Passive Resistance to Western Capitalism in Rural South Africa:
From *Abantu Babomvu* to *AmaZiyoni* [1]

Jacques P. de Wet
University of Cape Town

Abstract

Western encroachment into the south-eastern region of South Africa, formerly known as the Transkei, gave rise in the latter half of the nineteenth century to two distinct social groupings among the isiXhosa-speaking people, namely *Abantu Babomvu*, or Red People, and *Abantu Basesikolweni*, or School People. The former were more prominent in the Transkei than the latter. The *Abantu Babomvu* resisted Western Christian "civilisation" and Western capitalism, while the *Abantu Basesikolweni* embraced these. The *Abantu Babomvu* continued to dominate the Transkei region during the first half of the twentieth century, and even in the 1960s almost half of the isiXhosa speaking people in this region continued to identify themselves as Red traditionalists; however by the end of the twentieth century the *Abantu Babomvu* were gone. With the decrease in, and then the eventual disappearance of the *Abantu Babomvu* in the Transkei, there has been a substantial increase in the *AmaZiyoni*, or membership of the Zionist-Apostolic churches, from those who were previously *Abantu Babomvu*. In this paper I argue that (1) the decline of the *Abantu Babomvu* and the concurrent rise of the *AmaZiyoni* is not a coincidence; (2) the *AmaZiyoni* have succeeded the *Abantu Babomvu* as the result of ongoing renegotiation of collective identity as a response to colonisation of self and changing socio-economic conditions which have been brought about by the capitalist transformation of the world; and (3) that like the *Abantu Babomvu*, the *AmaZiyoni* are also engaged in passive resistance to attempts by Western capitalism to "colonise the self".

Introduction

The political, economic and cultural history of the mainly rural south-eastern region of South Africa, formerly known as the Transkei, has over the past two centuries been shaped by Western capitalism. It saw rural society manipulated into the broader political economy of South Africa and the West.

Western encroachment into the Transkei gave rise in the latter half of the nineteenth century to two distinct social groupings among the *isi*Xhosa-speaking people, namely *Abantu Babomvu*, or Red People, and *Abantu Basesikolweni*, or School People (Mayer 1980: 1). The former were more prominent in the Transkei than the latter (Mayer 1980: 1-2). The *Abantu Babomvu* resisted Western Christian "civilisation" and Western capitalism while the *Abantu Basesikolweni* embraced these. The *Abantu Babomvu* continued to dominate the Transkei region during the first half of the twentieth century, even in the 1960s almost half of the *isi*Xhosa speaking people in this region continued to identify themselves as Red traditionalists (1960 Census). By the end of the twentieth century, however the *Abantu Babomvu* were gone. Paralleling the decrease and then the eventual disappearance of the *Abantu Babomvu* has been a substantial increase in the membership of the Zionist-Apostolic churches, the *AmaZiyoni*, drawn from those who were previously *Abantu Babomvu*.[2]

In this paper I argue that the decline of *Abantu Babomvu* and the concurrent rise of *AmaZiyoni* is not coincidence. It is my hypothesis that the *AmaZiyoni* have succeeded the *Abantu Babomvu* as the result of continuous (re)negotiation of collective identity and resistance to colonisation of self, prompted by changing socio-economic conditions derived from pressures arising from contact with Western capitalism. This paper demonstrates how, from what, by whom and for what the *Abantu Bambomvu* collective identity was constructed and subsequently re-negotiated as *AmaZiyoni*.

I argue that although political resistance to colonisation was suppressed by the colonialists, the *Abantu Babomvu* of the Transkei were able to resist Westernisation. Initially they preserved their traditional identity, social structures and belief systems because they could sustain their economic independence and cultural isolation, supported by the construction of a vigorous *Babomvu* or Red ideology. Subsequently, the economic and political foundations of the *Abantu Babomvu* were eroded. Ritual and social patterns were modified in response to these changes, but the changes were legitimated, contained and institutionalised initially within the established *Babomvu* ideology. Finally, with increased participation in the migrant labour system which took many to South Africa's Western industrialised cities; the consequent pressure to adopt new social identities aligned with Western Capitalism; and significant social change in rural Transkei the *Abantu Babomvu* converted to Zionism and became *AmaZiyoni*. Becoming *AmaZiyoni* did not mean capitulation and the assimilation of Western "civilisation". I argue that while the *Abantu Babomvu* were unable to sustain their political resistance to Western colonisation and economic independence from

the colonial capitalist economy, they were able to resist the colonisation of self and adopt new, more complex passive resistance strategies. The *AmaZiyoni* have assumed the struggle for control over the symbolic realm in cultural production from the *Abantu Babomvu* by continuing to seek the possibility to negotiate (at least some of) the conditions for individual and collective life.

Key Concepts

The analytical framework used in this paper is constructed with the help of a number of key concepts, namely collective identity, identity negotiation, socio-cultural experience, and colonisation of self. I mainly draw on Casey (1995), Castells (2004), Comaroff (1985), Habermas (1987) and Melucci (1995) to emphasise human agency in the negotiation of collective identity and collective action prompted by resistance to colonisation of self and changing socio-economic conditions derived from pressures originating from contact with Western capitalism.

Identity can be seen as an individual's concern with the question: "Who am I?" The answer to this question is both personal and social. Psycho-social identity is both a do-it yourself enterprise and a social activity involving a quest for a sense of belonging. At one level this is about "what I sense, "how I feel", and "what I think", which incorporates personal value priorities and goals as well as personality traits (Burgess 2002: 11). In this respect identities are sources of meaning for social actors themselves (Castells 2004: 7). Castells (2004: 7) defines meaning as the symbolic identification by a social actor of the purpose of her/his action thereby linking identity, meaning and human behaviour. At another level it is about belonging to and identifying with groups of people, "people like us", who are "different from people like them". "We all learn about various 'we's and 'they's in this world" (Burgess 2002: 12). "I" is commonly called individual identity, and "we" and "they" refer to social or collective identity.

In this paper I am influenced by the sociological literature on social movements which tends to use the term collective identity rather than social identity (see Castells 2004; Klandermans 1997; Melucci 1989; Taylor & Whittier 1992). "[T]he concept of collective identity involves shared representations of the group based on common interests and experiences, but it also refers to an active process of shaping and forging an image of what the group stands for and how it wishes to be viewed by others. ...Thus, collective identities represent an *achievement* of collective efforts, above and beyond what category members have in common to begin with" (Brewer, 2001: 120). The concept of collective identity therefore shows how social identity (at both individual and group levels) is linked to collective action.

Melucci (1995: 44-45) explores this link by adding to the definition of collective identity, for he sees it as a "process of constructing an action system" in relation to the environment with its opportunities and constraints; collective identity is the

outcome of a negotiated process of shared meanings given to common experiences by individuals or groups who make up a collective. By the processes of interaction, negotiation—and sometimes even conflict—over the definition of the situation experienced, and the social grouping's reference frame, members construct the collective "we".

Defining identity as a dynamic process contrasts with definitions of identity that associate it with a certain stability, continuity and permanence over time. Social actors *do* try to draw up boundaries between themselves and others and stabilise their sense of self (Meluchi 1995). And so do others who view them as different. While identity may appear to be stable it is always the outcome, at least to some extent, of an active process that is not immediately visible.

Such a process involves continual investments through negotiation and opposition to different orientations, which at the more institutionalised levels of social action may increasingly crystallize into organisational forms, systems of rules and leadership relationships (Meluchi 1995). This may appear stable until significant changes in the social environment alter the group's socio-cultural experience,[3] undermine the collective meanings and sense of self, and pressurise the social actors to re-negotiate identity.

Castells (2004: 7) points out that an individual or a collective actor has a plurality of identities derived from their different social roles. Each of these roles is "defined by norms structured by the institutions and organizations of society" (Castells 2004: 7). The extent to which these roles influence people's behaviour depends upon "negotiations and arrangements between individuals and these institutions and organizations" (Castells 2004: 7). This plurality is a source of contradiction and tension in self-representation and social action because the individual's roles make demands on him/her, which are not synchronised, and which are often incongruent. For example, traditional society demanded that *Abantu Babomvu* men play the roles of traditional rural villagers and heads of homesteads, which were more or less congruent. However these roles were contradicted by the men who were, at the same time, lowly migrant workers in industrial cities where men were treated as boys, women as girls and leaders as servants.

Castells (2004: 7) distinguishes three forms of identity-building strategies for negotiating identity, which are based on the premise that "the social construction of identity always takes place in a context marked by power relationships". These forms of identity strategies can be identified as firstly the legitimizing identity strategy, secondly the resistance identity strategy and lastly the project identity strategy.

