

THE INDIAN MUTINY OF 1857 AND THE CAPE COLONY

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Part II: The Emergence of Black Consciousness in Caffraria

A major effect of the Indian Mutiny on the Cape Colony was an urgent demand for troops and horses.¹ But there is evidence that more than these material aspects was involved. It is clear that the Mutiny made a strong impression on the Blacks, and may be considered as a formative influence on Black cohesiveness in Caffraria,² and, indeed, even on the emergence of Black consciousness itself. By Black cohesiveness is meant the emergence of some sort of common feeling among Blacks, of whatever tribe (people), that they were the Black people of Africa, drawn together by the universal threat of White territorial encroachment on their land and their way of life. By Black consciousness is meant the articulation by 1865 of this pervasive sense of ethnicity into a written statement by the Reverend Tiyo Soga (1829—1871) which reflected pride of belonging to an ideal Africa-wide Black people, who were strong physically, tenacious culturally, and proud of their heritage and colour. It must be stressed that "Blackness" was an essential ingredient in this increasing sensitivity.

Some years ago I did some preliminary work on the emergence of Black nationalism in South Africa during the 19th Century. This identified the Eastern Frontier and the "triangle of resistance" (East London, Port Elizabeth and Alice) as a crucial, formative area.³ The connection has been acknowledged subsequently.⁴ But the subject needs amplification, especially for the 1850's and early 1860's where detailed analysis is lacking, and where all the indications point to a period of considerable gestation of Black consciousness and cohesiveness between the Crimean War (1853—1856) and Tiyo Soga's significant statement in 1865 on the future of the "Kafir race."⁵ In the 'fifties there was a free-floating belief in the resurrection of the leaders of the Blacks in Caffraria who were fighting the Whites; by the 'sixties there was an articulated, sensitive exposition of Black consciousness, in the tradition of James Africanus Horton, Edward Wilmot Blyden and Bishop James Johnson in 19th Century West Africa.⁶ I suggest that Tiyo Soga's statement was not only a reaction to immediate difficulties on the part of the Blacks, especially the proposed removal of the Ngqika east of the Kei,⁷ but also a response which had been nurtured by a

1. See Part I of this article, *passim*, which appeared in *Historia*, May 1987, pp. 55—69.
2. I use "Caffraria" generically to designate the land between the Great Fish and Umzimkulu Rivers.
3. Donovan Williams: "African Nationalism in South Africa: Origins and Problems," *Journal of African History*, Vol. XI, No. 3, 1970, pp. 371—383.
4. André Odendaal: *Vukani Bantu! The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics in South Africa to 1912* (Cape Town/Johannesburg), p. 286.
5. Printed in Donovan Williams (ed.): *The Journal and Selected Writings of the Reverend Tiyo Soga* (Cape Town, 1983), pp. 38—40, for extract from the journal, and pp. 178—182 for extract from *King William's Town Gazette and Caffrarian Banner*.
6. See R.W. July: *The Origins of Modern African Thought: its development in West Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries* (London, 1968), chs. 6 and 11.
7. See Williams (ed.): *Journal*, pp. 202, note 12, for these circumstances. Also see Donovan Williams: *Umfundisi: A Biography of Tiyo Soga, 1829—1871*, (Lovedale, 1978), pp. 91—94, for ano-



From Mrs. Alice
Lyons

The Reverend Tiyo Soga
1829—1871

decade of restless thoughts among the Blacks on how to resist the continuous and increasing material and spiritual pressures being exerted upon them by the Whites.⁸ The Indian Mutiny played an important role in formulating and sustaining such attitudes.

These feelings were already evident as early as 1828 when Kelly (Tyali), son of Ngqika, paramount chief of the amaXhosa, met with Colonel Somerset who admonished him for descending on Tyhumie (Chumie) mission station and killing one of its inhabitants who was a member of his tribe. Tyali replied that "The chiefs in this land had a right to do to their people, and act according to their own laws, as they pleased, as their fathers had done, so would they do ..."⁹ As I have pointed out, this was "a specifically Xhosa tribal statement of cohesion." (Less than forty years later, as we shall see below, Tiyo Soga's journal reflected an African as opposed to a tribal consciousness.)

