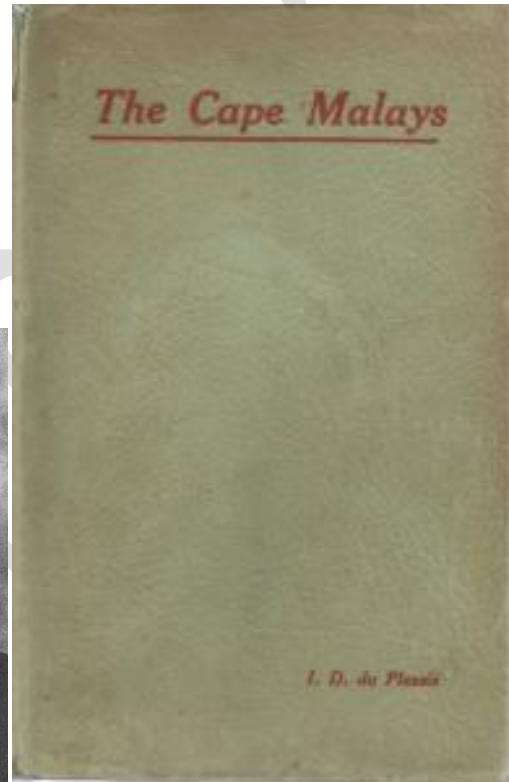


ORANG MELAYU CAPE DIASPORA

Brief History

This is the very first book on the Cape Malays of



Prof I D Du Plessis 25th June 1900 – 11th December 1981

This is an quote from his book “

“He is introspective, polite, kind towards women, children and animals; inclined to speak slowly, to be passive and indolent”.

When aroused he may lose all self control and run amok.pg 3

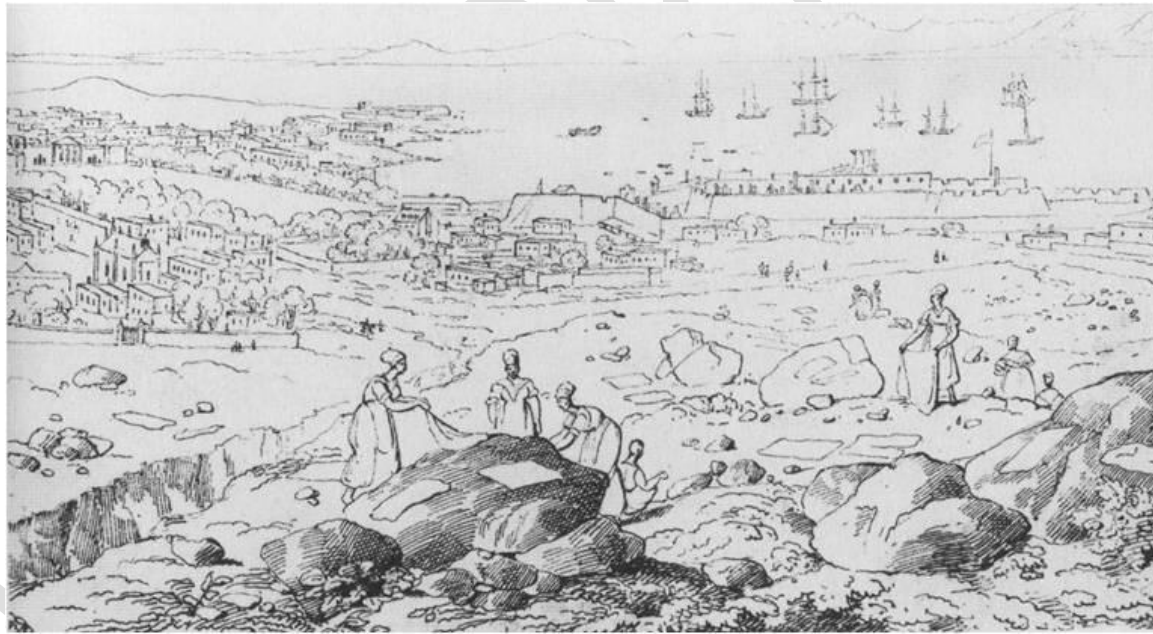
“As carpenters, cabinet-makers, coopers, masons, gardeners, tailors, shoemakers and coachmen, the Malays played an important part in life at the Cape during the 19th Century. The women did the cooking and washing and acted as *ayahs* to the children”.

pg 47 *The Cape Malays*

My personal critique on this book

Prof ID du Plessis started off by insulting and demeaning our Malayu "Adat" and "Adaab" then wrote about his experiences and stories about our narrative then immediately changed his agenda of writing this book about us.

As the Prof was an Afrikaner Nationalist and the Minister of Coloured affairs he saw that there was a definite difference between the "coloured" population group which was the indigenous people (first people) the Khoisan, San or Hottentots which was almost fully decimated by the Smallpox epidemic. Most of our Cape Malay women were the washer women persons so most of their families were directly affected by this infection.



Courtesy sketch from Iziko museums

Sketch from the Platteklouf gorge Table mountain

. The 1864 epidemic killed 25,000 inhabitants, one third of the total population in that same area. In 1713, an outbreak occurred in South Africa after a ship from India docked at Cape Town, bringing infected laundry ashore.

Source: South African History on line

Population makeup after Slavery at the Cape 1834 or 1838

There were also the offspring of the abuse women called mixed race (see Population register). The children that looked European (called the Afikaners) grew up in the slave masters house while the other children of colour (called the Adonis) were allowed to be nurtured by their mother, but were never called Cape Malay. But as time went on they turned out to be good and pious Muslims.

The Prof saw that was a definite cultural gap as the Adonis tried very hard to be accepted as Cape Malays but they only had the religion of Islam.

So the Prof ID Du Plessis decided to create the Cape Malay choirs in 1939. This upset many Cape Islamic scholars but later they accepted this created culture of choirs as an acceptable form of culture that was created by this Nationalist Afrikaner. In 1952 which was the third anniversary commemoration of the arrival of Governor Jan van Riebeeck at the Cape.

As he was commanded by the Here Sewentien VOC Dutch East company to built an refreshing station and castle at the Cape of Good Hope. At first he was instructed not to make use of indigenous people as they mostly Nomads that travelled to the North during our harsh winters May to August/September.



Picture to found Melaka at St Pauls church on top of Fort Formosa hill Melaka

Maria van Riebeeck died in 1664 in Melaka

Cape Malay choirs

The Prof creation of the Cape Malays became very popular and also promoted that Dutch Afrikaans songs which was mostly sexist lyrics was written without any of the members have any degree in the Dutch language or music of yesteryear and even today.

These songs were mostly sang by drunken Dutch sailors at the local taverns where our men frequented to assist them back to their ships for extra cash or favours

At these competitions which usually held after the New Years eve march into the recently name changed to Bo –Kaap after almost more than 200 to 300 years after the area was called Tana Baru and then to Malay quarter. Most of the people that wanted this name change were not of Malay/Melayu Asel and since the name change happen a lot protests and mayhem are happening to get tourists out of this area called Bo-Kaap.