The legitimizing identity strategy originates from dominant institutions of society which extend and rationalize their domination vis-à-vis social actors (Castells 2004: 7). Thus they become identities only when and if social actors internalise them, and construct who they are and their meaning around this internalization (Castells 2004). Resistance identities are often generated by those actors who are in positions/

conditions devalued and/or stigmatised by the logic of domination (Castells 2004: 7). Resistance strategies are based on principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the dominant institutions of society (Castells 2004). Project identity is applied when social actors build a new identity from whatever cultural materials are available in order to redefine their position in society and thereby seek structural transformation (Castells 2004).

The second type of identity-building, identity for resistance, is the focus of this paper. Castells (2004) describes resistance identity strategies as forms of collective resistance against an otherwise unbeatable oppression. These resistance strategies are forms of "exclusion of the excluders by the excluded" (Castells 2004: 7). By building a defensive identity they often invert the terms of oppressive discourse of dominant institutions/ideologies, thereby reversing the negative value judgement while reinforcing lines of resistance. Regarding the social construction of identity Castells notes that

> The real issue is how, from what, by whom, and for what. The construction of identities uses building materials from history, from geography, from biology, from productive and reproductive institutions, from collective memory and from personal fantasies, from power apparatuses and religious revelations. But individuals, social groups, and societies process all these materials, and rearrange their meaning, according to social determinations and cultural projects that are rooted in their social structure, and their space/time framework (2004: 7).

I am also influenced by Kruss's (1985) Marxist concerns with relationship between changes in mode of production and human consciousness. Much of Kruss's (1985) work shows how social consciousness corresponds with the social being – how the mode of production and the class forces in different stages in the history of capitalism in South Africa act to shape the religio-cultural forms (Kruss 1985: 150). This is apparent in the emergence, the changes and the decline of the *Abantu Babomvu* collective identity and renegotiation as *AmaZiyoni*. Kruss bases her analysis on Marx's notion that "[t]he mode of production of material life conditions the social, political, and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men [and women] that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness" (cited in Castells 2004: 68). However, Kruss's historical-materialist analysis with its emphasis on the mode of production leaves little room for human agency. Kruss's historical-materialist explanations neglect the cultural dimension and struggles in cultural production that have received attention by the radical humanist Comaroff (1985). Comaroff (1985: 1) examines one Tswana-speaking community in South Africa, the Tshidi, "as determined, yet

determining, in their own history; as human beings who, in their everyday production of goods and meanings, acquiesce yet protest, reproduce yet seek to transform their predicament". Furthermore, Comaroff (1985) claims that the phenomenal growth of Zionism among the Tshidi can be viewed as the emergence of an identity-seeking movement struggling for control over culture production in defiance of the Western hegemonic order.

Orrin Klapp (cited in Johnston 1995: 10) sees "identity seeking movements, such as religious and self-help groups" as attempts to reclaim a self which has been robbed of its identity. Klapp (cited in Johnston 1995: 10) argues that new social movements arise "in defence of identity" as individuals collectively claim the right to realise their own identity. Klapp (cited in Johnston 1995: 10) suggests that we use concepts developed in the analysis of new social movements to re-examine social groupings and movements that predate them in order to trace the trajectory of collective identity construction in their formation, continuity and change. For the *Abantu Babomvu*, identity issues were basic mobilising factors, therefore their role as precursors of a new social movement, *AmaZiyoni*, has to be examined.

What are indigenous resistance identities resisting? I argue that they are defences against the colonisation of self by Western capitalism and its institutions. I now define the term colonisation of self.

Casey (1995), using Habermas' concept "colonization of the lifeworld" (cf. Habermas 1984, 1987), interprets reactions to the industrial-capitalist system's assault on the individual employees' "lifeworld" as employees' efforts to resist the colonisation of their lifeworlds. The systems of management and discursive practices of Western global capitalism aim to discipline and colonise the identities of employees so that they become the kinds of people the company would like them to be: people with values, attitudes and orientations that achieve an appropriate fit with the requirements of the Western organisational culture (Casey 1995: 139). Casey's (1995: 139) notion of "corporate colonization of self" describes the corporate world's attempt to appropriate not only the personal time of employees, but also their identities (cf. Castells' legitimating identity defined above). Employee "traits and attitudes that are unnecessary or that impede the processes of the workplace culture, and therefore of production, are thwarted and suppressed" (Casey 1995: 139). However, employees' selves are not completely controlled. They are not merely passive recipients of identities provided to them by social entities. Employees can respond to identity pressures or initiate identity dynamics; they negotiate their workplace identities (Casey 1995: 139).

From colonialism to neo-colonialism, agents of Western capitalism—missionary churches, trading stores, companies, schools, and the state—have similarly sought to colonise the indigenous self. They have sought to create new kinds of people: new converts, new workers, new students, new consumers and new citizens who serve the requirements of the capitalist forms of production and associated styles of Western

capitalist social organisation. The social construction of the *Abantu Babomvu* and subsequently the *AmaZiyoni* collective identities are indigenous identity strategies of resistance to the colonisation of self.

Emergence of the *Abantu Babomvu* Collective Identity in a Social Context

From about the 1850s onwards, the influence of the Cape Colony began to extend north of the Cape Frontier, across the Kei River and into the region south of Natal (Beinart & Bundy 1987: 5). At that time the Cape officials viewed this area as a series of adjacent territories controlled by independent paramount chiefs. The process of Western encroachment was indirect and took the form of missionary work.

Wesleyan missions, the Glasgow Missionary Society (which established Lovedale mission station and was later succeeded by the Bantu Presbyterian Church), the Moravians, the Berlin Missionary Society and the Anglicans were some of the early pioneers (Beinart & Bundy 1987). In particular, missionaries worked to win the hearts and minds of the indigenous people in order to secure a favourable balance of power and to encourage trade; sometimes they even intervened in disputes between chiefdoms (Beinart & Bundy 1987). Protestant missions represented not only the world of Christianity, but colonialism and the money economy also. "The Protestant mission bore the symbolic forms, the ideological commitments, and the imperial intent of nineteenth-century Europe" (Comaroff 1985: 123).

The history of the Cape Frontier during the first half of the nineteenth century is characterised by competition for scarce land, which contributed to conflict between the indigenous people and the colonial expansionists. From the 1860s until 1895 colonial rule was gradually imposed over the territory. It started with colonial conquests and the capture of land for colonial allies, and culminated between 1872 and 1895 in the annexation of each of the territories known as Fingoland, Gcalekaland, Thembuland, Emigrant Thembuland, East Griqualand, Pondoland and districts peopled by the Mpondmise, Bhaca, Hlubi and Sotho groups (Saunders 1972; Beinart & Bundy 1980: 273; and Beinart & Bundy 1987: 5). Under Cape rule this region was named the Transkeian Territories (Beinart & Bundy 1987). Transkei was administered by agents (mainly magistrates and salaried headmen) of the Cape Colony, and later the South African state (Beinart & Bundy 1987: 6-7). Its annexation "was seen as desirable in terms of economic gains: the income from hut taxation was to pay for the new roads and bridges, cheap labour could be provided for the Colony while timber of quality was available. Control was systematically tightened over the territory" (Pretorius 1993: 8).

> The Transkei's penetration by merchants, missionaries, magistrates and labour recruiters was an uneven, but

inexorable process of critical importance in shaping the lives of its inhabitants: What they produced and consumed, how they worked and for whom, what patterns of authority and power they recognised, and how they sought to alter these[,] . . . shifts in consciousness and ideology . . . [and] how Transkeians identified themselves (Beinart & Bundy 1987: 2).

The locations in which colonisation, resistance, as well as resistance to Western encroachment in the Transkei are well documented by the likes of Bundy (1988), Beinart (1982), Beinart and Bundy (1987), Peires (2003a, 2003b), Saunders and Derricourt (1974). Socio-political resistance was manifested in the nineteenth century conflict between *isi*Xhosa-speaking people of the Cape Frontier and the Colonialists; and in the twentieth century in the unrest in Qumbu (from 1912 to 1913); the anti-dipping movement in Mount Frere, Mount Fletcher and Matatiele (1912-1917) and the Pondoland Revolt (1956-1965). Furthermore, a rather well-developed politico-religious resistance tradition was also established. For example, the prophetic utterances of Nxele, Mlangeni and Nongqawuse formed the basis for mobilisation against the colonial invaders (see Peires 1979: 51-62; 1986: 443-61 and 1987: 43-63; Hodgson 1986: 3-24). Etherington (1978: 35) notes other types of effective and determined Nguni resistance to Christianity. In Pondoland (North Eastern Transkei) "converts were effectively quarantined on mission stations and ceased for all practical purposes to be members of the nation (*ibid*: 35). Caderwood, a missionary in the Kei region in the 1850s (Mayer 1980: 8) and Dr J. T. van der Kemp of the London Missionary Society, who settled among the people of chief Ngqika in 1799, and his successor, Joseph Williams, reported similar resistance to missionary efforts to convert *isi*Xhosa-speaking people (Hodgson 1985: 21, 27-28, 33 & 1986: 17). Among the indigenous people of the Transkei there was a tendency to associate the mission endeavour with Western "civilisation" and with colonial power as missionaries who often acted as government agents (Elphick 1981: 294). Both the colonial authorities and paramount chiefs used them as political brokers. In 1830, Paramount Chief Faku allowed Wesleyan missionaries to establish a station in Pondoland (Stapleton, 2001: 33-34). He was solely motivated by the political gains of having a mediator to communicate with the Cape Colony, and later Natal (Elphick 1981: 34). Missionaries had to be satisfied, therefore, with making converts among what Etherington (cited in Elpick 1981: 292) refers to as the "flotsam and jetsam" of the Cape Frontier. A considerable proportion of those living at the mission were refugees; as outcasts or misfits in their communities, they found refuge in the mission station (Pauw 1975: 21; Ethington 1978: 78; and Elphick 1981: 292).

