edge. It was fixed to a wooden handle by hammering its pointed end into a wooden shaft so that the point of the metal protrudes through the handle. In addition to being used as an axe, the instrument was also employed in scraping hides when these were prepared for the making of cloaks. The awls were simple eyeless needles sharpened at one end and used for making holes when sewing cloaks.

According to Kropf [188] smiths also worked with copper which they obtained from the Cape Colony. This was worked without the use of fire and was hammered into armrings, izacholo, rings for the fingers, imisesane and rings which were strung on thongs for making girdles; the rings were called iinqwemesha.

It is extremely difficult to obtain suitable informants on spear making today. This is occasioned by the fact that the making and possession of such arms is prohibited by law. Consequently even those who might have had a knowledge of the craft did not readily admit to it for fear of being apprehended. A number, however, were prepared to discuss what they knew about spear making.

Informants all agreed that although the Xhosa knew how to work with metal, they never mined metal extensively, nor have they any knowledge of any of their contemporaries or forefathers mining metal ore, isinyithi. Informants themselves made their assegais from old or new files or from any suitable piece of iron. One informant endorsed this by saying that his father used the handles of a broken plough. This was at the time when plough shares were made of wood.

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188) Kropf, A.: op. cit., p. 113.

To fashion these into spears, the metal was burnt red hot in a "furnace", a perforated four gallon tin or any metal receptacle suitably sized to make the fire in. Dried cowdung, amalongo, or wood from the Acacia karroo, umnga, was used. One informant, born in 1876, added that umnquma, Olea africana, umhlakothi, Rhus legatii and umhlakotshana, Rhus lancea made excellent charcoal for heating the iron.

The wood was burnt in a hole dug in the ground. When the wood was burnt to coals, the fire was doused by covering it up with a layer of earth and left like that to cool. The charcoal thus produced was used in a proper furnace and not in the perforated tin, imbhawula. The furnace proper was built of soft stone cemented together with mud. The soft stone was preferred to the hard stone because it did not split on being intensely heated. The whole furnace was shaped like an antheap which was open at the top. Provision was made in the wall of the furnace for a hole to take the nozzle of the bellows.

When the iron was sufficiently heated, it was hammered on both sides into a rough shape of the intended assegai. The heating and hammering was repeated until the assegai was finished, but the hammering had always to be done from the tip towards the tang, umsuka, of the assegai head. The finished but unsharpened assegai head was heated red hot and immersed directly into a solution of salt water. This was repeated three times after which the assegai was left to cool off. The assegai head was ground on a soft stone to sharpen it.

It was pointed out that as an alternative to using itywina for fixing the assegai head to the shaft, aloe juice mixed with finely ground soot, umle, was used. This was probably the more traditional method since informants who know

this method stated that they learned it from their fathers. The assegai shafts were made from isiduli, Eugenia zeyheri Harv., umnqabaza, Grewia occidentalis and umlungumabele, Knobwood.

The smiths never stock-piled finished assegais or hawked them around the country. Those who wanted them usually placed an order for such assegais. It was not everybody who placed an order for an assegai who got it. All customers were carefully screened by the smith in order to find out whether the buyer had any malicious intentions, for example, a young man contemplating to kill his father. Sample questions in the screening would run like this :-

"Whose son are you?"

"What do you need the assegai for because there are no wars, nor are there animals to hunt down?"

These questions are repeated in a subtle manner to elicit as much as possible the true identity and intention of the buyer. If there is reason for doubt, the order is politely turned down in some such like manner :-

"I am sorry my son, I used to make assegais but now I have stopped because of my weak eyesight".

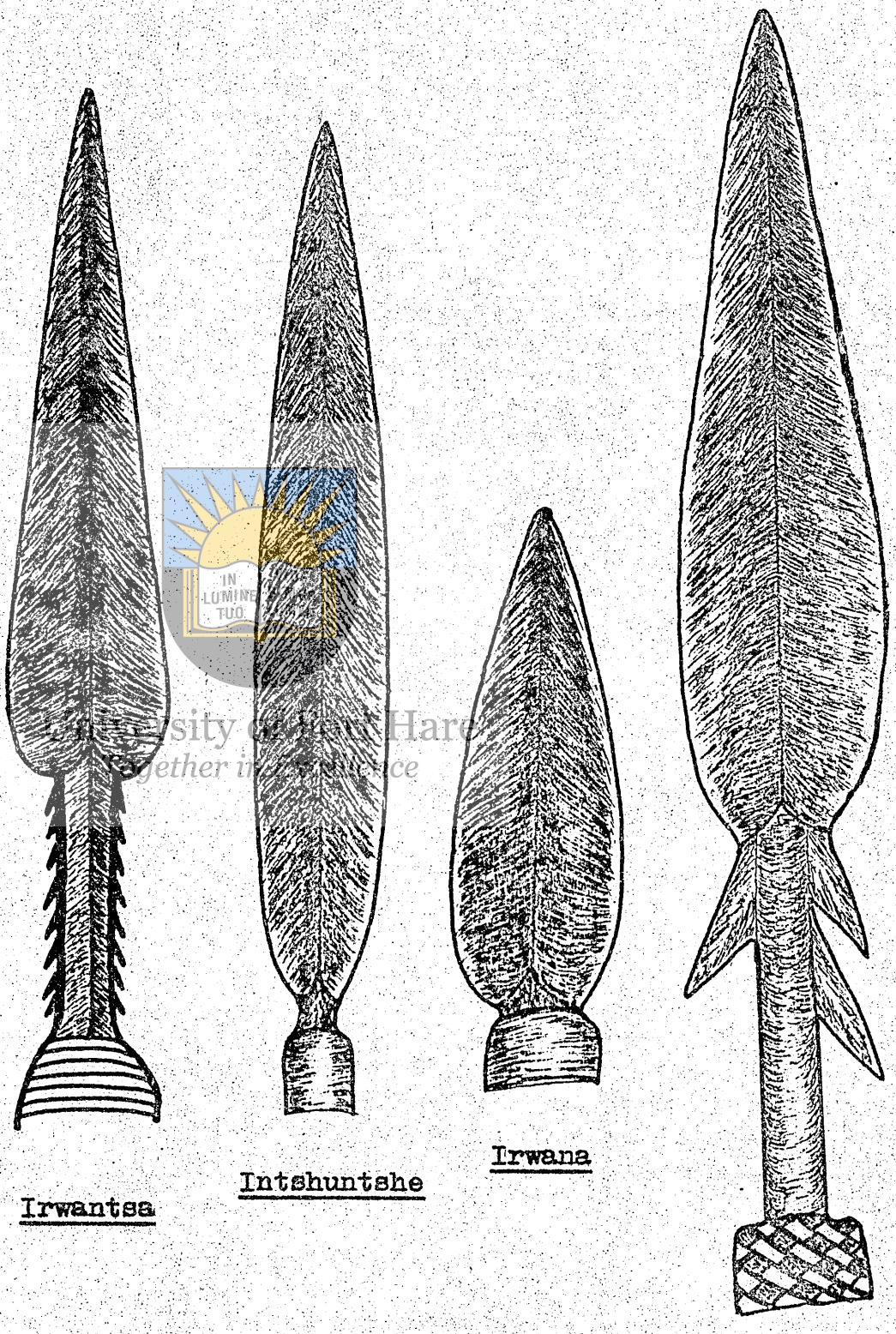
In the case of an assegai assault on somebody, the Chief's court always tried to find out who the smith was who sold or made the assegai for the offender. Should it be found that the smith was irresponsible in doing so, he was then liable to the payment of a court fine. We see, therefore, that Xhosa culture possessed the necessary mechanism in terms of moral, social and legal sanction, to guard the well-being of society in the use of arms.