The competitions that were held over three months with a final show at an rugby track or stadium was mainly officiated by the most conservative Afrikaners that came down from the old “Transvaal” province which was one of the four provinces in the old Apartheid racists South Africa. As these racists Afrikaner had no idea what this was all about they never gave good judgements or rulings on who should win this “Silver fez” which was an exact replica of the Turkish fez.

Not one of these groups have an Malay/Melayu name or have any Malay/Melayu musical instruments and nowadays they also include Christian Gospel singers.

There were always fights after the finals





The dress code of the Cape Malay choirs and musical instruments

Even women participate in this choirs

Bo-Kaap (Tana Bahru/Malay Quarter protests

The demands of the protesters emanating are confused and irrational.

First they want to stop gentrification, and the sale of properties to outside people which are mostly rich Europeans that travel to Cape Town for the long summers. Another demand they want a cheap housing development .

Nowadays they want the renamed area declared an heritage which they the Bo-Kaap civic (Community organisation) never wanted but they are only forcing the hand authorities to do just. But this community organization agreed to reduce the area to less than kilometre and also sold historical piece of land called the Heros acre for pittance to the White developers . When this issue is raised they want to silence this voices.

This matter are ongoing.

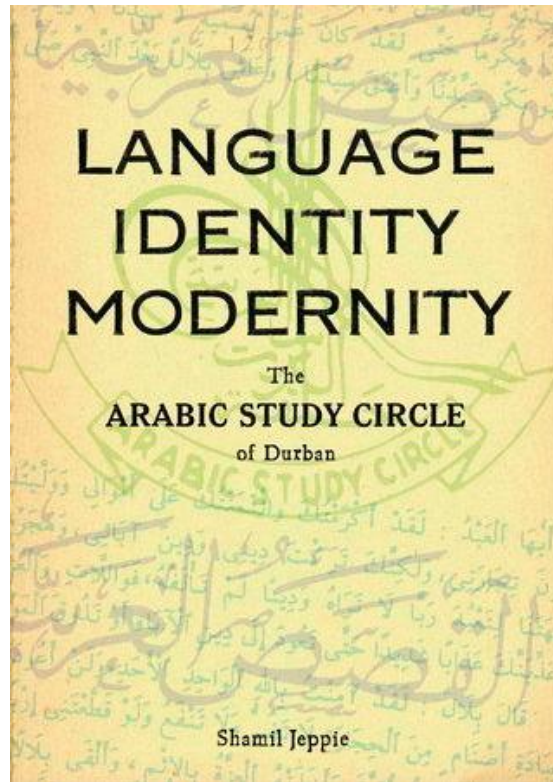
HISTORICAL PROCESS AND THE CONSTITUTION OF SUBJECTS : I.D. DU PLESSIS AND THE REINVENTION OF THE "MALAY"

- Prof Shamil Jeppe Department of Humanities

University of Cape Town



Prof Saarah JAPPIE Princeton left with cousin Prof Shamiel Jeppie UCT far right in Timbuctu Mali.

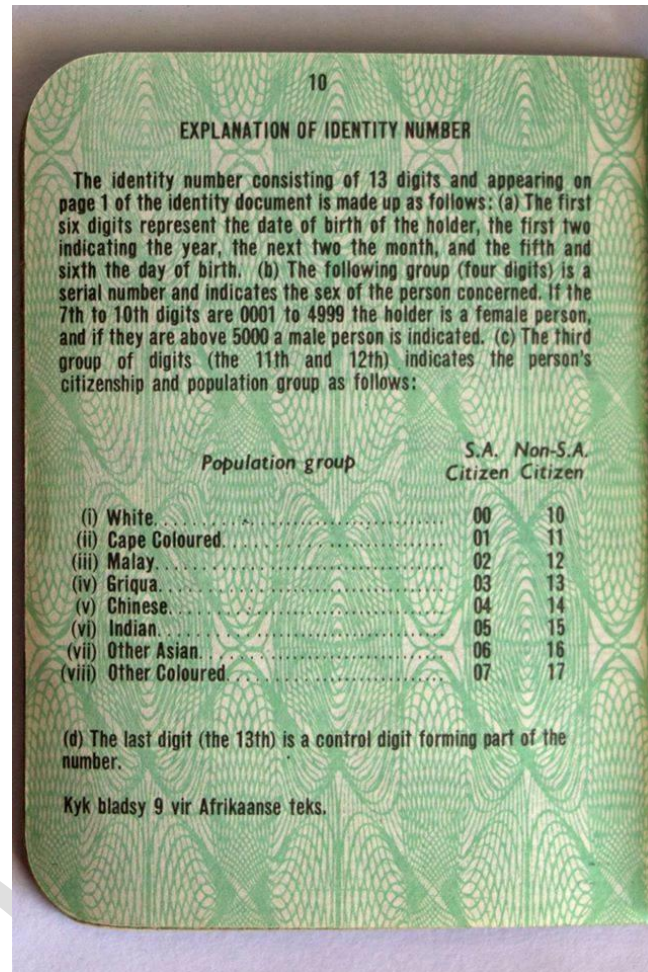


"The purpose of this thesis is to examine how a ruling-class actor attempted to reinvent and reconstitute an ethnic subject. Dr I.D. Du Plessis was, among other things, an Afrikaner litterateur and Commissioner of Coloured Affairs between 1930 and 1962, the period covered by this thesis. In Cape Town he applied himself to "preserve" what was known as "the malays". Although having an historical presence in Cape Town, defining the "malays" was always a problem as their very basis was in the process of being eroded as industrialization forced social and communal changes. But the specificity of the "malays" was not an ethnic specificity with a rigid system of control and leadership, and staunchly cast against other sets of "identities" (such as Indians or "coloureds"). As chapter one shows, Du Plessis initiated the project at a conjuncture when the existence of ethnic units was presumed and the efforts to "preserve" them were profoundly political. A background to his ideological location is also discussed. From his particular location he journeyed amongst the "malays" and attempted to reinvent them as a specific ethnic unit fixed in space and time. Chapter two presents Du Plessis' model of "malay ethnicity" and its roots in history".

My critique:

These two versions of who we are has been used to debunked the idea that there was an even a population group as Malays. The use of our identity name is being in the lower case. Prof Shamiel Jeppie (Jappie) even changed his surname to be sound more English than the Dutch spelling. The Prof used the Malay as an attempt to make

“coloured” meaning we as Cape Malay must assimilate with the local indigenous which today want to lay claim to their real identity being Khoisan This put the Cape Malays in total political isolation as we were told to forsake their identity in 1994 but till today we don’t know who erased our identity as this was an given right by the racist Apartheid Nationalist government



As the above will show that the African people were excluded as they carried the “dompas” (passbook/passport) which will classify from what African nation tribe their asel is from and homeland “Bantustans” they must reside in. This practice was totally inhuman as they were regarded as foreigners in the land of their birth.

The White race owned most of the arable land and minerals that was exploited by them.

Their cheap migrant labour was used to enrich the White/European establishments in South Africa and abroad especially the British.