Besides resistance another consequence of Western encroachment in this area was what Mayer (1971: 3-4 & 1981: 1) describes as the cleavage between *Abantu*

Babomvu or Red People and *Abantu Basesikolweni* or School People. According to Mayer (1980: 1) these groupings appeared from about 1850 among villagers of south-eastern part of South Africa in the vicinity of the Great Kei River. Hunt Davis (1979: 12) observes that by the 1870s two distinct rural ideologies were well established in this region: a "Red ideology" and a "School ideology". Both were responses to increased exposure by the indigenous people of the Transkei area to Western Christian "civilisation" (Western commodities, values, priorities, and ways of life) with the expansionism of "white colonialism" (Mayer 1980: 1). Wilson (1969: 265) notes of the *Abantu Babomvu–Abantu Basesikolweni* divide that "the cleavage has been deeper and more persistent among *isi*Xhosa speaking than in any other community in Africa." The term *Abantu Babomvu* literally means those who smear themselves and their clothing with red ochre, and was symbolic of their whole culture, hence the reference to Red People (Pretorius 1993: 65). The *Abantu Babomvu* distanced themselves from the School People, whom they called *Amagqoboka* ("people having a hole") because they had made a hole in the tradition and allowed Western corruption in. The *Abantu Basesikolweni* referred to the Red People as *Amaqaba*, which literally means people who smear themselves, yet the term implies "conservative", "heathen", "pagan" and "backward". While the *Abantu Basesikolweni* were associated with missionary churches and schools and they accepted many elements of Western culture, the *Abantu Babomvu* criteria for prestige-ranking was the extent to which their peers resisted "white civilisation" and missionary endeavours (Mayer 1980: 3, 5, 46, 53 & 54). Mayer (1971: 41) points out that it is not that the adherents of the Red ideology showed no signs of "acculturation", nor that school people abandoned the indigenous tradition altogether; rather the latter saw their association with Christianity and Western "civilisation" as positive, whereas Red people accepted only such Western cultural elements as were unavoidable or obviously necessary in the wake of change beyond their control. The *Babomvu* way was to maintain an identity in ways prescribed by the *izinyanya* (ancestors) (Mayer 1971: 40).

These different responses to Western "civilisation" have been described variously as "equal cooperation versus exclusiveness" or "assimilation versus 'Black consciousness'" (Mayer 1980: 1). "In their prime, the ideologies of Red and School . . . presented comprehensive patterns of belief, laying down precepts for most aspects of life, including economic behaviour" (Mayer 1980: 2). Beinart and Bundy (1980: 285-286 and 311-312) and Mayer (1980: 27-57) discuss the emergence of these two collective identities and their differences in relation to family structure (size), patterns of investment and, especially, patterns of consumption.

Missionaries convinced early converts like the *Abantu Basesikolweni* that assimilating Western Christianity would give them admission on equal terms to the colonial economy (Mayer 1980: 22). For a time missionaries played a prominent part in drawing blacks into the market-oriented colonial economy (Mayer 1980:

21). (This, of course, was short lived as white colonialists soon changed their minds.) Bundy (1988) supports this in his historical account of the emergence of a relatively wealthy African peasantry in the Kei region in the mid 1800s who experimented with new crops and methods of production and who entered market production desiring equality in the colonial economy. In contrast to the *Abantu Basesikolweni* the *Abantu Babomvu* stopped at adopting the plough and selling surplus livestock. Their position was one of minimum involvement; thus they resisted even at an economic level.

The *Abantu Babomvu* position of resistance was reinforced by their economic self-sufficiency. The high points of black peasant production in Western and Southern Transkei were in the 1870s and 1880s (Bundy 1988). There is some evidence which suggests that there were peaks in agricultural production in Pondoland (North-Eastern Transkei) in the early 1890s, and again in the first decade of the twentieth century (Beinart 1982: 70), but "the crux of the Mpondo economic independence . . . was their wealth in cattle" (Beinart 1982: 55). "During the 1870s and 1880s . . .   missionaries and officials commented on the near impossibility of finding anyone in Pondoland who was prepared to leave the area for paid employment" (Beinart 1982: 54-55). During the early days of contact with the ideas and beliefs of the colonialist agents who sought to undermine their political and economic independence, the *Abantu Babomvu* had the capacity to defend their autonomy. With reference to the Western and Southern Transkei, Bundy (1988: 112) maintains that the ability of large numbers of *isi*Xhosa-speaking peasants to produce an agricultural surplus is evident in their paying taxes and having sufficient over to satisfy their wants. Even at the beginning of the gold-mining era (after 1886) a measure of economic independence was retained (Bundy 1988: 113).[4]

Mayer (1980: 27) notes that broadly speaking the Transkei (north of the Kei River) was dominated by "Reds" and in the Ciskei (the former homeland south of the Kei River) School People were predominant. (This is not to say that there were no *Abantu Babomvu* in the Ciskei/Eastern Cape area and no *Abantu Basesikolweni* in the Transkei.) Hammond-Tooke (1975: 19) singles out the Red People in the Transkei region as people who "resisted change to a degree unprecedented in Africa."

The *Abantu Babomvu* could resist colonisation of self because they were able to distance themselves from most manifestations of Western "civilisation" and capitalism. Although present in their socio-cultural experience, the physical distance of agents and institutions of Western "civilisation" and infrequent contact meant a slow pace of change. Consequently the *Abantu Babomvu* could engineer cultural isolation, thus neutralising Western influences, and confirming their religio-cultural order which was taken for granted previously.

The cleavage between *Abantu Basesikolweni* and *Abantu Babomvu* made their opposition conscious and so helped them to articulate what they were resisting and

what they were defending. The labelling of the *Abantu Babomvu* as *Amaqaba*, inferior and backward, was rebuffed by their appropriating and redefining the term positively: Red, for them, was beautiful. Thus they inverted the terms of oppressive discourse to reinforce the lines of resistance and their *Babomvu* or "Red Consciousness". Their economic independence, cultural isolation and the construction of a vigorous *Babomvu* ideology enabled them to sustain a traditional identity, social structure and belief system.

The political economy of the region changed significantly in the first half of the twentieth century. It saw the deterioration of the economic base of the *isi*Xhosa-speaking peasant society and increased contact with Western "civilisation". What were the consequences for the collective identity and ideology of the *Abantu Babomvu*?

Re-negotiation and Adjustment of *Abantu Babomvu* Identity

Drought, crop failure and disease had, by the late nineteenth century, undermined the independence of many rural communities north east and south east of the Kei River. While the region had previously managed to recover from economic disasters, the rindepest epidemic of the late 1890s devastated the peasant economy of the Transkei.

> [T]he disease which destroyed 80% to 90% of the cattle in the Transkei and nearly as many in the Ciskei was an economic disaster: it liquidated much of the peasant's capital, adversely affected his credit-worthiness, made ploughing more difficult and transport facilities rarer and dearer. (Bundy 1988: 120)

The immediate outcome was the impoverishment of thousands of peasants. Therefore many were forced to turn to labour migrancy[5]. The primary intent was to earn wages to supplement the home economy; the short term objective was to replace their cattle. Mfenguland, Emigrant Tembuland, Gcalekaland and northern Griqualand East were most affected and produced very high percentages of migrant workers (Bundy 1988: 124).