According to informants the bellows, imfutha, was made from the skin of a buck, impunzi, in the absence of which

an ordinary goat skin was used. The animal was not slaughtered in the normal way by cutting the skin open along the belly, but the head was cut off and the skin "peeled" off the carcass in such a manner that it formed a bag, open at both ends. The neck part of the skin was joined on to a tube made of a bullock's horn. The opening at the opposite end of the skin was contracted to a narrow aperture to which short slats of wood were sewn so that it could be opened and closed at will with the thumb and fingers of the hand. Two such bellows were made with a common tube through which the air was forced into the furnace. The smith's assistant would then sit down on the ground between the bellows and alternately push the two bellows up and down keeping up a constant blast of air into the furnace through the common tube.

Today very few smiths practise their craft. The craft declined with the appearance of the European hoe and plough displacing the traditional hoe, isikhuba, manufactured by the smith. Assegais and shields were no match against European guns and bullets during the Frontier Wars. This resulted in the Xhosa hankering after European guns which they brought back as booty from wars and skirmishes with the Europeans, or obtained them through illicit trade with European traders and gun traffickers. The defeat and subjugation of the Xhosa at the end of the so-called Kaffir Wars was an additional death knell to craft of the assegai maker, and with their defeat, the making of and possession of arms was prohibited. It is secretly practised today to make spears for the circumcision of boys or for use on ritual and ceremonial occasions. The disappearance of this craft also affected ancillary crafts and skills such as the making of the double bellows, the making of shields, etc. All these ancillary crafts disappeared with that of the smith.

TYPES OF ASSEGAI HEADS.



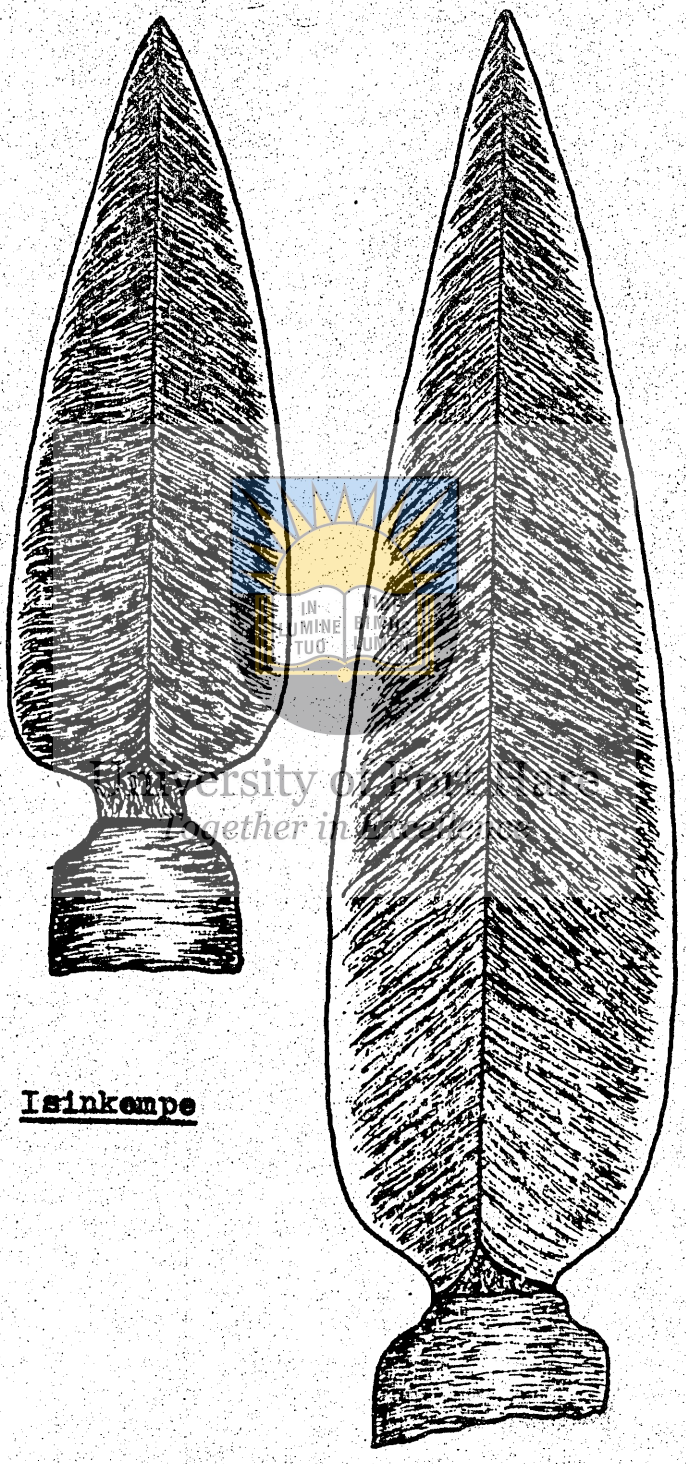
Irwantsa

Intshuntshe

Irwana

Izaka

TYPES OF ASSEGAI HEADS.



Isinkempe

Ijozi

Ingcola

CHAPTER VIII.

XHOSA COSMETIC PRACTICES.

References to early Xhosa cosmetic practices exist in the writings of early travellers and missionaries, although they are very fragmentary and often biased. Consequently we have descriptions in these early sources on Xhosa cosmetic practices dealing inter alia with initiation, weddings, as indications of status, etc. In general these practices have been recorded by early writers as either neutral customs or as symbols with religious significance. In many cases they are seen as heathen practices, mainly because they were never cited in the proper social and cultural context. Early references to cosmetic practices will be treated under the headings Initiation, Weddings, Status Symbols and Occupations.

Initiation :

One of the earliest references to cosmetics in the form of body paint is found in von Winkelmann [190] referring to circumcision.

> The chief performs circumcision, ties the wound with 'sea-onion', paints the initiands in white after two days and makes leaf aprons for them.

Steedman [191] has the following statement on initiation :-

> We noticed on our route a number of boys confined within a circular enclosure, whose bodies were daubed over with white clay, and on inquiring the cause of their singular appearance, we learned they were the 'amaquati' or newly circumcised .....

190) In Godée Molsbergen, E.C.: op. cit., pp.314-315.
191) Steedman, A.: op. cit., pp. 54 and 55.

The next reference to painted initiands is found in Moodie [192] :-

> At one kraal (at Amatola Basin) a number of youths were confined in a small enclosure surrounding a hut (lodge) and kept separate from the rest of the people until they were admitted to be men. They were hideously painted with clay all over the body.

Moodie [193] continues to say :-

> At the banks of a branch of the Keiskama there was a Kaffre kraal, where the people were performing a ceremony of admitting a number of youths into the society of men. The appearance of the youths was grotesque and hideous. Their faces and bodies were bedaubed all over with white and red clay; and they had huge bundles of rushes .....