In 1850 the "tribal" strain was still evident in Sandile's call to Pato:

Arise, clans of the Kaffir (Xhosa) nation! The white man has wearied us; let us fight for our country: they are depriving us of our rights which we inherit from our forefathers: we are deprived of our chieftainship, and the white man is the chief to whom we are obliged to submit: Sandile will die fighting for the rights of his forefathers.¹⁰

Johannes Meintjies has commented on Sandile as follows: "It was in the period 1847 to 1850 that Sandile began to emerge as a mature man and a great patriot. As a 'freedom figh-

ther reason. The Rev. J.A. Chalmers had written a most negative article in *Indaba*, Feb. 1865, Vol. 11, No. 14, pp. 495–497, entitled "What is the destiny of the Kaffir Race?". Soga was responding to this, specifically, in positive terms. If one is prepared to accept Chalmers' observations as symptomatic of a new, less accommodating (racist) attitude on the part of missionaries generally towards people of colour — something which started as early as the 'forties with de Gobineau and others — then this, too, is an example (less obtrusive, perhaps, but nevertheless discernable) of the "spiritual pressure" I refer to as a source of Tiyo Soga's writing. But at this stage of my research I am not prepared to be categorical about it — at least not until a lot more work has been done on the Rev. J.A. Chalmers. For the emergence of the new attitude see Philip J. Curtin: *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action 1780–1850* (Wisconsin, 1964), Pt. 111, *passim*. The latest mention of it is probably Andrew Ross: *John Philip (1775–1851): Missions, Race and Politics in South Africa* (Aberdeen, 1986), p. 192.

8. I draw attention to my statement in *The Journal and Selected Writings of the Reverend Tiyo Soga*, p. 200, note 1: "Inevitably, in the writing of South African history, each generation struggles with the vexatious problem of nomenclature when seeking to describe ethnicity, or, in harsher terms, race. I have used the term 'Black' to describe Tiyo Soga's ethnic group which he unashamedly called the 'Kaffir race' of which he was so proud. Historically the 'Kaffirs' were the Xhosa, but Tiyo Soga also perceived it as embracing all black people in Africa. There is no doubt about his insistence on colour (or, as he described it, 'African blood') as an undeniable and identifying characteristic. I use the term 'Black' or 'black person' in the same way, specifically or generally, even though they are, like all other terms, open to criticism: for all Blacks are not black and all Whites are not white." Therefore it is obvious that to describe the confrontation along the Eastern Frontier of the Cape Colony in terms of Black versus White is an oversimplification. However, it is an inescapable fact that during the period from the 1850's to the 1870's there is ample evidence of balkanisation between the two groups, thus described in general terms, and that there are frequent references by the Blacks which indicate that they were developing (or continuing to develop) hostility towards white people. And there is no doubt that this hostility drew strength from an increasing sense of cohesiveness based on the concept of being part of the black people, of whatever tribal persuasion.
9. Williams: "African Nationalism in South Africa: Origins and Problems," p. 380.
10. CO 48/308, Smith & Grey, October 31, 1850: Enclosure: Statement by George Cyrus, August 15, 1850. Quoted in A.E. du Toit, *The Cape Frontier: A study of Native Policy with Special Reference to the Years 1847–1866* (Archives Year Book for South African History, 1954, Government Printer), Vol. 1, p. 55.

ter' he had much in common with men elsewhere in the world who laboured and fought for the unification of their people, for a national awareness and for independence from an oppressor.¹¹ But "nationalism" is an elusive concept, and Meintjies' use of the word for this early period of Caffrarian history seems premature and open to criticism on the part of the purists. Nevertheless, he has identified in one section of the Caffrarian Blacks a deepening feeling and a gathering momentum in sentiment which are the precursors of nationalism, or "incipient nationalism". As I have indicated elsewhere, incipient nationalism in Caffraria is characterized by a strain of unification among the various tribes, "some consciousness of belonging to a common race, with a common heritage that included long years of defensive measures against white encroachment, both material and spiritual".¹²

Events abroad during the 'fifties played a significant part in crystallizing isolated tribal feelings into a more generalized response. And this response was strongly laced with a growing consciousness on the part of the Blacks that they, *qua Blacks*, were pitted against the Whites. There is no doubt that the 1851 Frontier War had about it some elements of a race war and that in Caffraria the colour line between White and Black had been drawn.¹³ This is not to minimize the fact that the Eastern Frontier and Christian missions in Caffraria were ethnic melting pots. Black territory had been lost and continuing Christian missionary activity posed a spiritual threat.¹⁴ The evidence strongly suggests that after 1853 especially during the years of the Crimean War (1853—1856), there was a general consolidation of an attitude of "them and us" on the part of the Blacks in Caffraria, based on differences in colour. It drew strength from the speculation which had been abroad during the Crimean War that the British should and would be resisted by the Blacks led by former chiefs and prophets who, hallowed by earlier resistance, in mystical fashion emerged in the Crimea to fight the Whites. The Blacks of Caffraria clearly hoped the "English" would be beaten.¹⁵ What is significant is that the Blacks were most interested in the *colour* of those fighting against the British. Umhalla and 50 of his counsellors were surprised that the Russians were white.¹⁶ "Rumourts circulated that Makana, Ngqika, Mlanjeni, and other historical figures were fighting the English over the Water (i.e. in the Crimea) and that it was a lie that the Russians were white. The common opinion was that they were