While Pondoland was largely free of from disease other forces were at play there. Beinart (1979: 54-62) traces the origins of migrant labour from Pondoland in some detail, from which it is clear that labour migrancy came late to Pondoland. In the early decades of the twentieth century a number of factors gradually contributed to the change to labour migrancy in Pondoland. Diseases, drought and the imposition of taxes in the late nineteenth century had made some families indebted to traders. At the same time labour recruiting agents arrived in the region and attracted some men into migrant labour in order to replace cattle, pay debts and taxes. While there were signs of an increase in dependency on wage labour

during the period 1910-1930, Beinart (1982: 161) notes that by the 1930s the economic position in Pondoland could still be compared favourably with that in many other reserves in South Africa. He points out that migrancy rates were lower, the number of cattle per capital was above average, soil erosion was slight and landlessness rarer. It would appear that a number of political economic moves by the colonial government served to undermine significantly their economic independence and that of rural indigenous people. The Land Act of 1913 and the Native Land and Trust Act of 1936 are examples of legislation which sought to curtail the development of cash crop farming by African peasantry. Moreover it seems that the colonial government was not unaware of the potential threat it posed to the interests of white farmers and industrialists (Bundy 1988). Mayer (1980) refers to page 85 of the Tomlinson Report of 1955 where it is noted that in 1938 a scheme was introduced to subsidise the purchase of ploughs, planters and cultivators by black farmers, and "considerable use was made of it [the scheme] until it was discontinued in 1947." Cash crop production was gradually reduced to almost nothing in the Transkei. The significance thereof can be appreciated when one takes into consideration the indirectly proportionate relationship between cash crop production and migrant labour that is revealed by studies of rural conditions in other Third World countries with industrial centres, like South Africa (Bundy 1988). Table 1 below gives an idea of the large increase in labour migrancy in Pondoland and the Transkeian Territories collectively from the end of the 1800s to the 1930s.

Table 1: Patterns of migration from Pondoland & Transkei Territories: 1896-1936 (% of men absent)

	Pondoland	TranskeianTerritories
1896	2.5	13.4
1904	10.1	14.5
1911	9.6	16.5
1921	13.5	17.0
1936	17.1	22.8

(Source: Beinart 1982: 172)

According to Beinart (1982: 172) the percentages given in each year are not always calculated from strictly comparable data. For more realistic statistics Beinart (*ibid*) claims that "the percentage of 'economically active' men (those between fifteen and forty five years of age) absent . . . should be multiplied two and a half times." Therefore, we can state that by 1936 an estimated 57% of the economically active male population of the Transkei Territories were migrant labourers working in

urban areas, many of them on the gold mines of the Witwatersrand.

One would expect that the *Abantu Babomvu* collective identity, which had been developed in a strictly rural traditional context and which managed to keep Western "civilisation" on the periphery of the *Babomvu* lifeworld, would have disintegrated once its adherents experienced the urban Western context. However, there is substantive evidence which indicates this did not happen. *Babomvu* migrants in town had little opportunity to sample urban pleasures or urban tastes. They had little or no income and had no means to move beyond the confines of the mine compound, where their basic needs of accommodation and food were poorly provided for. Furthermore, for those coming from the Transkei, migrant labour was a temporary situation, the means to replace cattle lost due to some or other disaster. Archival statistics from the 1960 South African Census show that 42% of all the *isi*Xhosa-speaking people of the Transkei (Regions 20 and 21 according to 1960 Census) were adherents of African Traditional Religion.[6] The *Abantu Babomvu* were the only *isi*Xhosa-speakers to adhere to African Traditional Religion exclusively, which means that in 1960 almost half the population remained *Abantu Babomvu*.

One way to explore the effect of labour migrancy on the rural people of the Transkei is to refer once again to the *Abantu Babomvu – Abantu Basesikolweni* differentiation. Both the *Abantu Babomvu* and the *Abantu Basesikolweni* were drawn out of the rural socio-economic system into the broader colonial economy and Western capitalism. They often worked in the same industries alongside one another, lived in the same mining compounds or shanty towns, travelled on the same buses to and from the city and occasionally resided as neighbours. Yet their response to industrial society, the denial of human rights and exploitation was quite different. With reference to the 1970s, Mayer (1980) notes that where the school way of life had disintegrated due to "the influence of urban secularism and consumerism, the popular ideologies of industrialism, the Red way of life is still surviving". The *Abantu Basesikolweni* had, of course, already adopted substantial elements of Western "civilisation" and aspired to the way of life that the city represented. The Western experience was for them, therefore, not so much identity threatening as it was frustrating.[7] The *Abantu Babomvu* identity and ideology was, however, undermined by the migrant labour experience and Western capitalism that promised economic advancement. The epistemology of Western industrial capitalism made a number of dichotomies which contradicted the *Abantu Babomvu* cultural categories, e.g. the radical distinction between self and other, subject and object, person and context, mind and body, religion and healing. The Western notion of the world is founded upon material and not social relations; and the situation of the person as depending upon his/her own initiative rather than his/her location in an all encompassing social environment. The relative isolation of the villages, the *ad hoc* nature of the urban experience (later it was formalised in South African labour policies and influx control legislation, which meant a continuous shuttling back-and-forth

between the rural and urban areas), its undesirability and other less obvious factors led to a splitting off of the two modes of socio-economic experience. The material base and socio-cultural experience in the rural village confirmed the *Abantu Babomvu* collective identity and ideology while the industrial workplace subjected them to the values and institutions of Western "civilisation".

In what follows I will elaborate on how the migrant labour system brought pressure to bear on the *Abantu Babomvu* collective identity, and on the manner in which their sense of self and concomitant ideology was re-negotiated and adjusted to take into account the substantial change to their socio-cultural experience.

Abantu Babomvu lived in relatively close-knit, face to face communities. Their ideology and collective sense of self was informed by African Traditional Religion, which revolved round the homestead or *umzi* (Kuckurtz 1983: 227). The re-establishment of the *umzi* in successive generations was of vital importance to their religious continuity and their way of life. The practice of ancestor religion revolved round the *umzi*. Sacred space within the confines of the *umzi* marked the presence of the ancestor shades. Furthermore, according to Kuckurtz

> There is no ancestor religious activity (ritual) unless it is initiated by a particular homestead head and unless the ritual takes place in his own homestead. The homestead head's authority in general, including his authority to call for an ancestral ritual, has been handed down to him from his agnatic forebears who are important (superhuman) objects of reference in the rituals themselves. (1983: 227)

Migrant labour threatened the religio-social order of this "small-scale" society, because the long absences of so many males increased the danger that some would not return to establish the *umzi*, and thus would bring extreme misfortune and chaos on the family of the offenders. What, then, prevented the disintegration of the religio-social order and concomitant collective identity?

In the 1970s McAllister (1980: 205-254) examined the ritual interpretation of labour migration among the people of Shixini in the Transkei. The people of Shixini were a conservative traditionalist community that fell into the category of *Abantu Babomvu*. It would appear that a modification of the *Abantu Babomvu* ideology had taken place to accommodate the social reality of the majority of males being absent for long periods of time.

McAllister (1980) showed that though the *umzi*, in its appearance, technology and human relations, remained extremely conservative, and the men's participation in the capitalist secular economy was skilfully interpreted to fit into this framework, weaving into a single coherent system of ideas two distinctly different sets of imperatives. The traditional indigenous religious practice of building up the *umzi*[8]

(referred to as *ukwakha umzi*) and reproducing the homestead relations of production remained a dominant feature. The males (homestead heads and their sons) had to endure the hardships of migrant labour for the sake of the homestead. The work place and the city were associated with going to war. The city experience was symbolically interpreted as military service—"a rite of passage" which a young man had to undergo in order to marry, to build up the *umzi*, maintain his family and accumulate cattle. The ancestral shades' interest in their descendants' migratory activities and good fortune while in the city was tied to the migrant labourers obtaining cash in order to build the *umzi* on their return.

Among the *Abantu Babomvu* complex "rites of departure" and purification rites on returning were part and parcel of the ritualisation of migrant labour. The rites of departure ensured the safety of the men folk—the combatants—while they were away and the rites of return were standardised rites and symbolic action giving thanks for their safe return (McAllister 1980: 234-243). Through these rites their good standing in the community and with the ancestors was assured. The restricted experience of the Western city and capitalism was incorporated and subjected to the paramount significance of the *umzi*. The resistance identity strategy was thus modified to accommodate a limited, but significant, new socio-cultural experience that otherwise threatened to undermine it.

The renegotiation of the *Abantu Babomvu* collective identity and ideology through the re-interpretation and appropriation of the undesirable yet essential migrant labour experience enabled the *Abantu Babomvu* to maintain a sense of *ubuntu* (humanity) in an otherwise very dehumanising and disturbing socio-cultural experience. The *Abantu Babomvu* could no longer keep Western capitalism on the outer periphery of their lifeworld. It had become a real feature of many *Abantu Babomvu*'s lifeworld and socio-cultural experience. Colonisation of self was a real threat, yet they successfully defended their collective identity by incorporating their new experience, by encapsulating the experience of becoming a migrant labour in the cities and by subjecting it to their ideology thereby preserving their resistance identity which it had threatened to destabilise.