Question:

Do we as Orang Melayu Cape share the same history as the Malay/Melayu people as Malaysia and the larger part of the Nusantara?

Yes we do

Only do we share same colonialists that came here to the Nusantara with the intention to manipulate our entire way of life in every way which can even be felt in our daily lives today especially in South Africa.

According to my research which is based mostly of through travelling (15th time to Malaysia) reading and inquiry about the Nusantara which include from southern Thailand border Malaya, Temasek, Sumatra Java, North and South Sulawesi, Java, Bali Moluccas islands Borneo (Kalimantan) Brunei and Philippines.

As the resistances continued here in the Nusantara a lot of our people were forcibly removed and exiled for their resistance and their "crime" our Melayu people to be free of this invasion of our sovereign lands.

Our Malay/Melayu people that was captured by the VOC, Here Sewentien Dutch East company men were sentenced harshly to travel to this arduous journey from this part of world first to Sri Lanka (Ceylon) then had to spent some time in the prisons there before being shipped out to Cape Town, South Africa. This journey took most four to six months which some of Malay people succumb to disease and lack of proper food (nutrition). The sailors of these ships had the best of everything on board.

The southern part of Africa was known to be called the "Cape of Good Hope" (Cab de Goede Hoop) which was definitely not for our Melayu people. Also our people never did buy a ticket to be shipped to this part of an greater emigration.

Some other people from Europe, the British Isles and Asia were either sent by the Here Sewentien the VOC and the British Crown to Cape Town was paid their passage was sponsored by the latter two countries.

There is this argument that there were large numbers of people of African and Asian descent came in the same manner that Melayu people were sent. Dutch presence on the [Indian subcontinent](#) lasted from 1605 to 1825.

There is assumption by many orientalis in especially in Cape Town has this firm believe that the Indians sent to Cape Town had an large impact in the local Indigenous community like the Khoisan and the Cape Malay/Melayu and even the households of

European slave masters the Dutch and English it certainly no evidence be it tangible or intangible.

There was an deliberate attempt to silence our Cape Malay/Melayu voices and crush our spirit to resistance. As this information of what happen here in the Nusantra came up only lately to us in Cape Town. Our religious practices was banned for more than 120 years 1684 – 1804. This act was called the “Placaten” which forbid any religious practice besides the Dutch Reform church doctrine.

Islam had to practice in private and secret but it must be remembered this still slavery at the Cape. How did the Quran recital took place under this strict enforcement by the VOC and the Slavemasters is by almost singing the Holy Quran and the Salawaat.

Since our democracy that happen in 1994 a lot of information flowed through to our Cape Malay people and only realize that our people are slowly being forced to accept this new Coloured identity which was enforced by the New South African. This absurdity continued when one of our Ex President Thabo Mbeki made an statement in our National parliament that he have Malay blood in his veins.

Short extract of his speech

Dated 8th May 1996

"I am an African" was a speech made by Thabo Mbeki on behalf of the African National ... In my veins courses the blood of the Malay slaves who came from the East. Their proud dignity informs my bearing, their culture a part of my essence".

Some would say that our ex President Nelson grandson Mandla Mandel married an Malay lady which is totally devoid of truth. Her father is of Indian Asel see attachment

Islam Nikah (marriage) performed yesterday by Sheikh Gabriels in Cape Town.



Their may have been an protest to our silence voices of what traumatic experiences we as human beings had to endure to be as lesser humans but as we are an isolated Malay/Melayu community and far from our Motherlands.

There was no talk of us resettling amongst Malay/Melayu families as because we suffered so much our will to ask for this disappeared over time and tried to survive.

As survival became paramount and our Deen was most important to our needs of the day at that time and even today.

Case in point the establishment of an Cape Malay party in 1923 which was shouted by Cape Muslim intellectuals as not divide the status quo of having ang united Muslim voice to fight for their right to co exist with the local Muslims that have embraced Islam.

In this rejection of our Cape Malay voice were neither here nor there.How did the Cape Malays tried to maintained their identity was to still “baca” the Friday Khutbahs and sometimes at the two Eids.In 1946 at some some mosques where the Imam was of Melayu Asel.

In the 1960’s there was an call for some Cape Malays to resettle in Malaysia.Few families responded but after an short period most came back with the exeption of one family.

Reasons for them not settling in Malaysia differ for one to the another person.I definitely do not know of the main reason. We the Cape Malays have lost of over three hundred years of isolationand through brainwashing by the Dutch Masters and British.So it must have been an total culture shock also at time there was no relations with the Nusantra (which has become Malaysia,Republic of

Indonesia, Singapore, Phillipines and Brunei in the 20th century and DNA tests were not readily available then. At that our Cape Malay dream was to go for Haj only.

The gradual freedom of the yoke of slavery came in stages starting by having an surua (which we called an “langgah”) in Long street, Cape Town then an madressa and finally an mosque in Dorp street called the “Auwal Mosque”.

See attachments below



Palm street mosque then and now



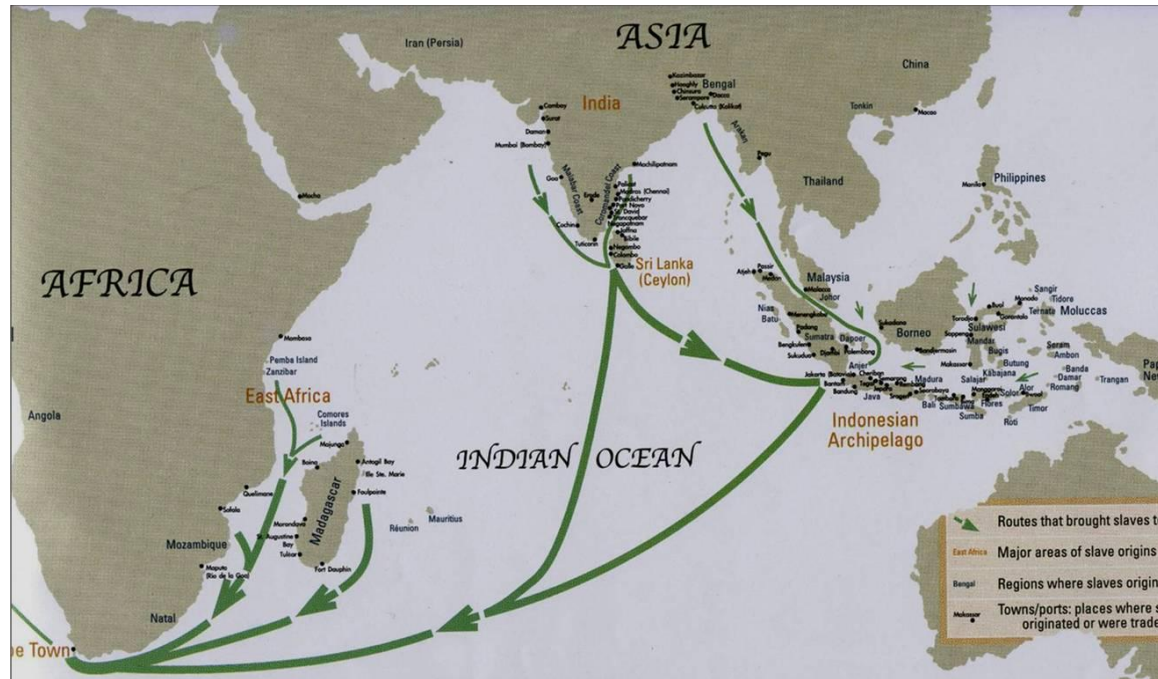
Auwal Mosque then and now



Cape Malay slavery time at the Cape 1652-1834 1838

The subject should be the enslavement of the Cape Malay/Melayu people is a very serious discussion in South Africa especially among European historians.