Thomas Baines [194] describes Thembu youth as follows :-

> We were met by the whole company, six to eight in number, and from twelve to sixteen years, dressed in karosses of whitened sheepskin, their eyebrows marked with charcoal, their eyes apparently unnaturally large, and their lips almost red by contrast with the ghastly greyish ash colour imparted to their dark skins by the thick coating of white clay, ...

Kropf [195] claims that initiation was introduced in 1739 when the Xhosa were in the Zuurberg. He reports that the body is painted white so that an ugly person becomes handsome. The initiates then race to the river to wash off the white paint. They return running and a chief of second rank or councillor of first rank takes a

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192) Moodie, J.W.D.: Ten Years in South Africa, Vol. II, p. 265.

193) Ibid., p. 275.

194) Baines, Thomas: op. cit., pp. 65 and 66.

195) Kropf, A.: op. cit., pp. 124 - 130.

bucket of thin fat, dips his hand thrice and smears the youths on the face with the first handful, on the right arm with the second handful and on the left arm with the third handful. The initiates then rub the whole body themselves. Each youth then receives a stick rubbed in fat.

The practice one generation ago is described as follows by Soga [196] :-

> Immediately after the surgical operation the boys are smeared with clay. The clay or mud is the ordinary kind, soil mixed with water ..... After the circumcision wounds have healed the mud is washed off and clay (white) substituted.

Present day practice is summarised thus by Pauw [197] : "They observed the smearing of their bodies with white clay".

Weddings :

Compared with reports on body painting during initiation, the references for other ceremonies are few. Painting of the bride is reported by Lichtenstein [198].

> The bride, after being ornamented by her companions, in particular having been new dyed, is led by two of them before the chief who, with his train, has taken his place in the general cattle-fold belonging to the kraal.

Steedman [199] describes a marriage as follows :-

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196) Soga, J.H.: op. cit., p. 255.
197) Pauw, B.A.: The Second Generation, p. 93.
198) Lichtenstein, H.: op. cit., p. 269.
199) Steedman, A.: op. cit., p. 242.

> The men whom I saw assembled at the marriage ..... were for the most part smeared with red ochre, that gave them a wild and ferocious appearance ..... Their short woolly hair was rolled up into small round knobs.

Baines [200] also refers to the use of cosmetics at wedding ceremonies. The bride is :

> Supported on either side by a young companion, like herself annointed with red clay and dressed only in the light yellow skin of an oribi .....

Soga [201] confirms the use of cosmetics at weddings :-

> The party (bridal) is decked out in their best garments, in addition to which the female members carry a supply of cosmetics, powdered ochre for facial and bodily decoration, fowl's fat rendered and clarified for rubbing over the body after washing.

Since it is reported that old women, for instance Suthu, Sandile's mother, hoped for remarriage with their deceased husbands, this may also be classified with wedding celebrations. Chalmers [202] has the following description of painting at the height of the Cattle Killing Episode of the Xhosa in 1856 :-

> At the dawning of the great day, a nation, many of whom had doubtless not slept, rose joyfully, decked themselves with paint, chains, and rings innumerable to welcome their long lost friends. One of the saddest sights was that of old women, wizened by age and doubly wrinkled by hunger, decked with the brass rings jingling on their withered arms and legs.

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200) Baines, Thomas : op. cit., p. 37.
201) Soga, J.H. : op. cit., pp. 230-231.
202) Chalmers, J.A. : Tiyo Soga, p. 114.

Status symbols and occupations :

Painting the body is also part of the preparation for occupational activities. A few references to the use of ochre by warriors exist. Steedman [203] describes a war dance as follows :-

> Let the reader picture to himself a hundred or more unclad Africans, besmeared and disfigured with copious defilements of red clay, and assuming with frantic gestures all the characteristic vehemence of a furious engagement.

Metrowich [204] also refers to warriors being painted for battle :-

> Similarly the Xhosa braves covered themselves with their red clay before engaging the foe in mortal combat.

Chiefs are sometimes described as painted or unpainted. Martin, [205] quoting Dr. van der Kemp, describes Chief Ngqika with cheeks and lips painted red. Cory [206] has this description in c.a. 1820 of Buku, Hintsa's brother and chief councillor on a diplomatic mission :

> His figure was tall and elegant, but as well as his face, was rendered more like that of a Hottentot than a Kaffir by being all over smeared with red ochre.

Hintsa himself is described as being without paint when seen on the following day. Steedman [207] describes Queen Tota

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203) Steedman, A.: op. cit., p. 6.

204) Metrowich, F.C. : Assegai Over the Hills, p. 148.

205) Martin, A.D.: Doctor van der Kemp, p. 84.

206) Cory, G.: The Rise of South Africa, Vol. 1., p. 183.

207) Steedman, A.: op. cit., p. 71.

wife of Chief Ngqika (Gaika) as being "smeared all over with red clay and grease".

Lichtenstein [208] is one of the first writers to refer to the paint pattern of a female diviner : "Her eyelid, her arm, and thigh, on the left side whitened, but the right dyed black". Steedman [209] also describes a female diviner :-

> She had tied two or three handkerchiefs round the waist; her face had been coloured on one side with white clay, and the other had been made quite black with charcoal, her body was smeared with grease and red ochre.

The main source of these ochres is the clays found in various parts of the Eastern Cape. Barrow [210] refers to an abundance of such sites :-

> There is scarcely a mountain in Africa that does not produce iron ores; and ochres are everywhere found in the greatest abundance. The finest of these are met with in the state of impalpable powder inclosed in crustaceous coverings of a reddish colour of the hardness and consistence of baked earthenware, ... In these stones every shade of colour is said to have been found, except the greens, but the most common are those of a pale yellow and chocolate brown. The country people know them by the name of paint stones, because the powders they contain, when mixed up with oil, make very good paint, without any sifting or further preparation.

Steedman [211] informs us that the Xhosa worked these clay sites at the Clay Pits, near Grahamstown :-

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208) Lichtenstein, H.: op. cit., p. 316.

209) Steedman, A.: loc. cit.

210) Barrow, J.: op. cit., pp. 227-228.

211) Steedman, A.: op. cit., p. 5-10.

> This peculiar clay is found in the vicinity of the Fish River, and it is surprising how distant a journey these people will undertake to procure it, so essential is it considered in completing the adornment of their persons.

Hockley [212] gives an account of the importance attached by the Xhosa to the Clay Pits when they were apportioned to the 1820 Settlers.

> The clay-pits, situated near the lands allotted to T. Mahoney's party, from which in the past the natives had obtained supplies of red clay much prized by them for ornamental as well as other more utilitarian purposes, proved a great attraction to the wandering bands. In January 1821, nearly three thousand natives, men and women, appeared at the clay-pits much to the consternation of the members of T. Mahoney's party and their neighbours, but a conflict was averted on its being discovered that Col. Willshire, in command of Fort Willshire, had given the visitors permission to carry away clay from the pits.

On realising the value of the clay to the Xhosa, the British Colonial Government allowed the Xhosa "to remove clay in exchange for cattle, ivory and hides" [213] from the Clay Pits. The pits provided clay which was much in demand by the Xhosa who used it to decorate their bodies. As Metrowich [214] confirms,

> the quality of the clay obtainable at the clay pits in the Coombs Valley was considered by the Bantu connoisseur to be far superior in quality to that procurable anywhere else in Kaffirland.