A number of examples will further demonstrate the continuity in attitude and behaviour between the rural and urban situation. Mayer (1971: 23-24) observes that in the city the Red people dressed differently and kept apart from School and Town People as much as possible. Care was taken in spending money on *impahla yomlungu* (things of the white people). Only that which was absolutely necessary and which benefited the *umzi* was purchased, i.e. a form of consumer asceticism was practiced. At home the Red children were warned not to play with the School children who spoke of "white people's things" because it was feared that if they entertained thoughts of city things too often Red adolescents who migrated may become *amatshipha* (absconders) and not return to the villages. According to Mayer (1971: 23-24), Red People referred to white people, not only as bearers of "new

ways", but also the destroyers of *ama*Xhosa political independence and those who "have continued to keep the African down". School people, in their view, were colluders or "sell-outs" and they themselves were national resisters (Mayer 1971: 31).

It would seem from the above that the *Abantu Babomvu* were able to engineer and sustain what Mafeje refers to as "militant conservatism", so that "they saved themselves from self-alienation" (1975: 178). In their everyday production of goods and meanings they complied yet resisted, reproduced yet sought to transform their predicament. In so doing, they successfully defended themselves against the colonisation of self by Western capitalism.

Could they sustain this position in the longer term, as the scale of social change increased?

Abandonment of the *Abantu Babomvu* Collective Identity

Evidence that the *Abantu Babomvu* resistance identity had been abandoned is presented in Table 2 below. The figures are drawn from the Census and a number of other sources

Table 2: Statistics on Religion of the *isi*Xhosa-speaking people of the Transkei (%)

	1960	1970	1980s*	1996	2001
Zionist-Apostolic	12	14	11	21	28
Ethiopian			4	2	2
Christian Mission	46	52	60	59	56
African Traditional	42	33	25	0 (0,02)	0 (0,1)
Other or undetermined	0	0	0	8	2
No religion	0	0	0	10	12
Total	100	99	100	100	100

Sources: South African Census Data 1960, 1970, 1996, 2001;
                 Pauw (1975) & Kritzinger (1986)
Note: * Census data in the 1980s are unreliable so I have opted to use statistics from the
                 above-listed secondary sources.

Pauw (1975: 49) and Mayer (1980: 49-50) point out that by the late 1970s the "red folk-culture" in the Ciskei and Transkei was disintegrating under the "influences of urban secularism and consumerism, the popular ideologies of industrialism" (*ibid*). Census data and statistics from secondary sources on the changing belief systems of *isi*Xhosa people of the Transkei show the decline in the percentage of the number of adherents of African Traditional Religion, the worldview of the *Abantu*

Babomvu. African Traditional Religion is a proxy indicator for the *Abantu Babomvu* collective identity. The figures in Table 2 from 1960 to 2001 show the decreasing trend and the rate of change. In 1960 42% of the rural *isi*Xhosa-speaking population in the Transkei could be classified as adherents of African Traditional Religion,[9] in 1970 33%, in the 1980s 25%, in 1996 0.02%,[10] and in 2001 0.1%. By the twentyfirst century almost no *isi*Xhosa-speaking people of the former Transkei region listed African Traditional Religion as their belief system.

What factors led to the abandonment of the *Abantu Babomvu* identity? There are probably a myriad of reasons why individuals abandoned their *Abantu Babomvu* identity, but within the scope of this work I will explore the link between the decline and eventual disappearance of the *Abantu Babomvu*, social change and colonisation of lifeworld and self. With this in mind I will briefly discuss the social factors that supported the *Abantu Babomvu* ideology and collective identity as a resistance strategy to see whether there were any significant social changes that might have contributed to the decline seen in the statistics. The assumption, at this stage, is that there is a correlation between a high level of social change and the disintegration of the *Abantu Babomvu* ideology and identity; the identity of a collective is influenced by the socio-cultural experience of the collective.

Therefore I will endeavour to ascertain whether large-scale socio-cultural disturbance was experienced by *Abantu Babomvu* prior the disappearance of this social identity.

Significant Social Change in Rural Transkei

There is evidence that the social life of rural Transkei communities was significantly destabilised. The *Abantu Babomvu* ideology was gradually undermined by the Western epistemology which turned this socio-religious order on its head.

Those areas of the Transkei which were strongholds of *Abantu Babomvu* tradition were less accessible due to topographical and socio-political factors and, therefore, remained outside the sphere of regular and easy communication. By the 1980s this was no longer true. As systems of communication were developed remote rural areas were gradually exposed to urban Western modes of thought. Roads and buses connected remote areas with towns and cities. Consumer commodities became more readily available, while the transistor radio brought urban culture into the *umzi*, the centre of the *Abantu Babomvu* ideology and identity. Young people in Red families had begun to attend school in significantly increasing numbers at that time. (Many mission schools had been taken over by the bantustan government). Thus school students became familiar with Western concepts and social categories via subjects such as Mathematics, Geography, General Science, English language, and Hygiene; on a more subtle level in the daily school activities and school etiquette which is based on a different order of time and space. The elders from *Abantu*

Babomvu communities began to lament the fact that though they had thought they were doing the best for their children by sending them to school, the children now were neglecting their customary duties.

The involuntary social restructuring of the political and economic life of the *isi*Xhosa-speaking people of the Transkei particularly threatened the *Abantu Babomvu* identity and ideology. The creation of apartheid bantustan authorities (the *Bunga* or central general council) in the Transkei (and the Ciskei) to some extent served to undermine the agnatic political authority. Thus the bantustanisation of the Transkei brought changes in the rural social structure. The bantustan civil servants—teachers, stock inspectors, magistrates, police, district commissioners, etc.—undermined the indigenous social hierarchy and its distinctions between agnation and matrilaterality, seniority and subordination, male and female. Changes in the relations of production affected domestic relations and kin ties. Where many *Abantu Babomvu* communities were too geographically removed to feel the full force of bantustanisation, the *Bunga* undermined their social structures by pressurising rural headmen to adopt what were referred to as "Betterment Schemes".

As early as 1936, certain rural areas ("native reserves", later called "bantustans", then "homelands") were proclaimed "Betterment Areas" under the Native Trust and Land Acts. These areas were to be rehabilitated and made economically viable by being divided into residential areas, arable lands and grazing commonage and by implementing the "necessary conservationist measures" (De Wet 1989: 327-328). This meant, potentially at least, that almost all rural black families would have to move from their old, scattered residential clusters to newly demarcated residential areas. Apartheid government planners viewed this as optimal usage of land. The recommendations of the Tomlinson Commission indicate that the radical restructuring of the rural environment was essential for the Betterment Scheme to be successfully implemented. In the 1950s and 1960s, attempts to implement Betterment Schemes in the Transkei were met with considerable resistance (see Beinart and Bundy 1980) as people in these rural areas came to associate the schemes with loss of livestock (culling was the method used to reduce the number of livestock per household), restrictions on grazing and reductions in the availability of arable land (McAllister 1989: 346). Stock limitation ignored the social and religious importance of cattle. Furthermore, communities that had to move from one kind of residential pattern to another experienced considerable social disruption and loss of political control. McAllister (1989: 346) also argues against the view that irrigation schemes implemented in relocated areas necessarily benefited the community. Scattered homesteads were historically shaped partly by the nature of the water resources. Betterment Schemes put pressure on single water points close to the settlement due to the high ratio of people to waterpoint. In the case of mechanical faults or the water becoming unsuitable for human consumption, the residents of the relocated settlement had to walk great distances to obtain water.

Betterment seemed to have meant a change in settlement pattern; an assault on the established political and territorial unit, the disappearance of old neighbourhood groups and youth structures, and it undermined the established strategies of subsistence. McAllister (1989: 368) is convinced that Betterment Schemes in the Transkei and the Ciskei played a major role in finally destroying the "red folk-culture" as a coherent way of life. Only a few areas such as Shixini, near Willowvale, provide evidence that "rehabilitation" had been fended off and *ubuqaba* (the red way) has lingered on.

Some 80% of all males over the age of 16 who were engaged in migrant labour in the 1980s spent extended periods in the towns and cities (McAllister 1989: 350). Western modelled schools, social restructuring by apartheid government planners, the radio and later the television subtly integrated Western industrial capitalist ideas and values into the common-place meanings and routine activities of the rural village. What Kuckurtz (1983, 1984) refers to as the homestead-centred world, was thus undermined. Once the Western capitalist cultural categories began to dominate the *Abantu Babomvu* socio-cultural experience in the villages, the *Abantu Babomvu* identity and ideology could not be renegotiated so as to make sense of Western industrial experience, and yet retain its characteristic form. The *Abantu Babomvu* collective identity and ideology were subjected to considerable pressure. The *Abantu Babomvu* ideology, which supported cultural separatism and economic asceticism, was no longer able to fit with the adherents' socio-cultural experience. Young people in particular were attracted to the urban Western culture and new ways of identifying themselves.