Our people were exiled to the Cape of Good Hope (Cab de Goede hoop) with the understanding that would serve time for their resistance then sent back to Nusantra.



This map shows the migration of people from the Indian continent to South East Asia which is totally wrong as there is no record of the mass migration of Indian “slaves” to Cape Town. I have read that most Indians that were sent to our lands were Indian soldiers that have done policing for Dutch East Company Here Sewentien VOC of our people in our lands.

The case as the Here Sewentien, Dutch East Company, VOC desperately needed cheap labour to establishing of their half way refreshment station at no cost to the Company. Thus the exile Malay/Melayu people that was sent to Cape became their labour force to be used as chattels for the Dutch sailors and Slave masters and the Company men and to have an free reign on the day to day life to abused and forcefully let our people work come rain or sunshine. During our long hot summers in the Cape they had to start work at 4am in the morning and toil until sunset which was about 8pm at night which was approximate 16hrs of work.

Their diet was meagre and only strongest survived this ordeal. The men were severely ‘sambuk’ and even killed if they did not performed according to the slave master orders as he was answerable to the Dutch Governor and the Dutch East Company Here Sewentien VOC.

Our local universities would not discuss Slavery at the Cape as they would be seen to encourage the idea that our Malay people should be compensated. Thus most of seminars on slavery in South Africa 2008 was discussed at Iziko museums that had no jurisdiction or clout to do much about our traumatic ordeal at the Cape of Good hope which was surely not.

Some of the brutality and savagery of slavery is being researched now about but nobody wants to discuss this in the public domain.

Ebrahim Rhoda



OLYMPUS DIGITAL CAMERA

Short video at end of article

Rebellion

Islam at the Cape, according to Kerry Ward, was not an overtly political force and did not promote organised resistance to colonial rule.

Resistance was rather embedded in religious and ceremonial practices of Islam as the main expression of an alternative religious faith to Christianity, the faith of the VOC, the faith of the oppressor. Islam established a completely alternative social order in which the dignity of the human being was recognised.

Slavery by its very nature is oppressive and demeaning and the harsh and brutal forms of punishment of slaves was sure to encourage resistance and rebellion.

There was also tension among the whites, which constantly feared a mass rebellion and death at the hands of a slave. There was always the fear that slaves who had run away might return to rob or kill, and so large rewards were offered for their recapture. Public warnings of an escaped slave included the tolling of bells and flying a large blue flag at the Castle and other signal-posts.

Slavery – the imposition of enforced servitude by a powerful group on another group

— inevitably breeds fear in both groups, and resentment in the oppressed

Slaves who had no hope of being manumitted were understandably resentful and expressed their displeasure in numerous ways, including desertion, mutiny, physical violence, arson, damage to property, laziness. Intoxication, insolence. Murder of rival slaves, infanticide, suicide.... Acts of desperation which deprive the owner of valuable property.

FORMS OF PUNISHMENT

Punishment at the Cape was severe, it is interesting that the Afrikaans word “soebat” meaning to plead, is from Malay origin. The slaves would have on many occasions used the word soebat. Runaway company slaves were whipped by a sjambok (Malay word, now part of the Afrikaans vocabulary) and branded on one cheek. With the next offence they were branded on the other cheek. Any further offence would lead to their nose and ears being cut off. Harsher punishment was dealt out for worse crimes. Punishment included; breaking on the wheel, pulling out flesh with red-hot tongs, mutilation, impaling, burning alive and slow strangulation. One slave woman who the authorities suspected of trying to strangle her child, the child died a week later, was to be punished by having her breast torn out by hot tongs. She was then to be burned to death, until there was only ashes. The authorities showed mercy and put her in a sack and drowned her in Table bay. The dead bodies of slaves were also left in public places as a warning to the rest of the slaves. When looking at the cruel punishments that was handed out to the slaves, the historical context should be taken into account. Burghers, who were punished, received nearly as gruesome forms of punishment as the slaves, from our present humanitarian position we find revolting.

Rebellion

One attempt at an uprising took place on a farm in Stellenbosch in 1690. Four slaves attacked a farmhouse, killed one burgher, wounded another and fled with stolen firearms. Burghers, soldiers and Khoikhoi auxiliaries were dispatched in pursuit and, in a gun-fight, three of the slaves were killed and the fourth wounded and taken prisoner. Interrogated, the prisoner said it had been their intention to murder a number of farmers and set fire to their fields, hoping this would attract other slaves to their side. Then they planned to seize some white women and make their way to Madagascar. But after their first attack they had panicked and taken to the hills.

The Tulbagh Code of 1754 gives some indication of all the rules slaves had to abide by. Ryk Tulbagh was the governor of the Cape Colony at the time. The Tulbagh Code included the following rules:

- Slaves have to be indoors after 10pm; if they were out, they had to carry a lantern
- Slaves could not ride horses or wagons in the streets
- Slaves could not sing, whistle or make any other sound at night
- Slaves could not meet in bars, buy alcohol or form groups on public holidays
- Slaves could not gather near the entrance of a church during a church service
- Slaves who stopped in the street to talk to other slaves could be driven off, with canes if necessary
- Slaves who insulted or falsely accused a freeman were to be flogged and chained
- Slaves who struck a slave-holder were to be shown no mercy and put to death
- Slaves were not permitted to own or carry guns.

Rebellion! 1713 Escape from Constantia.. Soudan Tappa Santrij

Rebellion – Arson Cape Town and Stellenbosch 1736

Rebellion – 1808 – Louis of Mauritius

Rebellion Galant of the Koue Bokkewveld

Summary of pre-Kutbah talk at the Claremont Main Road Masjid on Friday 23 September 2016

Introduction

Kerry Ward: Islam at the Cape was not an overtly political force and did not promote organised resistance to Colonial rule.