Sandile: The Fall of the Xhosa Nation (Cape Town, 1971), pp. 182—183. Meintjies correctly points out that the British were not, strictly speaking, "oppressors"; they sought to "civilize". But Sandile's *apprehension* is clear.

"African Nationalism in South Africa", p. 382. My ideas seem to have been accepted by André Odendaal in *Vukani Bantu!* (p. 287, footnote 124). My concept of "incipient nationalism" subsumes "primary resistance" and seems more acceptable than the mechanistic "proto-nationalism".

13. Williams: "African Nationalism in South Africa", p. 380; *Umfundisi*, p. 21.

14. The disquiet on the part of the Blacks resulting from the advent of missions in Caffraria and the missionary activity itself is undeniable during the first half of the 19th Century. (See Donovan Williams: *When Races Meet: The Life and Times of William Ritchie Thomson, 1796—1891* (Johannesburg, 1967), Chs. 4—5, *passim*; *Umfundisi*, pp. 78—86.) During the 'fifties and 'sixties the pressure increased. (See B.A. Pauw, *Christianity and Xhosa Tradition: Belief and Ritual among Xhosa-Speaking Christians* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 23—25.)

15. See John Zarwan, "The Xhosa Cattle Killings, 1856—57", *Cahiers d'Étude africaines*, 63—64, XVBI (3—4), p. 523 for useful references including N.J. Merriman in D.H. Varley and H.H. Mathew, (eds.): *The Cape Journals of Archdeacon N.J. Merriman* (Cape Town, 1957), p. 216.

16. Varley and Mathew, p. 215.

black and formerly Xhosa warriors who were killed in wars against the Cape Colony."¹⁷

The Xhosa Cattle Killing during 1856–1857 laid the already vulnerable Xhosa, and Blacks generally, wide open to White domination. The sad event had parallels in other parts of the world but had no connection with the Indian Mutiny. Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, writing to Grey, meditated briefly on the

strange coincidence of this mutiny, apparently originating in a question of Caste, with the wonderful exhibition of the power of Superstition which you have just witnessed at the Cape.¹⁸

He went on to hope that the slaughter by the "Kaffirs" of their cattle might be a means of

destroying forever the influence of these false prophets, and blind superstitions — and that the sanguinary revolt of the Bengal Sepoys will inflict a no less deadly blow upon the powers of the Brahmins and the prejudices of Caste.

The pervasiveness of a disapproving attitude to the "superstitious" practices of benighted native people¹⁹ was a concomitant of territorial pressure, conquest, dispossession and the threat of cultural dilution. Caffraria and India had suffered from these, in varying degrees, and both the Cattle Killing and the Mutiny owe their origins to the fears generated by White power, of whatever form.

In the uncertain, powerless and restless situation generated by the Cattle Killing, the Blacks turned eagerly to the Indian Mutiny as a solace in their time of trouble. The news of the outbreak reached official circles in the Cape Colony by early August, 1857²⁰. By February, 1858 it was abroad in the Cape newspapers and "coming through private letters" (as young Mrs. Murray put it).²¹ It filtered through to Caffraria quickly, for on 2 February, 1858 a "Kreli Kaffir" stated to the Chief Commissioner that

The news of the war with India are talked of throughout the Galeka Country, Tambookie land [sic], Faku's Country — It is reported that all the English Troops had gone to India from England, but were so overpowered by the Indians that all the English Troops had left this Country for the purpose of assisting their Countrymen — That all the horses had been shipped at East London, also the guns, and that the Troops had embarked at Port Elizabeth and Cape Town.