Abantu Babomvu ideology and Western capitalism are mutually contradictory, as are the social and economic orders of which each is in part a reflection. The co-existence of these two mutually contradictory socio-cultural orders presented a number of possible options at the level of individual consciousness and ideology. One was to reject the *Abantu Babomvu* collective identity entirely and to seek an identity solely in Western cultural terms. A second was to assert the primacy of Western techniques and concepts while rejecting Western Christian "civilisation"—a historical materialist perspective. A third option was to renegotiate ideology and identity in a way that addressed African concerns.

How have ex-*Abantu Babomvu* renegotiated their identity in a world dominated by Western capitalism? Which new identities and ideologies are they attracted to?

Adoption of the *AmaZiyoni* Collective Identity

Growth of AmaZiyoni in Transkei

Table 2 above shows that the dramatic decrease in support for a traditional collective identity and ideology in the Transkei from the 1980s to 1996 is accompanied by a significant increase in the percentage number of Zionist-Apostolics or *AmaZiyoni*

and those who had no religion. During this period the percentage of mission church Christians remained fairly constant and the percentage of Ethiopians and "Other or undetermined" negligible. The statistics suggest that the adherents of African Traditional Religion have either abandoned religion altogether (become secularised) or become *AmaZiyoni.*

Sundkler (1961: 49, and cited in Pauw 1975: 32) notes an upsurge in interest in the African Independent Churches that took place largely in the northern regions of South Africa in 1917-27. This marks the rise of the Zionist type churches[11]. The Zionist churches took much longer to spread through the *isi*Xhosa-speaking areas of the Eastern Cape. Rev. A.P. Phipson remarked in the 1960s that Zionism was a recent phenomenon in the Transkei. A few Zionist churches had existed in the Transkei from the 1930s, but Zionism as a movement only became conspicuous in the 1950s (Pauw 1975: 33; Pretorius 1985: 8-9; Mayer 1980: 32) According to Pretorius (1986: 156) steady growth in AICs is noted during the period 1960-1980. By the 1980s, 15% of the population in the Transkei belonged to AICs and a little under three-quarters of these churches were Zionist-Apostolic (ibid, see also Table 2). In 1996 the percentage of black Africans in the former Transkei who identified themselves as *AmaZiyoni* (members of Zionist-Apostolic churches) had risen to 21% and in 2001 it was 28% (see Table 2).

Links between Abantu Babomvu and AmaZiyoni
Like the *Abantu Babomvu*, Pauw (1975: 303) notes that Zionist church membership in the Transkei was drawn mainly from people of low social status, whether viewed in traditional terms or modern values. Pretorius (1985: 103) makes the same observation ten years later.

In the 1970s a substantial proportion of those joining the AICs were Red People (Pauw 1975: 49). Mayer (1980: 32) supports this observation by stating that School People in the Transkei/Ciskei region viewed the emotionalism of Zionist Churches as possibly good enough for Red converts but not fit for School People. Mission church and School People were critical of the Zionists because of what they perceived as their deviant beliefs and behaviour (Pauw 1975: 303). Pretorius (1985: 8) suggests that "fairly direct connections can be found between the last-ditch defences of traditional society and the appearance of tendencies toward Zionism."

AmaZiyoni Defend their African Identity and Resist Colonisation of Self
AmaZiyoni are the members of African Initiated Churches (AICs). Pretorius and Jafta (1997: 211) explain that the term "African Initiated Churches" focuses on the churches' distinctive African origins. The churches' self-reliance and refusal to accept either foreign financial support or leadership has also led to them being alternatively described as "African Independent Churches" (1997: 211).

African identity is the pivot of AICs. Makhubu (cited in Pretorius & Jafta

1997: 211-212), a leader of a group of AICs, articulates the central role of identity and independence when he says that Zionist-Apostolic churches are African Independent Churches which are "purely black-controlled denominations with no links in membership or administrative controls with any non-African church . . . They have in common a quest to 'indigenize', to establish a new African Christian identity." Similarly, Ngada & Mofokeng (2001: 17), leaders of an association of AICs, state, "[W]e are Africans before being Christians. To deny our Africanness would be to forfeit out God-given lifestyle to adopt an imposed culture . . . We are simply African Christians who have preserved our African identity."

Pretorius (1985: 149) in his study of Zionist-Apostolic churches in the former Transkei notes quoting Turner (1967):

> In these services one finds 'an African voice and body expressing in its own way the praises of an African heart for the religious blessing it had received . . . a wholeness of worship (is produced) adequate for every mood and need of African life, and it should be recognized both as a rich and complex liturgical achievement, and as an Africanization of Christian worship at the deepest levels.

In their ideology and organisation *AmaZiyoni*, like the Tswana-speaking BaRolong-Boora-Tshidi (Tshidi) Zionists in Comaroff's (1985: 176) study, have rejected the "political hegemony of white orthodoxy". Their position in society as peasant-proletariat could have given rise to a political consciousness aligned with the working class, but it did not. While there is no evidence of overt political protest by the *AmaZiyoni*, their socio-economic position in society did shape their consciousness and collective identity in a manner that is at odds with Western capitalist culture. In apartheid South Africa, religion was one of the few areas in which Africans were relatively free from legislative, bureaucratic and economic constraints upon their freedom to choose, as it was one of the ways in which they could structure their 'free time' (Kieran 1986: 8). Although it is not his intention, Pretorius (1985, 1993) shows that the *AmaZiyoni* in the former Transkei like Zionists in kwa-Zulu-Natal and among the Tshidi along the South Africa-Botswana border defy the authority of the Western hegemonic order. They are subversive because they are motivated by opposition to the dominant system. Comaroff (1985: 254) describes Zionists religious rituals as "opposition to the categories of bourgeois liberal secularism". Similarly to the classical Marxist definition of alienated workers, migrant workers under capitalism in South Africa are estranged from themselves, from their own labour power, their products, and their fellows; the act of production "is abruptly cut loose from its embeddedness in the social fabric by the mediation of money and the clock" in a manner that segregates physical, social and spiritual being (Comaroff 1985: 173).

Zionists subverted these divisive structures firstly of colonial society, and subsequently of neo-colonial society, so as to return to the self-estranged migrant worker "a tangible identity and the power to impose coherence upon a disarticulated world" (Comaroff 1985: 173). In so doing they exercise some control over the symbolic realm in cultural production and continue to seek the possibility to negotiate at least some of the conditions for individual and collective life.

Pretorius's (1985) detailed descriptions of their church services show how they construct an order of practice that seems to domesticate the divisive forces that have come to pervade their environment. They provide their followers with the opportunity to assert their distinct identity (Pretorius 1985: 177) in a changing world—a world increasingly dominated by institutions of Western capitalism (e.g. school, workplace, shops) which displace, discipline and colonise identities so that they become more like the kind of people whose values, attitudes and orientations fit the requirements of the Western global capitalism. The *AmaZiyoni*'s passive resistance might not confront the agents of Western capitalism or seek structural transformation, but it defies the colonisation of self.

A few examples from Pretorius's (1985, 1993) study of the Zionist-Apostolic churches in the Transkei will suffice to illustrate passive resistance to colonisation of self and how the *AmaZiyoni* rites of personal reconstruction involve the symbolic reintegration and domestication of alien Western commodities and images of being. Pretorius's publications (1985, 1993, 1997 co-authored with Jafta) are based on data collected from 25 Zionist-Apostolic churches in the Transkei and rich descriptive information drawn from two case studies: the Morians Episcopal Apostolic Church in Zion (MEACZ), which he describes as very typical of Zionist churches in the Transkei (Pretorius 1985: 103) and the Zion Apostolic Church in Zion (ZACZ).[12]

Some examples of continued resistance to Western luxuries and pleasures follow: The constitution of the MEACZ states that "a member of our church being found amongst the worldly parties and pleasures shall be expelled". The ZACZ do not allow their children to participate in *umdaniso* which is a modernised dance party with Western music (Pretorius 1993: 81). Neither are they supposed to smoke or drink alcohol (Pretorius 1985: 115; Pretorius 1993: 81, 82).

AmaZiyoni are encouraged to work together in cooperatives to satisfy their subsistence needs (Pretorius 1985: 111, 147). The Zionist ritual calendar reflects this through the *inkonzo yolibo* ("first fruits service"), the *inkonzo yesivuno* ("harvest feast") and the practice of *ilima lamaZiyoni*, where Zionist church members form work-parties to cooperate in hoeing, ploughing, harvesting and brickmaking (Pretorius 1985: 147 & Pretorius 1993: 76 & 77). Payment is in the form of food and *amarhewu* (a light non-intoxicating beer made from maize) rather than money thereby avoiding "a Westernized method of payment" (Pretorius 1993: 76).[13]

Zionists are discouraged from relying on trading stores to provide necessities; in practice this cannot be avoided. In order to address the paradox goods purchased

from trading stores are ritually cleansed with holy water. Alienated products, which are not the product of their own work are given a new social and spiritual identity. This ritual cleansing of alien products by subjecting them to Zionist church symbolic regime remind one of the manner in which Western goods and money acquired in the cities by *Abantu Babomvu* migrant labourers were previously subjected to the *umzi* and its symbolic regime.