Dr Robert Ross: Wrote an article on slavery at the Cape titled **The impossibility of Rebellion**

Prof. Nigel Worden : Article in Kronos : **Violence, crime and slavery on Cape farmsteads in the eighteenth century.** Amongst other he wrote: **“There is no doubt that the eighteenth century Cape I was an extremely violent society; behind the pictures of ornate Cape Dutch farmsteads and vines growing in a sunny landscape of unsurpassed beauty lurked the ever- present fear of murder, personal assault, theft and arson.”**

Tuan Guru 1792.... Last words of his testament: **“This is a place of sorrow” (Makanal Ghuzn)**

Relate story of Brotto from Java

1. Cite forms of punishment

a.Runaway slaves – flogged with sjambok and branded one cheek – next offence the other cheek

1. Any further offence – either nose or ears being cut off
2. More serious crimes: Breaking on wheel ; pulling out flesh with hot tongs; mutilation; impaling; burning alive, slow strangulation
3. Woman had her breasts torn out with hot tongs
4. Dead bodies of slaves were left in public Gallows in Greenpoint

2. Slavery by its very nature is oppressive and demeaning and these harsh and brutal forms of punishment were attempts to control and sustain the system. **Cite the apartheid regime / Palestine**

3. Historical evidence indicate that despite these harsh and brutal forms of punishment rebellion and resistance to slavery must forever have been on the minds of the enslaved... either individually or collectively

-

4. Forms of resistance: Desertion

b Arson

1. Collective rebellion and Murder

d Physical violence

1. damage to property (sabotage)
2. laziness
3. insolence
4. intoxication
5. murder of fellow slaves
6. infanticide
7. suicide

Influence of events in Europe, America and the Carribean

5. Will focus on the FIRST THREE
6. Desertion the most common form of resistance . Cite: 1. Soudan Tappa Santrij 1713
7. Maroons of Hanglip / Table Mountain and Faure
8. Arson: 1690 Stellenbosch

1725 Cape Town 1736

1. Collective rebellion 1808 ... Louis of Mauritius

1. Galant and the murders in the Koue Bokkeveld in 1825

SLAVE REBELLION AT THE CAPE

Slavery was [introduced to the Cape Colony](#) by the VOC in its desire to boost the agriculture and food supply while retaining control in the new settlement. As the settlement expanded, slavery also spread. Historian Nigel Worden points out that slavery “”became the mainstay of arable farming in the western districts, played a significant role in the functioning of Cape Town as a centre of exchange and was used for pastoral and domestic labour in the remoter northern and eastern districts...The vast majority of Company slaves worked in Cape Town, although some were based on company outposts and used in rural labour... ”• (Worden, N, (1985), Slavery in Dutch South Africa, (Cambridge University Press), p. 9)

The increase in the slave population was associated with the growth of the burger population and the expansion of agriculture. Cape Town expansion also led to the increase in the number of slaves. Slaves lived and worked under harsh conditions with long working hours maintained by the use of force. For serious offences slaves were hanged or broken at the wheel with **coup de grace** or without **coup de grace**.

Slave Resistance

Slave consciousness of injustice and awareness of issues of abolition of slavery in other parts of the world influenced two significant slave revolts in the Cape Colony. The first ‘mass movement’ against slavery and oppression in the Cape occurred in 1808. Stories of slave uprisings in the Americas and the Caribbean, and news of the abolition of slavery circulated in the Cape reaching different people including those who were enslaved. This inspired an ethnically mixed group of people such as a slave tailor named Louis from Mauritius, two Irishmen, James Hooper and Michael Kelly; another slave, Jephtha of Batavia, two more slaves Abraham and Adonis. This group was later joined by another Indian slave and two Khoi men.

This group planned to march from the rural districts of the Cape gathering slaves on the way to Cape Town. Upon arrival they hoped to seize the Amsterdam

Battery, turn the guns on the Castle and then negotiate a peace deal which would involve establishing a free state and freedom for all slaves. On the evening of 27 October 1808, on the farm of Gerhardus Louw, Vogelgevang, just north of Malmesbury, Louis arrived on horseback dressed as a visiting Spanish sea captain. Hooper and Kelly rode up by his side, disguised as British officers. The disguised band managed to convince the absentee farmer's wife to hand over all their slaves into the hands of the 'military' party, give them food and a place to sleep.

The next morning the party proceeded from farm to farm, persuading slaves and Khoi servants to join them. Only in one instance did the march encounter resistance. In fact, overall there was surprisingly little violence given the magnitude of the insurrection. Soon the group swelled to 300 mutinous slaves and servants. News of the revolt soon reached the Governor of the Cape, who ordered Infantry and Cavalry to ambush the insurrectionists at Salt River just outside the city. The ambush worked as 326 marchers were captured. 47 were put on trial including the leadership group of Hooper, Kelly, Louis and the two Khoi leaders. Nine were found guilty of treason and sentenced to be hanged, including Louis of Mauritius and James Hooper. Another 11 were sentenced to death as well, for 'active participation'. Others were given lesser sentences including imprisonment on Robben Island while 244 slaves were returned to their owners.

Galant and the 1825 slave uprising

In 1825 a slave named Galant who was aged 25 at the time led a revolt that consisted of twelve slaves and Khoisan laborers in the Koue Bokkeveld. Galant and the people that he mobilized killed his master and two other whites before fleeing into the surrounding mountains. A commando was dispatched from Cape Town and captured Galant and his supporters. They were tried and convicted of murder resulting in the execution of Galant and two others. The primary reason for Galant's rebellion was revealed in the subsequent investigations. Galant was subjected to severe beatings by his master who sent him to prison for discipline. He thrice reported to colonial authorities the ill treatment he received from his master but the authorities took no action. Galant also had reported that his master unfairly took his possessions but his report also came to naught.

A crucial aspect of the uprising was its timing. In 1823 the Governor Somerset issued a proclamation announcing the amelioration of slavery. For instance, slaves were given the right to marry, be baptized as Christians, testimony of Christian slaves became acceptable in court, minimum and slave working hours were set for winter and summer, slave children under the age of ten were not to be sold.

How a slave from Mauritius led a rebellion in Cape Town

By [Nigel Worden](#)

30 March 2016

On 27 October 1808, about 340 slaves from the Swartland and Koeberg hinterland of Cape Town rose up in revolt. They attacked over thirty of the prosperous grain farms of the region, took the farmers prisoner and marched on Cape Town where they planned to 'hoist the bloody flag and fight themselves free.'

The uprising was short-lived. On reaching Salt River, the slaves were met by troops sent out from the strongly-guarded Castle and were swiftly overcome. Within 36 hours it was all over. Because of this the uprising is not today widely known about or remembered.

Yet it was a highly significant event. Throughout the preceding 150 years of slavery at the Cape slaves had often resisted their owners. This was both by overt attacks on individuals or their property – fields and vineyards waiting to be harvested often went up in flames – as well as by less obvious means such as working slowly, breaking equipment or poisoning food. But usually slaves then ran away, seeking to escape from the colony into the interior.

But by the end of the eighteenth century, there was a new sense of resentment amongst Cape slaves. They were influenced by the revolutionary events in France and America, and in particular by the massive and successful slave revolt in Haiti. Instead of running away, Cape slaves were now beginning to demand their 'rights' and to stand up to their owners. For example in 1793 the slave Cesar van Madagascar was reprimanded by his owner for getting up late. He replied, "I was awake early enough, but because the weather was bad, I did not want to get up, and I must have my right to speak".