*They are delighted to hear that the Indians are a black race with short hair, and very like the Kaffirs. They only regret that they (the Kaffirs) are in such a state of destitution, that while their race is overpowering the English in India, the Kaffirs are unable to follow up the success and fall on the English in this Country.*²²

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17. Zarwan, citing *P.P.* 1857–58, p. 78, Extracts from information given to Lt. Gen. Sir James Jackson, 14 April 1856 and John Aiken Chalmers: *Tiyo Soga*, (Edinburgh, 1877), p. 102. The original statement on colour is in *P.P.* 1857, Sess. 1[2202], 22, deposition (10 April) in Grey to Labouchere (24 April 1856) (No. 32), quoted in W.D. Morrell, *British Colonial Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age* (Oxford, 1969), p. 71.
 18. Elphinstone — Grey, "Private" 29 June 1857, GH. 39/9, Cape Archives, pp. 23–24. (All G.H. and L.G. references are from the Government Archives, Cape Town.)
 19. Not all administrators in British India held such views. Sir George Russell Clerk was one of these, a worthy successor to Sir Thomas Munro, Sir Thomas Metcalfe and Sir John Malcolm, who, during the early 19th Century "Golden Age" of the British occupation of India, had formulated a humane and tolerant approach to such problems.
 20. See Part I.
 21. Joyce Murray (ed.), *Young Mrs. Murray goes to Bloemfontein* (Cape Town, 1954, p. 118.
 22. Statement to Chief Commissioner, British Caffraria, 2 February 1858, G.H. 3/34, Schedule 17/1851, Enclosure 6. (My emphasis.)

This is a significant statement, and given the uncertainties inherent in such reports, one should nevertheless take note of the phrase "the news of the war *with* India."

Thus certain Blacks, or Black groups, in Caffraria took the Mutiny seriously, looking towards it as a source of encouragement in their constrained circumstances. But the news was also a source of apprehension, particularly to those Blacks who had migrated to the Colony after the Cattle Killing in search of work. On 30 March 1858, Charles Brownlee, Ngqika Commissioner, wrote from Stutterheim to William B. Chalmers:

Reports are circulating, particularly by Kaffirs in the Colony, of a very injurious tendency respecting our position in India. Two men whom I had sent in charge of Kaffirs to Graff Reinets (sic), and who returned three or four days since, inform me that many of the Kaffirs in service are very unsettled in consequence of the reports, and that numbers of them will endeavour to return by the first favourable opportunity.

Our attempt to enlist for India has among other things been mis-represented, and Kaffirs who otherwise would go into the Colony for service are afraid to do so lest they be forcibly sent on to India.²³

On 21 September 1858 J.C. Warner informed Richard Southey that rumours of a revival of the "Umhlakazian agitation, or something of a similar nature" were becoming "more general and of a more serious nature." He continued:

although these rumours no doubt greatly exaggerate the real state of matters, yet there really does exist a great deal of superstitious excitement just now among the Tribes in the interior, as well as among the Natives of British Caffraria.

It is commonly reported that nearly every Tribe, from the Bashee to the Umzimvubi (sic), has its prophet, who almost daily harangues the people, and tells them that the black nations of the East have nearly extirpated the English, that Moshesh has settled the Boers, and that we are a doomed people.

Although there is little doubt that nearly all the Tribes in the Interior are more or less affected with this monomania, yet from all I can learn this agitation proceeds principally from Kreli and British Caffraria, and there is little doubt that the hopes of the nefarious agitators have been greatly revived of late, by the removal of so many Troops from the Frontier, and also by the reports of escaped convict Kaffirs several of whom have found their way back to Kaffirland from the Cape Town, and other parts of the Western districts, and two or three of whom are known to have passed into the Interior.

I have also been informed by a trustworthy Tambookie Chief, that similar rumours to the above are also in circulation among the Umhlakazian believers who are now scattered over the Colony as servants to the farmers.

In conclusion I may mention that I fancy these rumours are beginning to make an impression on some branches of the Tambookies of the Tambookie Location, as their bearing is more independent than it was even a short time ago ...

I must however state, that this new agitation has not yet assumed any very definite or tangible shape; but past experience has taught us that caution and vigilance are necessary, and therefore I feel it my duty to report to Government the rumours which are afloat.²⁴

Two years later J.C. Warner, Tambookie Agent, informed Richard Southey that "a very considerable revival of the Umhlakazian delusion, is just now taking place in several parts of Kaffirland, and also in Tambookieland". In the latter area "prophets" were arousing "the superstitious hopes" of the people. He gave an example involving an Englishman

23. Charles Brownlee to William B. Chalmers, Stutterheim, 30 March 1858, encl. to des. no. 42, Grey to Labouchere, 14 April 1858, G.H. 28/78.