These early references to cosmetics are summarised in the following paragraphs. With reference to initiation the white paint of the initiands has been traditional practice since the eighteenth century, and the practice is not

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212) Hockley, H.E.: The Story of the British Settlers of 1820 in South Africa, pp. 70-79.

213) Hockley, H.E.: op. cit., p. 76.

restricted to the Xhosa, but is also known to the Thembu and Fingo. The attendants and teachers of the youth were by contrast painted red. The white paint of the initiands is a second stage; immediately after the operation and until the wound has healed the youths are painted with mud. The white paint could be modified with black, blue and red dots. At the conclusion of the isolation the white paint is ritually washed off and replaced by annointing with fat.

At the wedding transition rite the bride signifies the change in her status by fresh paint, carefully applied. The celebrating company likewise painted themselves afresh with red ochre. A double purpose is assumed to be involved in this; namely, body decoration and protection against the sun.

Painting of the body is also part of the preparation for occupational activities, for instance, diviners. Heathenish implications ascribed to painting of the body were due to associations with the transition rituals and divining practices. The Clay Pits were a constant cause of friction between the Colonists and the Xhosa, and we see in this the value laid on the ochre by the Xhosa.

A description of Xhosa cosmetic practices presented the author with great difficulties as to the use of tenses. Some of these practices existed in the past but are no longer used, others exist today, either in the original or modified form. The tenses used in the text must be read in this light.

The predominant type of cosmetic among the Xhosa is the red ochre called imbhola. This term is sometimes used to denote any form of body painting even if it is not red, so that it would be best to qualify the term imbhola whenever it

is used. The red ochre, imbhola ebomvu, is mainly used by females. Xhosa women state emphatically that their red ochre has no smell at all and that the reason for this is that they do not use it in conjunction with fat, dismissing the latter with some contempt as a Fingo practice.

Red ochre is applied on all parts of the body except on the hair of the head. We shall later distinguish between various kinds of ochre, and state the preferences for and attachment to the various kinds. The body is washed and ochred afresh after every three or four days. Men only use red ochre on wedding ceremonies and at the first stage of manhood, ubukrwala. Today the red ochre is bought from the trader whereas formerly it used to be dug from the ochre pits situated in various parts of the Eastern Cape especially near Grahamstown.

Traditional Xhosa women attach great importance to the red ochre, hence it earned them the name "Reds". Formerly ordinary clay was used on the body for washing instead of soap. Mud was also used to dress the hair by plastering it in order to remove oil and grease and the natural kink of the hair.

The use of cosmetics is largely determined by the age factor. The various stages of development, usually marked by ritual practices and rites, are accompanied by the use of special kinds of cosmetics characteristic to their sex. Newly born babies, regardless of sex, are painted white. A certain kind of stone called ingxwala, also called imbhola emhlophe, is used. Several other ingredients are used in conjunction with ingxwala for hygienic or medical purposes. One such ingredient is the umthombothi tree, sandalwood, which has an aromatic flavour peculiar to it. The shell of

a snail, inkumba, is also used in conjunction with sandalwood and white ochre. The ochre and the sandalwood are rubbed on a flat stone in a bit of water; this is called ukulola. The snail shell is crushed and ground into a fine powder which is then mixed with the other ingredients into a smooth lotion. The lotion thus prepared is applied to the baby's body except for the head.

The application of the white ochre is ritual in function although none of our informants could clearly express this. The tendency is to associate it with the medicinal effect claimed for the sandalwood and the snail shell. These latter are included to remove the rash on a baby's body after birth. The rash is called ishimnca. Some informants contend that in addition the lotion helps to remove the hair that covers a baby's body at birth.

After the birth of the baby, the mother is traditionally confined for at least ten days in the hut in which she gave birth. This period is called ukufukama which can be rendered as "brooding" in English. It is during this period, especially, that it is insisted that the mother paints her face, arms, and breasts with white paint. Informants all agree that a lying-in mother, umdlezana, must paint herself thus. The probability is that it gives the umdlezana a smoother skin and a fairer complexion, intlahla, which is always admired when the mother comes out of her ten day confinement. The white ochre in the case of the mother may be mixed with sandalwood, but never with the snail shell.

The white ochre is not used immediately after birth but after about five days when the umbilical cord shows signs of healing. The first cosmetic used after birth is a

lotion made from the bark of umchani, a tree growing near water. The lotion is applied to the whole body.

Mother and child continue the use of white ochre throughout the suckling period, with less regularity as the child grows older. There are no elaborate cosmetics for children from the time they are weaned to adolescence. The only exception is the use of unsalted fat stored in a calabash, ihlala, for the purpose of smearing the children and members of the family. This is done especially in winter with the belief that the children will to some extent be protected from the cold.

The next important stage which entails elaborate use of cosmetics is that of initiation for both sexes. On attaining physical maturity, a girl is secluded in a separate hut and is concealed from the general public. This seclusion and the rites that accompany it marks the transition of the girl to a marriageable status. The public aspect of the seclusion is the dance, umngqungqo, which is performed by women and girls. The initiand does not take part. The dancers are all painted with red ochre, imbhola ebomvu, and decorated with dotted circular patterns of white, blue and black on the cheeks and forehead. This decoration is called ukuchokoza. Sometimes the ear is painted white and a white strip is made from ear to ear via the chin. The lips are often painted black with goo from a pipe or with potblack. Nowadays black boot polish is also used.

Boys also undergo rites of passage. When they are circumcised they paint their bodies with various cosmetics. Immediately after circumcision, the boys are smeared with mud or ash. After a few days they are painted white with a clay called ifutha or ingceke. This white paint differs from the one used on babies. The raw materials

from which these two cosmetics are derived differ. The ingxwala used on babies is a stone obtained from quarries, whereas the ifutha is a soft clay dug in ravines. The abakhwetha paint the whole body white except the hair on the head. They always have to wear fresh paint and they often have to go on long journeys in order to procure the ifutha. When out hunting or visiting other lodges, the abakhwetha provide themselves with powdered ifutha in a small bag, or string marble sized balls of ifutha round the neck. These are used to powder white, at least the face, when the paint has come off.

At the end of their seclusion in the veld, the initiands are chased to the river where they ritually wash off the white paint. When they return to the lodge, they are annointed with fat, sometimes butter which in both cases has to be free of salt.

After the annointment and ritual burning of the lodge, the initiands are aggregated into the society to which they belong. They are new members of the society. To mark this they are painted with red ochre, imbhola ebomvu, after the ukuyala ceremony. Only the face is painted red. They are now called amakrwala. The use of the red ochre for the ubukrwala stage is especially adhered to by the non-school and pagan Xhosa, ordinarily known as amaqaba, "people who smear". The school-going and Christian sections of the Xhosa use isibindi instead of red ochre. This is a liver coloured fungus growing on decaying trees. The stigma attached to the use of red ochre as a symbol of paganism has resulted from this.

As regards the treatment of hair during these stages of development fat seems to predominate. The boys' hair is shaved before the circumcision and again at the end of the period.

Another practice commonly observed among Xhosa adolescents was tattooing of the body. Adolescence was considered the correct stage for this practice. It was a painful practice which was referred to as a decorative measure, isihombo. All those who evade tattooing were despised and were referred to as having "bag stomachs" - batyela ezingxoweni.