The *AmaZiyoni* collective identity is expressed in distinct Zionist colour coded items of clothing, usually blue, green or white; their style of church service, with circular trotting-like dancing, certain postures in prayer, clapping, singing and shouting accompanied by drums, rattles, and trumpets and an emphasis on healing, which "is the most conspicuous phenomenon by which the AICs distinguish themselves from classical mission churches" (Pretorius 1985: 150).

By healing the *AmaZiyoni* mean the restoration of *impilo*, which in English is health. However, the word health does not adequately capture all-embracing nature of the *isiXhosa* concept for general well-being or fullness of life. This broad understanding of health is based on a traditional African view that the central value of life is the vital force (*amandla*), which is manifested in a healthy condition (*impilo*). Illness is seen as the shrinking of *amandla*. *Impilo* does not only determine the well-being, survival and sound relations of the individual, but also that of the family and society at large. Healing restores the equilibrium in the family, community and society (Pretorius 1985). The Zionist church's total activity aims at *impilo*, fullness of life, well-being and harmony between human beings and their physical, social and spiritual environment.

Pretorius (1985: 149, 1993: 70) is convinced that the growth of Zionism in the Transkei is largely the result of a loss of confidence in the traditional strategies for maintaining or restoring *impilo*, hence the appeal of Zionism's distinctive healing strategies. In his study of the ZACZ, Pretorius (1993: 68-69) observes that half of those who were previously *Abantu Babomvu* became *AmaZiyoni* because they were generally discontent with their previous religion and the associated lifestyle it implied and were attracted to what they perceived as a better life offered by the Zionist church (Pretorius 1993: 68-69). The other half was motivated by a need for *impilo* (Pretorius 1993: 68-69). Pretorius (1985: 10) also observes that healing played a direct role in the conversion to Zionism of 36% of the leaders of the 25 Zionist-Apostolic churches he studied. Comaroff (1985: 232) claims that the metaphor of healing in Zionism provides the means for effecting personal and collective transformation. "The signs of external domination and depersonalization [are] turned for the duration of the service into symbols of healing and reconstitution" (Comaroff 1985: 232).

Zionism constructs "a symbolic order in direct opposition to that of Protestant orthodoxy and the rational, dualistic

worldview it presupposed. Through its key metaphor of healing, it emphasized the reintegration of matter and spirit, the practical agency of divine force, and the social relocation of the displaced; in short, it drew together everything that had been set apart in the black experience of colonialization and wage labor . . . Zionism was to offer the apparent possibility of reconstructing a holistic community within which the impact of industrial capitalism could be resisted. (Comaroff 1985: 176).

Oosthuizen observes that

> These churches, although seldom directly active in organized political movements, have, through their forms of spirituality, their simple life-style, and their work ethic moulded a new socio-political consciousness. They have insisted on an ethic of self-restraint and thrift; they have prized personal discipline and integrity; they have taught their followers to be industrious; they have offered them liberation from evil powers, and psychic, spiritual, physical, and social healing. Their impact of society, and hence indirectly on politics, has been tremendous. (cited in Pretorius 1993: 226)

The renegotiation of the *Abantu Babomvu* identity, in a way that engaged meaningfully with the changing socio-cultural experience while not compromising core issues of concern such as the emphasis on *ubuntu*, was facilitated by the availability of a Zionist-Apostolic identity and ideology which could adequately take over where the *Abantu Babomvu* identity left off. It can be seen as a change in resistance strategy in order to neutralise the destructive elements in Western "civilisation". The *AmaZiyoni* collective identity provided a new frame of reference and religio-cultural set of symbols, which empowered its adherents to manipulate a dehumanising socio-cultural experience in a way that defended their humanity and sense of self (albeit a changed self). It mediated between the discontinuities people experience, for example, between communalism and its notion of self, and the liberal capitalist culture, with the emphasis of individualism, which undermines this.

AmaZiyoni have succeeded the *Abantu Babomvu* as the result of a continuous negotiation of identity prompted by resistance to colonisation of self and changing socio-economic conditions derived from pressures originating from contact with Western capitalism.

Concluding Remarks

This paper demonstrates how, from what, by whom and for what the *Abantu Bambomvu* collective identity was constructed and subsequently re-negotiated as

AmaZiyoni. In this paper I examined the emergence and decline of the *Abantu Babomvu* and their conversion to *AmaZiyoni* as a process of negotiating collective identity in rural South Africa, prompted by the resistance to colonisation of self and changing socio-economic conditions originating from contact with Western capitalism. The paper draws attention to human agency in the negotiation of collective identity and collective resistance and the active process of shaping and forging an image of what a social grouping stands for and how it wishes to be viewed by others. Furthermore, I have sought to demonstrate how significant changes in the mode of production, the socio-cultural experience, and the pace of change influenced the manner in which the collective identity of an indigenous grouping in South Africa was negotiated and re-negotiated over different historical periods. The resistance identity of the *Abantu Babomvu* and subsequently the *AmaZiyoni* was generated by rural actors in positions and conditions devalued and stigmatised by the logic of Western domination. Therefore their passive resistance strategies are based on principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the Western capitalist institutions which have dominated South African society. The *Abantu Babomvu* and the *AmaZiyoni* have successfully inverted the terms of oppressive discourse by building a defensive identity using terms from dominant Western capitalist institutions and ideologies, reversing negative value judgements yet reinforcing lines of resistance in ways that represent "exclusion of the excluders by the excluded" (Castells 2004: 7). Thus the *Abantu Babomvu* and subsequently the *AmaZiyoni* have processed their socio-cultural experiences of Western Capitalism and rearranged its self-alienating meanings, according to social determinations and cultural projects that are rooted in an African social structure and space/time framework.

Colonisation of self is a global process that encompasses colonialism and neo-colonialism. It is locally manifested in attempts over centuries by Western capitalist institutions such as the school, the missionary church, the workplace and the trading store to create new social identities or new kinds of people: new school students, new converts, new workers and new consumers. Yet the capitalist order has not enjoyed absolute ideological or cultural hegemony. Hall (1992: 305) has observed that while Western Capitalism is a global process that impacts on local identities, matters do not end there because local identities respond to the global—albeit from a position of disadvantage. In their everyday production of goods and meanings the *Abantu Babomvu* and subsequently the *AmaZiyoni* have complied yet resisted, reproduced yet sought to transform their predicament. In so doing, they have successfully defended themselves against the colonisation of self by Western capitalism.

Notes

1   A number of the historical observations made in this paper were first made in a conference paper "Social Change, Resistance and Worldview of a Community in the Transkei". The conference proceedings were published in Oosthuizen, Kitshoff & Dube (eds). (1994). *Afro-Christianity at the Grassroots*. In that paper I adopted what is arguably a functionalist explanation for changes in the worldview of a community. This paper expands on and adds to the earlier observations, and re-examines them using a new analytical framework which draws on radical humanists: Casey (1995), Castells (2004), Comaroff (1985), Habermas (1987) and Melucci (1995). This paper is the first in a series on African strategies for negotiating identity in response to the colonisation of self by Western capitalism.

2   Zionist-Apostolic churches are African Initiated Churches, sometimes referred to as African Independent Churches (see below for further information).

3   By socio-cultural experience I mean the sum total of each individual's experiences of his/her world-out-there (Cumpsty 1991). Although this may be unique to each individual, it is very much manipulated by the culture and social structure, of which he/she is both a product, and a part creator.

4   The colonial government introduced a tax system which meant that the indigenous people had to find the means to pay the taxes.

5   A migrant labourer is here understood to be a person who is away from his/her normal place of residence for two weeks or more in any one month; who contributes to the household and who, despite his/her absence, is regarded as a member of the family.

6   The rest were made up of 46% Mission Christians and 12% affiliated to Zionist-Apostolic or Ethiopian churches – the so-called African Independent Churches.

7   Their expectations of economic advancement and social equality with whites never materialised. Protest and resistance amongst school people took various forms, e.g. the breakaway Ethiopian-type churches were formed by school people out of frustration with the white hierarchy in the mainline churches; political organisations such as the African National Congress translated the political frustrations of school people into programmes of action.