24. J.C. Warner — Richard Southey, Resident Secretary, Graham's Town, enc. to des. no. 166, 27 September 1858, *ibid.* The prophet Umhlakaza was the prime mover in the Cattle Killing of 1856—1857.

and a deserter who had wandered into the Tambookie location. This was seized upon by

the Umhlakazian believers who declare that these 'Whites' are all that is left of the English 'over the sea;' the whole of our Nation having been destroyed by the black tribes, who have again — and this time successfully — risen up against us in defence of their liberties. And that these two having escaped the general destruction, have made their way hither, in order to convey the sad tidings to the Europeans on 'this side of the sea,' and to warn them of the doom which also awaits them.²⁵

Warner also reported that another story which was making the rounds was that Charles Brownlee, the Ngqika Commissioner, had lately held a meeting of "all the Gaikas" at which he told them that

the English were a doomed people; and that therefore he had resolved to cast himself entirely on the mercy of the Gaika Chiefs, and trusted that, as he had always been their friend, and done what he could to protect them from the oppressive conduct of the Government, they would, when they became masters of the world, have pity on him, and give him a place of refuge.²⁶

In the chief Joey's country, near the Bashee, 'the celebrated doctor 'Bombo' was

exciting the people by his wonderful predictions, with reference to the destruction of the 'white man'. There is little doubt I think that the news of the Chinese war has reached Kaffirland and it is very probable that the prophets and doctors are taking advantage of their knowledge of this fact to revive the superstitious hopes and fears of the people to incite them to acts of hostility against the Colony.²⁷

Warner expressed concern about the fact that "considerable 'treking' (sic) of Kaffirs and Tambookies" was taking place from the Colony, "which is at least a suspicious circumstance; for I have always found that these *simultaneous* trekings of Natives from all parts of the Colony back to Kaffirland bode no good to us."²⁸

These negative and hostile feelings on the part of Blacks in Caffraria toward Whites, the Cape Colony and the British Government, which fed on the Mutiny, had deep roots in the long history of the turbulent frontier wars which had left them the losers, one way or another. This was discerned in 1858 by one Captain Smales who, as a consequence of the Mutiny, suggested to the Board of Control²⁹ that "Kaffirs from the Tribes adjacent to Natal" be recruited as troops. The proposal was referred to the Colonial Office who asked Sir George Grey, as Governor of the Cape Colony, for an opinion.³⁰ Smales had had experience "in the recruiting service", having served as adjutant of the 3rd West Indian Regiment, with extensive service in recruiting in Sierra Leone and the Cape Colony. In his opinion recruiting in Caffraria would be a failure because

25. J.C. Warner — R. Southey, Glen Grey, 6 March 1860, E/2/51/60 L.G.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*

29. One of the two segments of the Home Government of India under East India Company rule. The other was the Court of Directors. In 1858, as a consequence of the Mutiny, the Crown assumed sovereignty over India.

30. E.B. Lytton — Sir George Grey, 29 June 1858, G.H. 1/262, f.17.

in order to get recruits the *first* and *all* important point to be gained is the sympathy and acquiescence of the Native Chiefs themselves[;] this cannot be obtained in British Caffraria and its immediate neighbourhood, owing to our having been *so constantly at war with them there ...*³¹

It is significant that Smales saw the paramount chiefs near Natal as allies of the British Government and observed that if they were "judiciously managed" they would be sympathetic towards recruiting.³² Given the difficulties of demarcating Blacks living "near Natal" from those living closer to the Eastern Frontier, there is no doubt that Smales identified differences in attitude between the two areas, attributable to history, and that feelings in western Transkei were more intense than in the eastern portion.

The overt hostility and resentment on the part of Blacks in western Transkei against White pressures, which was strengthened by the Indian Mutiny, contributed towards a common front among the disparate groups of that area who were often at odds with one another. Yet common cause was not the only strain in what may legitimately be regarded as incipient Black nationalism during the 1850's and 1860's. There was also an intellectual strain which sought to justify the integrity of the Blacks as a race³³ or congeries of races rooted in Africa, drawing strength from the past, proud of traditions and possessed of dignity and aspirations.

The role of Tiyo Soga in the awakening of Black consciousness

By the 1860's Caffraria had produced the Reverend Tiyo Soga, a remarkable person who is deserving of more recognition than has been accorded him in the writing of the history of the Blacks in Africa.³⁴ By the mid-sixties he had come up with a defence of the Blacks, urging them to be proud of their race and colour, stressing that they had a rich past deserving of cultivation and admiration, and trying to instill in them a dignity based on self-assurance.³⁵ Born on the Eastern Frontier of the Ngqika section of the Xhosa, educated in the Western tradition both at Lovedale and in Scotland to be a Presbyterian minister, married to a Scots lass, yet firmly rooted in his own culture, Tiyo Soga's thoughts on the Black race, its past, present and future — its *destiny* — were moulded in the crucible of a turbulent frontier which witnessed inexorable pressure on Black land and way of life.