Ubushwa (Venidium arctotoides Less.) a small plant with yellow flowers used for wounds and sores, and ubuhlungu (Teucrium africanum Thunb.) were used for tattooing; the juice of the two plants was applied to the tattoo wounds. Sometimes a mixture of red ochre and fat was used to heal the scars. This practice was known as ukuvamba and the scars imivambo. Tattooing is now in disuse.

The pattern of the tattoo marks differed according to sex. The pattern for girls was scars from the navel up to the chest between the breasts and across the whole chest. From the navel there were two lines of scars running either side above the hips. Another line from below the breasts would join the bottom line forming a sort of a triangle. Also on the back, on either side of the spine scars were made.

In the case of boys the chest was not tattooed at all. A practice that resembles tattooing, known as ukugaphula, cannot be referred to as a survival of tattooing since its purpose is not decoration but the insertion of medical substances into the blood stream with the aim of "strengthening" the person.

The bride on the first day of the umdudo ceremony has her body painted red. The face is not painted. The ears are painted white and the cheeks decorated with white

and blue dots. The groom paints his whole body red and his ears white and wears white and blue dots on the cheeks. In the early stages of married life, the wife daily uses red ochre on her face, shoulders, arms and legs. The regularity of this process is relaxed with the advancing of married life. If marriage is initiated by the abduction method, ukuthwala, the woman is regularly supplied with red ochre while she is still kept indoors.

Xhosa women are conscious of the fact that the red ochre they use is a means of preserving and improving their complexion. Various cosmetic devices are used against the sun. A type of fungus that grows on tree trunks called isibindi, differing in colour according to the species of the tree, is ground in water and applied to the face early in the morning. The Xhosa distinguish between this cosmetic and another type of isibindi, a kind of antheap, by referring to the former as isibindi somthi and to the latter as isibindi somhlaba. The antheap cosmetic is also ground into a fine powder and applied to the face against the heat of the sun. Ordinary yellow ochre, umthoba, is used for the same purpose as are the leaves of the umthole tree (Acacia caffra).

Against skin impurities and pimples, the bark of the isindiyandiya tree (Bersama lucens Szysz) is used. Chapped lips are treated with a mixture of umsizi, pot black, and fat. The ointment is also used as a decorative cosmetic by both married and unmarried women on festive occasions. Where fat is applied to the skin it has an important magical significance. Its preparation is important in that no salt is added and in some cases its smell is improved by boiling the fat with a plant that grows along streams and which smells very much like eucalyptus.

Young men and women chew wild mint, ityeleba and inxina to sweeten the breath.

As can be seen, almost all the cosmetics used are derived from natural sources. These range from various kinds of stones and clays to plants and animal products. The mixing of them and their preparation show some rudiments of scientific and empirical calculations. If, for example, we analyse the concoction applied to babies we find that it consists of no less than three distinct substances - ingxwala, umthombothi and inkumba. The first is a kind of stone, the second a tree stem and the last one an animal, that is, all the realms of nature are represented (soils, plants, animals). This combination is aimed at removing the stigma of birth by symbolically introducing the child to its environment. The umthombothi also serves as a deodorant hence the mother uses only two of the ingredients for her personal lotion, excluding the inkumba.

The use of fat as a protective measure against the corrosive effect of ochre or paint does not seem to have been favoured. It has more often than not been dismissed as a Fingo practice which causes smell. This point of view has been supported by some Fingo informants who find the rancid smell attractive.

The preparation of these cosmetics necessitates certain special utensils. Hence it is possible to detect that a woman is still capable of bearing children when she owns a small flat stone on which the lotion is made. The normal practice is to have separate flat stones for the preparation of the various lotions.

The use of the various cosmetics has now been greatly influenced and modified by changing conditions. The general trend of cultural evolution often leads to the

acceptance of European cosmetics in preference to traditional ones. The national colour of red ochre is now regarded as a sign of conservatism often frowned upon. The change in dress patterns has also had a bearing on the switch over from traditional Xhosa cosmetic practices towards European ones. The change over from traditional costume to European dress is in most cases accompanied by a lapse in the use of the old cosmetics in favour of European cosmetics.

The change is not a complete one. At first only certain elements of European cosmetics were introduced and the advance in that direction was influenced by various factors. In this regard the distinction between "Red people" and the "School people" arose partly on the basis of the type of cosmetic used.

The red ochre in this transitional stage has changed its significance. It is no longer regarded as a type of cosmetic for general use but it assumes specially defined roles. Substitutes are thus found. Degrees of acculturation also determine what cosmetics are used. Hand in hand with this we find the economy factor which makes some people cling to the cheapest European cosmetics they can afford.

The first sign of deviating from the use of traditional cosmetics is usually abstention from the use of red ochre for general and everyday application. In most cases the red ochre is substituted by vaseline, the ochre being used only after the coming-out ceremony of the abakhwetha. There is a marked tendency among "Red people" to have children born at home. When this is the case, the traditional Xhosa cosmetics are used on the baby, but when the child is born at a hospital, double standards in this regard are followed. Some traditional medicinal practices,

for example, the treatment of the umbilical cord, are rendered redundant by the medical treatment in hospital. On returning home, traditional cosmetic practices are resumed; the baby is smeared with the usual concoction and the mother paints herself white.

To a very large extent girls' puberty rites have fallen into disuse. It is suggested that they have been substituted by the practice of secluding the bride-to-be a week or two before the wedding ceremony. The girl takes great pains at improving her complexion during this period in order that she can show off at her best on the wedding day. The materials used for cosmetic purposes are sugar, milk, eggs, and a yellow type of floor polish. The sugar is partially dissolved in water or milk and applied to the face; the eggs are beaten up and applied in paste form on the face; the yellow floor polish is used as it is. On the wedding day, the bride is usually well varnished and powdered with European cosmetics. The public is usually critical of her appearance and hence all the care taken.

Depending on the stage of acculturation reached, men also use European cosmetics, vaseline predominantly in the lower levels of acculturation, and soap and complexion creams and lotions of varying qualities in the higher levels.

The treatment of hair by both sexes does not seem to have been given any pronounced attention. In the past the hair was combed and well dressed and curled with clay. With the transition to European cosmetics women have adopted the use of various hair tonics with the desire to have longer hair which would lend itself to easy dressing, especially plaiting. Various patterns of plaiting the hair were evolved, the most common of which were the herring bone and the banana. The attributes of good hair were in the

length of the hair, and the number of plaits, the fewer the better. This very much affected the doek-wearing practice of Xhosa women, since for the hair to be appreciated, it must be uncovered. The plaits are called amafrero or amaplato from the Afrikaans "vleg" and from the English "plait" respectively.

Plaiting is still in vogue, but it is gradually being pushed into the background by the recent rage, straightening of the hair called ukustretsha, to stretch. A lubricant, normally vaseline, liquid paraffin or cooking oil is applied profusely to the hair. A heated metal comb designed specifically for the purpose is then run through the hair leaving it straight. According to personal taste, the hair in this form may either be plaited or nicely done up without plaiting. Expensive artificial wigs are also superceding older practice; they are ready to hand, and much time is saved in preparing the hair for a special occasion.