8   The establishment of the *umzi* meant the reproduction of homestead social relations, e.g. the relations between parents and children, the confirming of the role of the elder men folk (men who had retired to their homes in their early fifties). This involved ritual practices on which, for example, the sons' immediate and future welfare depended. It also meant guarding the young men's interest in land and cattle, and the protection of the dignity of the women folk

9   The 1960 & 1970 Census use the category "non-christian". Pauw (1975: 37) notes that this category includes: "other"; "object and no religion" and "unspecified"; however, for isiXhosa-speaking people of the Transkei "non-Christian" really means "persons adhering exclusively to small-scale traditional forms of religion" (ibid) or African Traditional Religion.

10   In 1996 the first Census in a democratic South Africa no longer recognised the Transkei as a separate region. For comparative purposes I have isolated the statistics

for the municipal areas that previously constituted the former Transkei. From 1996 the category African Traditional Religion is used in the South African Census data.

11   The Zionist-Apostolic or Zionist type African Initiated Churches are not to be confused with the Ethiopian-type African Independent Churches. Zionist-Apostolic type churches have been referred to as the African appropriation and indigenisation of Christian symbols. Ethiopian-type churches have seceded from mission churches primarily on grounds of racial discrimination and oppression; they are thought to be nationalistic but otherwise their pattern of worship and doctrine are very similar to the mission church.

12   Incidentally, the ZACZ Pretorius studied is in the village of Rhini, which is situated along the Transkei Wild Coast and close to Coffee Bay in the Mqanduli municipality and about 60 km North East of the Shixini village, which I refer to earlier.

13   By way of contrast, Pretorius (1993:75) notes that the father of the famous Rev. Tiyo Soga, who was a missionary church convert, introduced the payment of wages to work parties which transformed cooperative community relations into farmer-labourer relations.

Works Cited

Beinart, W. 1982. *The Political Economy of Pondoland 1860-1930*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Beinart, W. & Bundy, C. 1980. "State Intervention and Rural Resistance: the Transkei 1900–1965." In *Peasants in Africa: Historical and Contemporary Perspective*, pp. 271–315. Edited by M. Klein. Sage: London.

Beinart, W. & Bundy, C. 1987. *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa: Politics and Popular Movements in the Transkei and Eastern Cape 1890-1930*. London: J. Curry.

Brewer, M. B. 2001. "The Many Faces of Social Identity: Implications for Political Psychology." *Political Psychology*, 22, 1, pp. 115-125.

Bundy, C. 1988. *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry*. London: Heinemann.

Burgess, S. 2002. *SA Tribes: Who We Are, How We Live and What We Want From Life in the New South Africa*. Claremont: David Philip Publishers.

Castells, M. 2004. *The Power of Identity* (2nd Edition). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Casey, C. 1995. *Work, Self and Society after Industrialism*. London: Routledge.

Comaroff, J. 1985. *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance: the Culture and History of a South African People*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cumpsty, J. 1991. *Religion as Belonging: A General Theory of Religion*. Lanham: University Press of America.

De Wet, C. 1989. "Betterment Planning in a Rural Village in Keiskammahoek, Ciskei." *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2, pp. 326-345.

Elphick, R. 1981. "Africans and Christian Campaign in Southern Africa." In *The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa Compared*, pp. 270-307. Edited by H. Lamar & L. Thompson. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Etherington, N. 1978. *Preachers, Peasants and Politics in Southeast Africa.1835-1880: African Christian Communities in Natal, Pondoland, and Zululand*. London: Royal

Historical Society.

Hall, J., Held, D. & McGrew, T. (Eds). 1992. *Modernity and its Futures.* Cambridge: Polity in association with the Open University.

Habermas, J. 1984. *The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume 1: Reason and Rationalization of Society.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Habermas, J. 1987. *The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume 2: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Hammond-Tooke, W. D. 1975. *Command or Consensus: The Development of Transkeian Local Government.* Cape Town: David Philip.

Hodgson, J. 1985. "A Study of the Xhosa Prophet Nxele. Part I." *Religion in Southern Africa*, 6, 2, pp. 11-36.

Hodgson, J. 1986. "A Study of the Xhosa Prophet Nxele. Part II." *Religion in Southern Africa*, 7, 1, pp. 3-24.

Hunt Davis, R. 1979. "School vs. Blanket and Settler: Elijah Makiwane and the Leadership of the Cape School Community." *African Affairs*, 78, 310, pp. 12-31.

Johnston, H. & Klandermans, B. 1995. "The Cultural Analysis of Social Movements." In *Social Movements and Culture*, pp. 3-24. Edited by B. Johnston & B. Klandermans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Kiernan, J.P. 1986. "The Management of Complex Religious Identity. The Case of Zulu Zionism." *Religion in Southern Africa*, 17, 2, pp. 3-14.

Klandermans, B. 1997. *The Social Psychology of Protest.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Kritzinger, J. 1986. "What the Statistics Tell us About the African Indigenous Churches in South Africa." In *Religion Alive: Studies in the New Movements and Indigenous Churches in Southern Africa: a symposium*, pp. 253-261. Edited by G.C. Oosthuizen. Johannesburg: Hodder & Stoughton.

Kruss, G. 1985. Religion, Class and Culture – Indigenous Churches in South Africa, with Special Reference to Zionist-Apostolics. MA Thesis, Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

Kuckurtz, L. 1983. "Symbol and Authority in Mpondo Ancestor Religion. Part 1." *African Studies*, 42, 2, pp. 113-33.

Kuckurtz, L. 1984. "Symbol and Authority in Mpondo Ancestor Religion. Part 2." *African Studies*, 43, 2, pp. 1-17.

Mafeje, A. 1975. "Religion, Class and Ideology in South Africa." In *Religion and Social Change in Southern Africa: Anthropological Essays in Honour of Monica Wilson*, pp. 164-84. Edited by M. Whisson & M. West. Cape Town: David Philip.

Mayer, P. 1971. *Townsmen or Tribesmen: Conservatism and the Process of Urbanization in a South African City.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Mayer, P. (ed). 1980. *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

McAllister, P. A. 1980. "Work, Homestead, and the Shades: The Ritual Interpretations of Labour Migration Among the Gcaleka." In *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society*, pp. 205-254. Edited by P. Mayer. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

McAllister, P. A. 1989. "Resistance to 'Betterment' in the Transkei." *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2, pp. 346-368.

Melucci, A. 1989. *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Identity Needs in Contemporary Society.* London: Hutchinson Radius.

Ngada, N.H. & Mofokeng, K.E. 2001. *African Christian Witness: The Movement of the Spirit in African Indigenous Churches.* Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.

Pauw, B.A. 1975. *Christianity and the Xhosa Tradition.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Peires, J. 1979. "Nxele, Ntsikana and the Orgins of the Xhosa Religious Reaction." *Journal of African History*, 20, 1, pp. 51-62.

Peires, J. 1986. " 'Soft' Believers and 'Hard' Unbelievers in the Xhosa Cattle Killing." *Journal of African History*, 27, 3, pp. 443-461.

Peires, J. 1987. "The Central Beliefs of the Xhosa Cattle-Killing." *Journal of African History*, 28, 1, pp. 43-63.

Peires, J. 2003a (2nd edition). *The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-killing Movement of 1856-7.* Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball.

Peires, J. 2003b (2nd edition). *The House of Phalo: a History of the Xhosa People in the Days of their Independence.* Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball.

Pretorius, H. 1984. "Historical Trends in Transkeian Zionism." *Missionalia*, 12, 1, pp. 7-12.

Pretorius, H. 1985. *Sound the Trumpet of Zion: Aspects of a Movement in Transkei.* Pretoria: Iswen.

Pretorius, H. 1986. "Some Beliefs and Related Practices in a Transkeiam Zionist Church." In *Religion Alive: Studies in New Movements and Indigenous Churches in southern Africa.* Edited by G.C. Oosthuizen. Johannesburg: Hodder & Stoughton.

Pretorius, H. 1993. *Ethiopia Stretches Out Her Hands Unto God: Aspects of Transkeian Indigenous Churches.* Pretoria: Institute for Missiological Research.

Pretorius, H. & Jafta, L. 1997. "A Branch Springs Out: African Initiated Churches." In *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social & Cultural History*, pp. 211-226. Edited by R, Elphick & R. Davenport. Cape Town: David Philip.

Saunders, C. and Derricourt, R. (eds). 1974. *Beyond the Cape Frontier.* London: Longman.

Stapleton, T. J. 2001. *Faku: Rulership and Colonialism in the Mpondo Kingdom (c.1760-1867).* Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press.

Taylor, V. & Whittier, N.E. 1992. "Collective Identity in Social Movement Communities: Lesbian Feminist Mobilization." In *Frontiers of Social Movement Theory*, pp. 104-130. Edited by A. Morris & C. Mueller. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Wilson, M. 1969. "Co-operation and Conflict: The Eastern Cape Frontier." In *The Oxford History of South Africa*, *Volume 1: South Africa to 1870*, pp. 233-268. Edited by M. Wilson & L. Thompson. London: Oxford University Press.