It is significant that Tiyo Soga's working life was spent at the United Presbyterian Church mission stations of Emgwali and Turtura which were in or contiguous to the area

31. Smales to The Secretary — the Honourable E[ast] I[ndia] Co[mpany], 21 May 1858, *ibid.*, f. 21. (My emphasis.)

32. *Ibid.*

33. The use of the word "race" is derived from the writings of the Reverend Tiyo Soga himself. (See below.)

34. There are three major sources for the life and times of Tiyo Soga. The first is the original biography by John Aiken Chalmers: *Tiyo Soga: A Page of South African Missionary Work* (1st ed., Edinburgh 1877). More than a century later I published *Umfundisi — A Biography of Tiyo Soga 1829—1872* (Lovedale, 1978) and *The Journal and Selected Writings of the Reverend Tiyo Soga* (Grahamstown Series No. 7, A.A. Balkema, Cape Town and The Hague, 1983.) For further source material the reader is referred to my biographical essay in *Umfundisi*, pp. xiii — xx, 134—138, and the edited *Journal and Selected Writings*, pp. 209—210. In this article I refrain from tedious repetition inherent in a detailed discussion of Tiyo Soga's life and times, concentrating rather on broad statements on his significance for the growth of Black consciousness which may be verified by reference to the publications mentioned above.

35. Williams (ed.): *Journal*, pp. 38—40; "A National Newspaper", *Indaba*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Aug. 1862, pp. 9—11, in *Journal*, pp. 151—153; Williams: *Umfundisi*, Ch. 7, *passim*.

identified by Smales as inhabited by Blacks who were hostile towards the Cape Colony. Tiyo Soga himself was not antagonistic towards the Cape Colony and all it implied for the future of the Blacks; yet the pull of his people was strong. True enough, he was in favour of abolishing the grosser practices of traditional Xhosa society while inculcating Christianity, with its handmaiden, Western Civilization, under the umbrella of British rule.³⁶ But, equally, he was strongly supportive of the bulk of rites, customs and traditions³⁷ which bound together both his own Ngqika people and other Blacks, as members of a universal Black race.³⁸

Tiyo Soga's perception of the universal Black race emerges in his journal where he sees the "Tambookies — Mapondo's — Napondomisi — Mabomvana — Galekas — Zulu's — MaSwazi" as "all pure, Kaffir races — one in language — manners — with but slight differences ..."³⁹ and stretching to the Equator.⁴⁰ He sees the Blacks as resilient: "Africa God has given to Ham — and all his descendants — my firm believe (sic) is that nothing shall ever dispossess them of this inheritance". As I have pointed out elsewhere, Tiyo Soga's most original contribution to Black thought was *African consciousness*. Black people contained all the elements from which "a noble race might be made". It was this commitment which made Tiyo Soga opt for the Blacks, in the final analysis.

His negritude is evident in the advice he gave to his children when they left to be educated in Scotland (for he was realistic enough to take out that insurance for them!): 'take your place in the world as coloured, not as white men; as Kaffirs, not as Englishmen ... For your own sakes never appear ashamed that your father was a Kafir, and that you inherit some African blood'.⁴¹ He even advocated exclusiveness: he called upon people of colour to help one another and to patronize each other's business and shops. His frequent use of Ntsikana's great hymn in services conceivably contributed to the origins of separatist (nativist) churchers.⁴²

A careful scrutiny of Tiyo Soga's writings reveals that although he was strongly in favour of Blacks having faith in themselves, their way of life (subject to the constraints of Victorian morality), their land and their heritage,⁴³ there is virtually nothing which suggests that he came down on the side of the Blacks with even a hint that they be aggressive against the Whites or their governments in the Cape Colony or British Caffraria. There is an acceptance of British authority over those parts of southern Africa in which he lived and worked — an acceptance which clearly demonstrates that he was inextricably involved with life to the West of the frontier which had threads extending to Glasgow and Edinburgh. His education at Lovedale and in Scotland had made its mark. When he left Scotland to return to Caffraria he thought of it as leaving "home." In his case cultural conquest was clearly evident.

And yet it did not turn him against his own people and their ways which were very important to him. With the launching of *Indaba* (The News) by Lovedale Press in 1862 he

36. Williams (ed.), *Journal*, p. 3.

37. "A National Newspaper," *Indaba*, Vol. 1, No. 1, August, 1862, pp. 9—11, in Williams (ed.): *Journal*, pp. 15—153.