The trend in the use of cosmetics by Xhosa, and especially by the women, is distinctly European. Cosmetic firms in the Republic of South Africa are hiring and training African personnel to act as make-up and beauty treatment consultants. Ochre and a very large range of the indigenous cosmetics have been relegated to purely ritual or ceremonial use.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION.

An investigation of the arts and crafts of the Xhosa in the Ciskei, past and present, shows that they were crafts of everyday life producing sufficient items to fulfil adequately their utilitarian functions. The products of these crafts were shaped by hand directly from the environment, and they were often of limited durability, often needing frequent replacement. In addition, the tools available to the indigenous craftsman were not sufficiently varied or complex to permit of a high standard of specialisation and high quality work. As a result of this Xhosa society was not divided into economic classes, an essential condition to incentive and competition and, therefore, to higher standards and production rates than demanded by tradition. In other words, the crafts were stabilised by tradition.

This stabilisation was not a result of inherent inability to change. It is suggested that the stabilisation was largely, in addition, a result of the frequent tribal wars with an interval of about ten years between each war, the catastrophic Cattle Killing Episode of the Xhosa in 1856/7 which destroyed the basic economic pattern of the people and the advent of Europeans with their superior material equipment and advanced technology. Thus the Xhosa, since their arrival in the Ciskei, never really had the opportunity to settle to a quiet and peaceful life which is one of the essentials for the advancement of a material culture.

The range of the craft products was not wide and very little was obtained through trade from neighbouring tribes,

since these possessed a similar material culture and technological achievement. It should be borne in mind that production was by hand, and the producer was often the owner of the raw material and the tools. He worked for a definite area on piecemeal orders and very seldom on long term contract. In most cases the finished product was handed over directly to the consumer. Very few craftsmen could thus make a living solely from their crafts with the result that real professional craftsmen were largely absent. Exchange for products of other crafts occurred only after local family needs were satisfied. It must here be emphasised that economically craftwork was secondary to the Xhosa whose primary economic pursuit was cattle raising. However, metal - expecially iron - was a valuable commodity used in the manufacture of weapons. Thus it is on record that a fair amount of trade was carried on between the Xhosa and the Thembu for iron ore and copper beads.

The trade practices of the Xhosa were redirected when they converged with the European Colonists between the Gamtoos and Kei rivers in 1702. Initially the Xhosa showed preference for European wares such as beads and copper rings which they obtained in exchange for ivory, hides, skins and gum. Barter between them and the Colonists was at first regarded as illegal by the Colonial Government, but because the practice was inevitable, bartering was legalised by the institution of trade fairs in 1817, 1821 and 1824. The sale of fire-arms, ammunition and liquor was prohibited at these fairs.

The fairs were, inter alia, designed to cultivate civilised habits among the Xhosa. This is a clear instance of directed cultural change. The transformation to civilised habits through these fairs was regarded as having been sufficiently accomplished by 1830, and licensed

itinerant traders were allowed into Xhosa territory to clinch the transformation. The fairs and the itinerant traders did not stimulate Xhosa arts and crafts to higher production since the Europeans received only raw, unprocessed material from the Xhosa. In many cases the raw materials exchanged were basic to the crafts of the Xhosa, a fact which further impeded advancement of the crafts concerned.

The civilised needs of the Xhosa later shifted from beads and trinkets to a desire for agricultural implements, domestic utensils and clothing of European manufacture. In doing so, the Xhosa unwittingly sanctioned the deterioration of their own crafts which satisfied their simple needs. Some of these crafts disappeared completely. In conclusion it may be said that the Colonial Governments, the Missions and European economic practices are the three most important factors responsible for the rapid change in Xhosa material culture. Economic practices in the form of European merchandise, trade fairs and traders are the most conspicuous and perhaps the most far-reaching of the three.

The whole task of feeding the family, from hoeing and sowing in the fields to the grinding of corn, is the labour province of women among the Xhosa, including the cooking of food and the brewing of beer. The manufacture of utensils used for the preparation of food, especially that of clay utensils and baskets, was and still is the craft of women.

Xhosa pottery was variously interpreted by early writers who in many cases saw only the finished product. Much attention was given to the preparation of the clay, but the receptacles made could hardly have had an aesthetic appeal to the outsider who was used to fine and elegant porcelain from China and elsewhere. The purpose of

Xhosa pottery was to serve practical needs, and whatever aesthetic satisfaction was derived from their manufacture, was probably limited only to the craftswoman.

Various types of vessels were made, the shape and size of each determined by the use to which it would be put. However, they were all characterised by the absence of a "foot", the base being always round. They had no knowledge of the potter's wheel. The pots were entirely shaped by hand, the main method of construction being the coil technique. Sea shells, bone and wooden implements of the simplest kind were used as modelling tools. Simple devices were employed to pivot the pot during construction. Potsherds, mats and flat stones were used for this purpose. At times, linear decorations were incised on the outside of the pots.

The craft was hemmed in by taboos which have persisted to the present day. As a result of this, very little change in technique has occurred in the craft. Traditionally a hide or a mat was used to cover the prepared clay to stop it from drying quickly before the construction of the pot. Today sacking is used for the same purpose. It may well be that the scarcity of hides and skins which are sold to shops when available has partly occasioned this change. Whatever the reasons, the change was an improvement in that it allowed equal evaporation as compared with the hide, thus maintaining to some degree the same consistency in the clay. An interesting innovation is the use of greased brown paper as a lining inside an enamel dish. Fat or grease was never used in conjunction with pottery. The smoothness of the enamel dish enables it to swivel more evenly than when a potsherd, mat or stone is used in turning the pot during construction. Further, the contoured shape of the bottom of the dish allows for a better base for the finished clay pot, which

would consequently rest more steadily on the ground. The enamel dish thus served as a "potter's wheel", and the greased paper lining prevented the clay from sticking to the bottom of the dish when it is to be removed. The use of black and brown boot polish for burnishing the outside of the pot is an innovation which is especially used on ornamental earthenware for sale as curios. However, the making of clay pots as an item for the curio trade has never been developed extensively. Such curio trade is thus not an important incentive in the pottery craft. This applies also to most other crafts. It is really crafts introduced by European incentive, for example, mohair weaving, that are important in this respect. These new crafts, with their advanced tools and techniques were, however, not traditionally practised.

An alternative method of making clay pots non-porous was the boiling of meat in them. This practice has been transferred to the three-legged iron pot for the purpose of removing "rust" from a new pot. In both cases slaughtering was necessary, but it is not clear whether in the case of clay pots the slaughtering was a ritual one.

Pottery as a craft has virtually disappeared among the Xhosa, Schönland [215] succinctly sums up the reasons as follows :

> Unfortunately, whenever the natives come into very close contact with the white man their arts and industries disappear to a very large extent. It does not pay even a Kaffir to make a water-tight basket (or clay pot) when he can use an old biscuit tin for the same purpose.

The biscuit tin appeared later on the scene, having

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215) Schönland, Dr. S.: op. cit., p. 131.

been preceded by wooden casks, iifatyi. Every household one enters today has European domestic utensils, and no evidence has been found in the field regarding the relegation of the clay pot to ritual use.

To a lesser degree basket work has suffered a similar fate as pottery. Of the many baskets made for various purposes, the small grain basket, ingobozi, the sleeping mat, ukhuko, and the food or meal mat, isithebe, are still functional in traditionally orientated households. The techniques of construction have remained the same, except that ordinary twine is used in making the sleeping mats.