In 1808 the slaves' demand for change took a new turn. They went from farm to farm, gathering support from slaves and from some of the Khoi labourers as they went. They were armed with guns and greatly outnumbered the farmers, many of whom were taken by surprise. They took over the farmsteads, captured their owners and demanded freedom for all slaves and 'to make themselves masters.' This was a revolutionary act.

An intriguing aspect of the 1808 uprising is how the rebels behaved on the farms. There was very little direct physical violence. Instead they asserted themselves by deliberately reversing the roles of slaves and masters, often in highly symbolic ways. They gave orders to the male farmers and overseers while holding

sjamboks, the symbol of the slave owner. They hunted down on horseback and with the help of dogs those farmers who attempted to escape, forcing those they captured to run in front of their horses. This was exactly how slave runaways were caught. They deliberately addressed the farmers with the familiar word **jij** rather than the respectful **u** expected of a slave addressing his owner. They demanded that the farmers doff their hats to them. They insisted on being given wine from the cellars in the best glasses. They told the slaves they met on each farm to stop treating their owners with respect since 'their time is up'.

At the first farm they visited, the rebel leaders carried out an elaborate charade. They pretended to be visiting ship captains, and were served dinner and wine by the unsuspecting farmer's wife while others informed the farm slaves what was afoot and obtained their support.

The leader of the revolt was a Cape Town slave named Louis. He had been transported to the Cape from Mauritius when he was a young boy. Now in his early 20s, he was owned by the proprietor of a wine store on the foreshore where he mingled with the diverse and transient population of sailors and soldiers from throughout the Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds. They brought news of the momentous events taking place in this era of revolutions and war, including the slave uprising in Haiti.

Louis was particularly incensed when he met two Irish soldiers who told him that there was no slavery in Europe or America. As he later said, 'I had heard that in other countries all persons were free, and there were so many black people here who could also be free, and that we ought to fight for our freedom.'

A clue of what inspired Louis is that he took particular care to obtain special clothes to wear : 'a blue jacket turned up with red, white Chinese linen trousers ... two golden and two silver epaulets besides some feathers for his hat.' This was exactly the uniform worn by the the Haitian slave leader Toussaint l'Ouverture as shown in a print of the time. It seems clear that Louis was imitating the slave hero Toussaint.

But Louis did not have Toussaint's success. His rebellion was swiftly crushed and he was sentenced to death. The slaves had only tasted power for a short time. Nonetheless their world would never be quite the same again. In the subsequent years more and more Cape slaves demanded rights within the colony rather than running away. This, as much as the actions of distant abolitionists, was eventually to bring chattel slavery to an end in the 1830s.

- [Share](#) ces are being silenced and the African Apartheid experience which actually only came into being about in 1948 and ended in 1994. Every African Apartheid experience is being put out in social media, documentary and history books have change to emphasize this racist Apartheid policy towards the Black African and the indigenous Khoisan, San Hottentot people really have to fight for their identity.

Our Cape Malay/Melayu peoples culture and heritage is also being mocked at as some of the Cape Muslims (coloureds) which have absolutely nothing to talk about their roots saying that have also become Malay be the mere fact that they are now Muslim. But recently a lot of economic migrants from other countries to the North like Malawians, Nigerians, Bangladeshi, Pakistanis and Egyptians are coming in huge numbers then saying that they are African and Indian Muslims never claiming our Malay identity.

Our Cape Malay people fought hard in two wars in South Africa,

First was the 1806 Battle of Blaauwberg where decided to be on the side of Dutch Royal House of Orange which were the same people that exiled us and then the Battle of Axe 1846 where we fought on behalf of British settlers in Eastern Cape against the Xhosa people that made a strong protest that their land and cattle are being stolen to make way for the British settlers which was refuted by British Crown as they claim negotiations were held with their Xhosa Chiefs and trinkets were given to usurp their lands.

Battle of Blaauwberg 1806**THE BATTLE OF BLAAUWBERG: DAY OF DESTINY**

By Willem Steenkamp

Introduction

Soon after first light on the morning of January 8, 1806, the peaceful plain behind the Blaauwberg, just 30km from Cape Town, erupted in an orgy of controlled violence on a scale never before seen at this faraway enclave at the toe of Africa.

Artillery pieces boomed and spat lethal iron cannon-balls back and forth, muskets rattled off individual shots or roared in volleys. Wounded men and horses screamed as they wallowed in their own blood, officers and sergeants shouted orders in voices hoarse with thirst, torrents of sweat turning their powder-stained faces into devils' masks.

Drums rattled, Highland bagpipes screeched eerily, overlaying frenzied battle-cries in Dutch, English, French, Gaelic and the local dialect Malay. Everywhere lay the dead, some in the red coats of imperial Britain, others in the dark blue of Holland's Batavian Republic.

Two hours later it was over. General Jan Willem Janssens, commander of the Batavian forces, had withdrawn and General Sir William Baird of His Britannic Majesty's Army was the master of the battlefield and its gory fruit. It was still to be another 10 days before a formal capitulation was signed, but for all practical purposes the Cape of Good Hope was now a British colony.

The Battle of Blaauwberg was insignificant when measured against the scale of other battles of the Napoleonic period. It involved a total of no more than about 6 000 men, and at its end, the combined dead, wounded and missing amounted to just over 500 - a mere bagatelle compared to epic battles of the period, such as Austerlitz and Waterloo.

Yet that brief clash of arms had enormous consequences, not just for the Cape but for all of Southern and Central Africa, because it drastically and permanently altered the regional architecture of power and set in motion a long train of interconnected events that is still unfolding today, almost 200 years later.

In spite of this, however, it has become little more than a footnote in our history-books. Not only is its historical significance almost forgotten, but also the array of people and personalities involved, which makes its telling read like a fascinating work of fiction rather than hard fact.

The “cast of characters” includes the generals like Janssens and Baird; the expatriate soldiers and sailors who fought on both sides: Dutch, English, Scottish, French, German, Hungarian and Austrian; and, most important of all, the small but valiant multi-racial corps of Cape-born men – white dragoons, coloured light infantrymen and Panglima’s Muslim Malay gunners, who stood their ground after many of the Batavian troops had fled, and held off the battle-hardened British till the Batavian army had managed to withdraw.

The Cape contingent at Blaauwberg was a small one, only 563 men out of a total of just under 2 000 in the Batavian forces, which consisted of the following units:

* 181 men of the Hottentot Light Infantry (these were what would today be called “coloured”; “Hottentot” was then a descriptive rather than perjorative term).

The Hottentot Light Infantry was an efficient corps of professional soldiers whose men had already acquired a fine reputation as turbulent but valiant fighting soldiers. They were raised by the Dutch East India Company as the Korps Pandoeren in 1787, and at the Battle of Muizenberg fought shoulder to shoulder with the light dragoons. They were then recruited into the British service as the Cape Corps and in 1803, after the handover of the Cape to the Batavian Republic, into the Batavian service as the Hottentot Light Infantry.