38. Williams (ed.): *Journal*, pp. 38—39.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 180. (From the polished version in the *King William's Town Gazette, and Kaffrarian Banner*.)

41. J.A. Chalmers: *Tiyo Soga: A Page of South African Mission Work*, (1st ed., Edinburgh and London, 1877) p. 430.

42. Williams; *Journal*, p. 6; *Umfundisi*, Ch. 7, *passim*.

43. See especially "A National Newspaper," *Indaba*, Vol. 1, No. 1, August, 1862, pp. 9—11, in Williams (ed.): *Journal*, pp. 151—153.

called upon "the Xhosa and Embo people" to "disgorge all they know.

Everything must be imparted to the nation as a whole. Fables must be retold: what was history and legend must be recounted ... whatever was seen heard or done under the requirements of custom would be brought to light and placed on the national table to be sifted for preservation ... Were there no national pets in the days of yore? ... Let us bring to life our ancestors; Ngconde, Togu, Tshiwo, Phalo, Rharhabe, Mlawu, Ngqika and Ndlambe. Let us resurrect our ancestral fore-bears who bequeathed to us a rich heritage.⁴⁴

The use of the word "nation" is instructive. It would seem that Tiyo Soga saw his Xhosa people as a circumscribed body in European terms. Yet they were part of the wider whole in whom he had full confidence:

Everything was of God given to the race of Ham. I find the Negro from the days of the old Assyrians downwards, keeping his 'individuality' and 'distinctiveness', amid the wreck of empires, and the revolution of ages. I find him keeping his place among the nations, and keeping his home and country. I find him opposed by nation after nation and driven from his home. I find him enslaved — exposed to the vices and brandy of the white man ... I find him exposed to all these disasters, and yet living — multiplying 'and never extinct'.⁴⁵

With all this Africanness, nevertheless Tiyo Soga, as a Christian minister, sought to Civilize and Christianize the Blacks. In his view the missionaries had suffered from a chronic shortage of funds which had inhibited their great work of redemption and salvation from the depths of much of the grosser aspects of Black rites and customs. He saw the solution as advancing what he called "the alternative elevation of aboriginal races" through "the Gospel by itself and christian civilization (sic) by itself."⁴⁶

There is no doubt that Tiyo Soga's thoughts on the nature and destiny of the Blacks aligns him squarely with the protagonists of Black consciousness in West Africa. As far as I can ascertain he arrived at his conclusions independently of them. And yet, when all is said and done, it is difficult to assess Tiyo Soga's influence. His letter in the *King William's Town Gazette and Kaffrarian Banner* of 11 May 1865 on "The Destiny of the Kaffir Race" is rich and evocative. But it appeared under the pseudonym "Defensor." How many Blacks would have read it, or his articles in *Indaba*? André Odendaal puts the number receiving elementary mission education at 9,000 in the 1850's throughout southern Africa. Most of these were in the Cape Colony.⁴⁷ The Cape liberal tradition produced political activity among the Mfengu in the Cape Colony during the 1860's and early 1870's. But by the 1870's only a "small missionary-educated class of Africans" had emerged and began to use newspapers for debate and forums. The *Isigidimi Sama Xhosa* (started at Lovedale as the *Kaffir Express* in 1870) saw "a new class of literate Africans" active in its columns.⁴⁸ The big surge in political activity came in the 1880's. But Tiyo Soga himself did not engage in

44 *Ibid.*, p. 152.

45 Letter in *King William's Town Gazette and Kaffrarian Banner*, 11 May 1865, in Williams, (ed.): *Journal*, P. 180.

46 *Ibid.*, p. 182.

47 *Vukani Bantu!*, p. 3.

48 *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6. James Stewart, in paternal fashion, in *The South African Outlook*, January, 1880, drew attention to the fact that "The number of educated natives in South Africa is as yet exceedingly small, so small that I should be afraid to put it into figures. The number that can read and write is considerable." He then drew attention to the lack of published material by the educated Africans in the *Outlook*. (Frances Wilson and Dominique Perrot, *Outlook on a Century, South Africa, 1870–1970* (Lovedale Press, 1973), pp. 62–65.)