The demand for these items is declining because they are being displaced by beds and mattresses for sleeping mats, plates and dishes for food and meal mats and bags and dishes for the small grain basket. They are, however, still being made to supply the shrinking traditional market where they are used as presents at weddings. Generally speaking, Xhosa craft products are not only utilitarian but also symbolic in value. Sleeping mats symbolise marriage, hence they form part of the presents at weddings. However, in Church and Civil marriages sleeping mats do not feature, and the question is how much longer they will remain an important item in Xhosa culture ? It is assumed that with the advance of acculturation among the Xhosa to include even the so-called Red People, the link of sleeping mats with Xhosa culture will ultimately disappear. The sleeping mats are also used in connection with funerals for screening the corpse during the traditional "waiting" before the burial. Bed sheets and mortuaries are displacing the sleeping mat in its traditional use. European interest in these items as private collection material also provides their manufacture with an outlet from the craftswoman.

The art of making cloth was unknown to the Xhosa. They used hides and skins to make their garments, and again this was largely the task of the women. The preparation of the hides was a task divided between the men and the women, and the standard of work attained was such that it attracted the attention and praise of early authors. The serrated edges of the aloe leaf were used to scrape the inside of the hide to a furry texture worn next to the body. The cattle complex of the Xhosa manifested itself strongly in their leathercraft. The hides are themselves a by-product of cattle raising. The use of cowdung and sour milk in the tanning process and the use of sinew for sewing can hardly be passed by as evidence of this cattle complex. The cloaks were dyed red or black.

Great decorative taste, especially in the skin garments of the women, was shown. They were profusely ornamented with beads, shells, pieces of polished metal and buttons. With the exception of the shells, all the decorations were foreign elements which fused with traditional ones as far back as the early contact days. Beads and buttons have been retained as decoration media as well as black braiding for womens' garments up to the present day.

The manufacture of skin garments has virtually disappeared among the Xhosa, yielding place to garments of European manufacture. Of the two sexes, the men were first to discard their traditional apparel for European blankets, shirts and trousers. They made no attempt to give the adopted garments a traditional touch. This would have been difficult because they had nothing comparable to the shirt or trousers. The manufacturers made the blankets of a scarlet colour which resembled the traditional red ochre used by the Xhosa. In the course of time the men discarded the scarlet blanket in preference to jackets,

shirts and trousers, especially in cases where they came under the influence of missionaries, or when they went out to work for farmers, traders and later in urban centres where they had to present a "civilised" front to be acceptable for employment. The fact that Xhosa men had to present a "civilised front" when seeking employment in European areas and European establishments, was one of the most important factors and directives in changing the dressing patterns of men.

The women have shown a different tendency. Those of them who were not converted to Christianity, adapted materials of European manufacture to comply with traditional patterns. The material from the manufacturer comes in an off white colour. In order to bring it to conformity with tradition, the material is "dipped" in an infusion of red ochre. Excepting for the material used, there has been no drastic departure from the traditional patterns. The modern traditional costume thus still consists of the skirt, bodice, shoulder wrap and headdress decorated with beads, buttons and black braiding. Skin dresses where they occur, have been relegated to ritual use only.

The disappearance and reformulation of Xhosa traditional costumes is intimately associated with the efforts of missionaries to convert the Xhosa to Christianity. Missionaries enforced the adoption of European clothes by their converts as a symbol of their conversion, while the traditional garments and red ochre were disdained as marks of paganism.

The civilising policy of the Colonial Governments was another factor which actively contributed to the disappearance and reformulation of Xhosa traditional costume. They aimed at cultivating civilised tastes among the Xhosa whose

dress forms were looked upon as inadequate for purposes of decency. This led to a well planned policy of induced change. Act 24, Section 125, of 1886, reads[216]

> Whoever indecently exposes his person or appears in any street or public thoroughfare without such articles of clothing as decency requires shall be punished with a fine not exceeding two pounds, ...

Before the institution of regular trade fairs between the Xhosa and the Colonists, Brownlee[217] states that no article of European manufacture was to be seen among the Xhosa save a few beads, brass wire and buttons. In 1824, the regulations controlling trade between the Xhosa and the Colonists at the fairs stipulated that in exchange for Xhosa articles, the Colonists should give cloth materials of any description, blankets, leather trousers and a limitation was put on beads and trinkets. By 1875 sixty thousand blankets which displaced traditional costumes were sold in King William's Town alone.[218]

The Cattle Killing Episode of 1856/7 hit Xhosa traditional costumes hardest. It struck at the primary source of raw material for the garment making craft, and led to a mass migration of the Xhosa to the Cape Colony in search of food, clothes, shelter and work.

Beadwork is a younger craft among the Bantu of the Republic of South Africa. The beads have been so adapted in Xhosa as well as other Bantu cultures, that beadwork is today universally accepted as a traditional craft.

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216) Statutes, Proclamations and Government Notices on Native Territories 1907, p. 112.

217) Brownlee, C.: op. cit., pp. 371-372.

218) Robertson, H.: op. cit., p. 424.

Before the introduction of beads, the Xhosa used what the environment could provide to make necklaces. From the nature of the material used, they were not able to evolve intricate patterns and designs as we see them in their modern beadwork.

Beads are strung by women, especially girls. It is an occupation which is intimately associated with the age groups, since it features prominently in regulating their love life. Beads are also of ritual importance, finding their best expression in this regard with diviners.

The ornamental beadwork passes from the woman to the man as a love token, but unlike among the Zulu and the Swazi, the beadwork exchanged has no coded messages, the interpretation of which is based on the colours used to be decoded. The entire bead ornament is the love token with traditionally blended colours for the specific age groups. A rich vocabulary, derived from nature, has been evolved in naming the bead colours. All the materials used in the craft are of European origin. The only exception is the occasional use of sinew for threading.

The making of pipes is a specialist craft - one of the few still practised by Xhosa men in the Ciskei. The wood used is Acacia caffra and a kind of Dracia, umnyamanzi. The craft is governed by a number of taboos.

There has been much fusion of traditional and European elements in Xhosa pipe making, especially in the techniques used. No change was effected on the borrowed tools, nor were they surrounded by ritual observance in adapting them to the craft. An interesting innovation is the making of bores from plain wire to resemble European bores. These are used for boring through the stem of

the pipe, thus replacing the old and arduous method of burning a hole through the stem. Technical originality is shown in the use of different sized pegs, izikhonkwane, as a gauge to measure the size of the bowl for a woman's or a man's pipe. Thus we see detailed attention being given to the use and function of the pipes to the extent that the inlay of tin in the bowl is so arranged as to provide for the side from which the pipe will be lit.

A new pipe resembling the European one has been evolved. It is called upexe and is also provided with a tin inlay. Significantly enough, this type of pipe is only used by men and not by women. Men on the whole seem to be more susceptible to culture change than women. Women often resist tenaciously in these matters. It is an observable fact that technical introductions from another culture tend to be confined to use by males only in Xhosa society. This has been the case with the introduction of the plough, the axe, to mention only a few.

Traditionally the pipe is of social and ritual significance, but with the break down of traditional social structure, and the gradual disappearance of customs which buttress it, the traditional Xhosa pipe will lose its symbolic significance.