* 224 men of the volunteer “burgher cavalry”, organised as light dragoons (actually mounted infantry who fought on foot), mainly from the Swellendam district. The light dragoons were volunteers, drawn from the farming community. By 1806 they had acquired a fine track record, having fought very well at the Battle of Muizenberg during the first British invasion of 1795; when the DEIC regular troops had fled almost without firing a shot, the dragoons and the coloured soldiers of the Korps Pandoeren counter-attacked so ferociously that they drove a

much larger British landing force back almost to the water's edge, and were only forced to retreat by artillery fire.

* 54 gunners of the "Javanese artillery corps", assisted by 104 auxiliaries such as wagon-drivers. The Panglima Malay Muslim artillerymen were also volunteer citizen-soldiers, members of a "corps of free Javanese" recruited from the "Mardykens", the substantial community of freed slaves of Malay origin, which by that time was playing an increasingly important role in the social and economic life of the Cape.

General Janssens had established the corps in 1804, mainly to help in manning the Castle's guns, and by the time of Blaauwberg it had gained a good reputation for zeal and efficiency. Because Blaauwberg was far beyond the range of the Castle's gun, the "free Javanese" served on this occasion as a unit of foot artillery, the only such unit in South African military annals. The guns they fired at Blaauwberg were "lantakas", the traditional Indonesian light cannon – again, the only time these traditional weapons were ever used in Africa, as far as is known.

The words of the oath they swore still survives. *"Ik beloove en zweere by den Eenigen en Almachtige God en Zyner grooten Profeet Mohamet*

trouw aan de Bataafsche Republiek, dit land onzer inwoning, tegen alle vyanden van den Bataafsche Republiek te beschermen". Freely translated from the Dutch, it reads: "I promise and swear by the One Almighty God and His great Prophet Mohamet my loyalty to the Batavian Republic, (and) to defend this land in which we live against all enemies of the Batavian Republic." They were soon to prove that to them these were not mere words but a sacred undertaking.

Less is known about their 104 auxiliaries, but it is known that they represented a cross-section of Cape Town's very cosmopolitan proletariat; some of them were almost certainly blacks who had come to the Cape from Mozambique and elsewhere.

The Cape men can only be described as a mixed bag. Some were Christians, some were Muslims, others animists; their skins were of every colour found in mankind. Some had been born free, others were former slaves.

Some were professional soldiers, others citizens in arms. Their professions ranged from labourer to soldier to shop-keeper to farmer, and their personal condition from prosperous to comfortable to poor.

But they had three important things in common. However, that comes later in this account.

Four seminal events in South African history

The Battle of Blaauwberg (literally "Blue Mountain" in Dutch) - at which a British expeditionary force wrested the Cape of Good Hope from the Batavian Republic – might have been insignificant when measured against the scale of other battles of the Napoleonic period, but it had enormous consequences, not just for the Cape but for all of Southern and Central Africa. It drastically and permanently altered the regional architecture of power and set in motion a long train of interconnected events that is still unfolding, almost 200 years later.

Seen against the broader tapestry of the sub-continent's history, Blaauwberg was the third of four seminal events – the fourth being the election of 1994 - that determined the shape of things to come in an immense swathe of territory.

The first seminal event took place before recorded history, when Khoi clans from the hinterland colonised what later came to be known as the Cape of Good Hope, marginalised the original hunter-gatherers - whom they scornfully referred to as "San" or "Sanqua", meaning robbers or murderers - and set up a loose but clearly defined patchwork of independent clans and small tribes.

The clans' main preoccupations were livestock ownership and access to water and grazing;

while some enjoyed peaceful co-existence through links of blood or mutual interests, there was also constant competition for resources.

The second seminal event was the arrival in April 1652 of members of the Dutch East India Company under Jan van Riebeeck, whose mission was not colonisation as such but the creation of a revictualling and repair station for DEIC ships undertaking the long haul from Europe to the spice-growing countries of the Far East, where the company had established a trading centre called Batavia in what is now Indonesia, and the equally arduous journey home.

The Cape became so important to the Dutch economy that the DEIC settled in for a long stay. No systematic colonisation *per se* took place (this was expressly forbidden, together with any attempt at converting the local inhabitants to Christianity or making war on them if this could be avoided, because the DEIC's main purpose was to provide a way-station for its passing merchant fleets) but there were several unplanned consequences.

One consequence was that the outpost expanded beyond what had originally been envisaged because the Khoi were not cultivators and did not like to trade off too much of their livestock, which were a status symbol. This meant that the outpost had to grow its own grain and breed its own livestock to fulfil its purpose of re-supplying the DEIC ships.

Another consequence was that Islam was established at the tip of Africa because DEIC policy did not allow for enslaving or conscripting the local inhabitants.

As a result, slaves were imported from what is today Indonesia and its neighbouring countries, as well as India, while other inhabitants of those countries came as freemen and yet others were exiled here after clashing with the DEIC.

By far the most famous of these early Cape Malay Muslims was, of course, Tuan Guru Abdoes Qadi Salaam, R.A. of Tidore an nobleman of great influence. In 1794 Tuan Guru was banished to Robben Island. Tuan Guru as he was affectionately known wrote three Holy Qurans from memory which one is to be found in the first mosque the Auwal mosque in Dorp street in Cape Town. Also he gave sword over to his close friend Imam Achmat of Bengal to lead the Panglima's into battle as he was very old at that time.

By all accounts the DEIC treated Tuan Guru R.A. was cruel and this evident from his diary which he kept. He had played a great role in entrenching the Islamic faith in South African soil, for which he is remembered to this day. It is important to note the status of Islam at that time, and for the next century or so. Its practice was condoned by the DEIC but, like all the other faiths at the Cape except for the strict Protestant church of the DEIC, it did not enjoy legal recognition or protection.

A third unintended consequence was that the fragile and disunited Khoi social structure could not withstand the impact of a more firmly organised, better-resourced and inevitably expansionist social machine. Its demise was hastened by lack of a common purpose - with some clans enlisting the help of the Dutch against their enemies - and a devastating epidemic of smallpox brought by ships from the Far East in 1713.

That no such epidemic had arrived at the Cape before then was very strange, seeing that trading ships of various nationalities had been calling since the 16th Century, bringing with them the world's diseases. But in 1713 ships coming from the Far East brought smallpox with them, and it wiped out the major part of the Khoi population in what is now the Western Cape.

Within three generations most of the pre-1652 Khoi culture had crumbled away, and a new society had begun to arise at the Cape, composed of foreign and locally-born whites; the descendants of Javanese exiles, slaves and free persons; people of mixed descent; and small numbers of blacks from farther afield.

Further infusions took place as the decades passed, and as the years passed the people of the Cape became ever more cosmopolitan; at the same time they were beginning to evolve into a distinctive society with its own cultural characteristics and also its own creole language - a mixture of Dutch, Melayu, French and Khoi words and grammar which was later to be known as Afrikaans. To this day, some Melayu words are in common use in Afrikaans – such as “aia” and “baie” (a corruption of “banjak”) – and so is the practice of repeating a word to give it greater emphasis, and the double negative. The Mardyker cuisine has been maintained by the Malay community, and much of it has passed into the broader South African cuisine.