political activity.⁴⁹ Certainly those who began to read and use newspapers actively in the 'seventies would have been a generation who knew not Joseph. Yet, without pressing the case, Tiyo Soga's writings clearly demonstrate the trend of thought of at least one Western-educated Black. There must have been others who knew him and who read what he had written. But to what extent his workings contributed to incipient nationalism is difficult to say. It is not a quantum leap from Tiyo Soga's thoughts on Black self-help to later Black political activity. And, as has been pointed out above, I have hazarded a guess that the reverence of Tiyo Soga for Ntsikana's great hymn and its frequent use conceivably contributed to the origins of separatist churches which are closely associated with political consciousness.⁵⁰ He also undoubtedly the progenitor of Black Nationalism in the shape of a cultural nationalist. Today he is acknowledged as a Xhosa nationalist.⁵¹

I have not found evidence that Tiyo Soga's writings fed on the Indian Mutiny.⁵² He never mentions it. But there is no doubt that the Caffrarian milieu, which shaped his writings, was not ignorant of the Mutiny. Soga was close to the source of apprehension and discontent, and being a sensitive person he reflected on the lot of the Blacks and produced the sort of material which 20th Century Black nationalists in West Africa generated and made use of extensively.⁵³

The majority of South African historians writing on the 19th Century display a singular lack of appreciation for the roots of Black nationalism and, consequently, a lack of perspective when discussing late-19th Century and 20th Century developments.⁵⁴ The reasons for this are perhaps not obscure. The seductiveness of hot political activity in the 20th Century has probably led some astray. Perhaps an anti-Christian or Marxist bias has also played a role. Yet, in spite of the slow start there are signs that the 19th Century Black past cannot be denied any longer. Paradoxically, although Tiyo Soga has gone unrecognised as the progenitor of Black nationalism by the conventional political historians he has lately been accorded recognition as a cultural nationalist by research work on music, dance and

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49. While in Scotland he flirted with an (unidentifiable) political party (see *Umfundisi*, p. 27 and footnote 52). In Caffraria occasional representations to the Cape Government on behalf of Blacks seeking grants of land cannot be regarded as political activity.
50. Williams: *Umfundisi*, p. 126–128.
51. Williams: *Umfundisi*, p. 128, quoting Siphon M. Burns-Ncamashe, editorial comment, 7 Aug. 1961, in *UTiyo Soga* (Lovedale, 1969, pp. vii–xii).
52. There is only one passing reference to India in a lecture delivered in Cape Town in 1866 when Tiyo Soga mentioned Sir John Malcolm, Tipu Sultan and Hyder Ali in another context. (Williams (ed.): *Journal*, pp. 192–193).
53. See R.W. July: *The Origins of Modern African Thought, passim*. Also Hollis R. Lynch: *Edward Wilmot Blyden: Pan-Negro Patriot 1832–1912* (London, 1967), Epilogue, pp. 248–252, and especially p. 249, footnote 6.
54. The subject of the emergence of Black Nationalism during the 19th Century receives no attention in Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson: *Oxford History of South Africa* (2 vols. Oxford, 1969). Peter Walshe: *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1971), is equally neglectful, together with Rodney Davenport: *South Africa, A Modern History* (Toronto, 1980). There are others. André Odendaal: *Vukane Bantu!* has set a new trend, but much remains to be done. See also below, footnote 55.

theatre among the Blacks.⁵⁵ The full story, to which the Indian Mutiny contributed in no uncertain fashion, is still to be told.

55. See David B. Coplan: *In Township Tonight! South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre* (Johannesburg, 1985), pp. 29–30. The surge of cultural nationalism during the later 19th Century is dealt with in Chapter 2. Coplan sees Tiyo Soga as influencing the writing of the Reverend William Goba in *Isigidimi Sama Xhosa (Kaffir Express)* as well as the nationalist musical-ministry (my description) of the Reverend John Knox Bokwe (p. 30). Bokwe was also influenced by Ntsikana. He wrote his biography (Lovedale, 1914) and set the Great Hymn – which Tiyo Soga so admired and used on important occasions (Williams: *Umfundisi*, pp. 127–128) “in the simplified Curwin tonic-solfa system of notation introduced into South Africa by a London missionary, Christopher Birkett, at Fort Beaufort in 1855” (Coplan, p. 33). It is also of some interest to note that in 1938 the Black Pitch Follies (one of the large, mixed companies, backed by jazz orchestras) included “Ntsikana’s Vision” and hymns by Tiyo Soga in their repertoire (*Ibid*, p. 127). Although this book is a little too free in assigning “influence”, nevertheless it opens up a new perspectiveness on the emergence of Black cultural nationalism in the 19th Century which cannot be ignored and which must be explored further and integrated into a richer, emerging picture of political nationalism.