Another specialist craft carried on by men was smith work in which they excelled, especially in the manufacture of assegais. No record exists of the Xhosa ever having mined iron ore, nor could it be proved that Tshawe was a culture innovator through having introduced the use of metal assegais among the Xhosa. All that can be deduced from tradition is that iron was introduced not later than the middle of the sixteenth century.

The smith was highly respected in traditional Xhosa

society since the spear was both an offensive weapon in war, and a ritual implement in circumcision, warding off lightning from a kraal and in weddings. Today the craft no longer exists, and a number of corollary crafts and skills have disappeared with it. These are the making of the double bellows, the manufacture of shields and the construction of a furnace for smelting or heating the iron. The culture loss may be ascribed to a number of factors.

(a) Since spear making was a specialist and esoteric craft, no smith would profane the mystery of his craft by allowing uninitiated eyes to inspect his various processes. By this very fact the craft could not expand into the proportions of an industry with a deliberate exploitation of raw materials, skill and labour for the expansion of the craft. The value of iron caused by its scarcity was an additional limiting factor to the craft's expansion. The products of the craft were thus exposed to easy competition by technologically advanced weapons.

(b) Xhosa-European contact in South Africa expressed itself in a struggle for control of the environment. The struggle involved the eight Kaffir Wars which proved to the Xhosa the superiority of the European gun which defied distance, doctored armies and the trusted hide shield. The envy of the Xhosa to possess a weapon of such quality was thus intensely excited. They acquired the guns through the prolific gun-trafficking which took place between them and the Colonists and traders who imported what was then known as "Kaffir Muskets". The Xhosa also acquired guns and ammunition by deliberately attacking military posts and as spoils of war. However, as more and more guns were acquired, the smith gradually lost his place of importance in society as there was less demand for his product.

(c) The logical consequence of the defeat of the Xhosa was

to prohibit them the manufacture and possession of arms by the Colonial Governments. This was the final death knell to the smith and his craft.

Assegais are still in use today as instruments of ritual, for instance, circumcision. Their manufacture for such purposes, therefore, must necessarily be secretly done as it is against the law.

Xhosa cosmetic practices have been observed and recorded in the past. A study of these records shows that to a large extent cosmetics were used for their religious and magical effectiveness traditionally. This is especially observable in transition rites.

Traditional cosmetics are still used in their ritual and social contexts, but the field has been invaded by a number of new usages. Eggs, sugar, floor polish and proper European cosmetics are used today for complexion and beauty purposes. This has led to an application of double standards in cosmetic usage by the same ethnic group. As a result, the various cosmetics used are identifiable with different levels of acculturation reached by the users, the broadest levels being the "Red People" and the "Church or School People". There has also been a change of values in connection with cosmetics. Beauty, light complexions and straight hair are some of the effects desired from the use of European cosmetics. Socially, this leads to a sharp cleavage between the generations.

Traditional Xhosa craftsmen never organised themselves into guilds. This meant that craftsmen practised their crafts as individuals and in relative isolation which led to a lack of consistency in the standard and quality of the craft products. The idea of subjecting their craft products to a uniform quality test was foreign

to them. It has been pointed out that very few craftsmen made a living solely from their crafts so that strictly speaking, the professional craftsman was largely absent.

In order to save traditional crafts from disappearing, which is in the process of happening, existing crafts could be revived, improved and modernised into home industries, the proceeds of which could supplement the incomes of the people concerned. The Zenzele Women's Club (a national women's movement in the Transkei and Ciskei) is an attempt in this direction, but they seem to put more emphasis on the self-sufficiency of the individual than on the crafts as such. Such an organisation should aim at establishing functional centres with definite quality tests to be passed by the products, as well as a market for them. Potential markets exist in the form of curio and gift shops (reference has been made to Enid's in King William's Town, a European gift shop selling curios from the Ciskei), fashion boutiques at home and abroad. South African Bantu beadwork is at the moment very fashionable overseas with various Fashion Houses, especially beaded collars, necklaces, cuffs, etc., which have been adapted from Bantu beadwork. There is also a tendency even among educated Bantu women to adapt beadwork etc. to European clothing. This is potentially a valuable market which should be exploited fully.

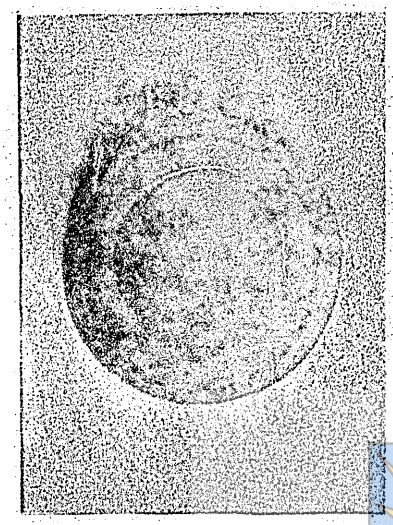
Museums could also have small curio shops attached to them, since many visitors to museums are keen collectors. Sleeping mats are increasingly used for decorative purposes in European homes as wall and floor coverings, and many collectors of beadwork use the mats as a display background for their beads. Crafts such as pottery, beadwork and pipe making could be brought up to modern standards and serve this keen market. Potentially there is, therefore, a

large market for these indigenous craft products.

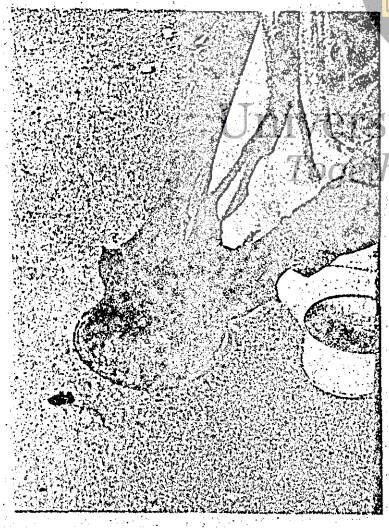
The Xhosa Development Corporation has launched a promising enterprise in the revival and modernisation of indigenous crafts. It has established a small handcraft centre at Butterworth in the Transkei, where it sells beads at a reasonable price to interested women in the district. From these the women make bead ornaments which they resell to the centre for eventual sale to curio shops and fashion boutiques in the Republic, America, England and Switzerland. The centre also receives hand carved pipes, walking sticks, assegais, basketware and sleeping mats. It would be a paying proposition to revive pottery as well along these lines with the help of modern techniques and glazing methods.

Bantu crafts have for a long time been regarded as unsuitable for further development. This is a completely wrong view. Many of the crafts can be modernised with modern techniques, etc. to become a valuable supplement to the national incomes of the Transkei and Ciskei. This has been done with great success in other parts of Africa, and there seems to be no reason why the same cannot be achieved here. In many respects the Bantu people have become too dependent on products of European origin instead of adapting and developing their own crafts and products. It is important that this attitude of inferiority towards their own craft products be counteracted, and that in the place of this sufficient incentive be supplied for the modernisation of indigenous crafts. Obviously crafts such as spear making belong to the past, but crafts such as pottery, beadwork, wood carving, matting, etc., could be utilised to the profit of the Bantu people. An example at hand of what could be done is the sale of Swazi floor mats which has become a major home industry in Swaziland, and which are exported to all parts of the world.

Miscellaneous.



Chief's Ivory Ring.



Clay pot making,
lump technique.

Clay pot making,
lump technique.

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