Through all these changing times, one thing remained constant: the vital importance of the Cape of Good Hope. The mighty Dutch East India Company, although a private enterprise,

was the backbone of the Netherlands' economy, since the Dutch were barred from operating in the Mediterranean Sea by the Kingdom of Spain; and it was said that while the prosperity of the Netherlands depended on the prosperity of its Indonesian outpost of Batavia, so the prosperity of Batavia depended in turn on the existence of the Cape.

The precursor to the third seminal event took place in late 1795, by which time the once-powerful Dutch East India Company was enfeebled and almost bankrupt. The decline of its parent naturally affected the Cape's place in the scheme of things, but it was soon to assume an importance of a different kind.

Europe was in turmoil as the French Revolution spread outward to neighbouring countries; among other things there was an insurrection in the Netherlands; the Dutch ruler, Prince William V of Orange, was forced to exile himself in Britain, and the Batavian Republic was proclaimed.

The Batavian Republic (named in honour of the Batavia, a Dutch tribe which had ferociously resisted the ancient Romans) was the nearest thing to a liberal democracy that could be found in those days. Based on the French revolutionary ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity, it had a constitution which guaranteed various liberties such as the freedom of religion, forbade slavery and introduced a qualified non-racial franchise.

France declared war on Britain and the remaining loyalist Dutchmen, and there ensued a ferocious struggle (known not quite accurately today as the "Napoleonic Wars") that was to continue, with occasional pauses, till 1815.

Now the Cape was strategically as well as commercially important. Like the Dutch, the British and French had been heavily involved in the Far Eastern trade since the 17th Century, and had acquired substantial colonial holdings there; possession of the only existing revictualling and ship-repair station half-way between West and East became crucial from a military as well as an economic point of view.

Sir Francis Baring, chairman of the English East India Company, put it succinctly in a January 1795 letter to the British Secretary of State for War, Henry Dundas, when he pointed out that the Cape “commands the passage to and from India as effectively as Gibraltar does the Mediterranean”. Equally trenchantly, Dundas’s Under-Secretary noted that although the Cape was “a feather in the hands of the Dutch” it would become “a sword in the hands of France”.

The British government pressured the Prince of Orange into authorising Dutch naval commanders to allow British warships to defend the Cape against the French and ordering Commissioner A J Sluysken to accommodate British troops to prevent a French invasion. It then despatched three squadrons of warships with several thousand soldiers on board.

On 11 June 1795 the first two squadrons, under Vice-Admiral G K Elphinstone, anchored in False Bay, which (unlike Table Bay) was poorly fortified, and entered into negotiations with Sluysken and his military commander, Colonel Robert Jacob Gordon. It soon became evident that, far from merely garrisoning the Cape against the French, they wanted full

control over it; negotiations broke down and on 14 July the British landed soldiers at Simon's Town and occupied it.

On 7 August a 1 600-strong force consisting of soldiers and two battalions of seaman disembarked at Muizenberg and advanced on the Dutch positions there, which were defended by 287 infantrymen and 150 artillerymen of the VOC's regular garrison, as well as 200 white citizen-soldiers which included light dragoons from as far afield as Swellendam, and 150 coloured soldiers of the Korps Pandoeren.

To their surprise they encountered little resistance; the officer in charge, Lieutenant-Colonel C M W de Lille, had been ordered to give offer only a token resistance. However, the citizen-soldiers – all of whom supported the Batavian Republic – and the Pandoeren offered a spirited resistance. They launched a fierce flanking attack, and in spite of their small numbers forced the British to retreat, then pursued them for some distance till they were forced to desist by fire from some of the abandoned Dutch guns that the British had turned on them.

Several weeks of guerrilla warfare then followed, but on 3 September the third British squadron arrived with 2 500 soldiers arrived and the final advance on Cape Town began. On 14 September a 24-hour truce was negotiated and the following day the Cape surrendered. Thus ended a short and ignominious campaign, whose only highlight had been the heroic repelling of 1 600 British soldiers and sailors by less than 400 white and coloured soldiers, most of them either citizens in arms or barely trained recruits unproven in battle.

The invasion of the Cape was, to all intents and purposes, the death-blow for the faltering Dutch East India Company; and when the British reluctantly relinquished the Cape in December 1802 in terms of the short-lived Treaty of Amiens, they handed it over to the Batavian Republic.

It was a significant moment in South African history. For the first time the Cape had a national identity. It was no longer either a scattering of individual tribes or a commercial outpost run by the Dutch East India Company, or even a colony; it was now part of the democratic Batavian Republic and its people were Batavian citizens. Also for the first time the Cape, led by the new Governor-General, Lieutenant-General J W Janssens and, initially, Commissioner Abraham de Mist, was being governed for and by its inhabitants rather than managed as a virtual branch office of the Dutch East India Company's headquarters in Indonesia.

Janssens and De Mist forbade the importation of slaves, preparatory abolishing slavery for good. They established a non-racial qualified franchise; they freed trade, so that the inhabitants could do business directly with any passing ship or even with Europe. Schools and agriculture were upgraded. Government finances were opened for scrutiny by the people. The Islamic faith, which had been tolerated but not officially recognised by either the Company or the British in 1795-1802, was accorded equality before the law and full legal protection.

It was an amazing transformation; within less than three years the Cape had become the

only liberal democracy in Africa and, in fact, in most of the world. But Batavian rule at the Cape was destined to come to an abrupt end.

In 1805 the British decided to return, this time for good. The French had suffered a devastating naval defeat at the Battle of Trafalgar, but their maritime fighting forces remained formidable; with the Cape as a secure base and Mauritius also in British hands, the Royal Navy could dominate the southern oceans

In August 1805, as Napoleon massed forces at Boulogne to invade England, a British force sailed away on a secret mission to re-take the Cape. It consisted of 61 warships and transport vessels commanded by Vice-Admiral Sir Home Popham and 6 654 soldiers and marines under Major-General Sir David Baird. It was a formidable force indeed, and in addition Baird knew the Cape well from serving there after the first invasion.

On 4 January 1806 Janssens received definite tidings of the British arrival off the coast, and immediately began mobilising both his regular soldiers and his local forces, most of them part-time citizen-soldiers. To call in the latter, the chain of signal guns stretching inland for almost 250km began firing in sequence.

It was the very worst time for such a summons. Crops were ripening and could not be left unattended, and it was so hot that many of the outlying burghers had to travel at night or risk killing their horses.

As a result, Janssens had been able to muster only about 2 000 soldiers by the time the British arrived in Table Bay on 5 January: the mercenaries of the Regiment Waldeck, two Batavian battalions, a squadron of Batavian light dragoons, a troop of Batavian horse artillery, 240 sailors and marines from two beached French warships, the Atalante and the Napoleon, and his force of local men - the Hottentot Light infantry, some burgher commandos; the Swellendam light dragoons and the “Javaansche Malay Artillerie Corps”.

There was a howling south-easter which made conditions in Table Bay so bad that Popham concluded he would be unable to land, and diverted a portion of his force to Saldanha Bay to make landfall there and then advance on Cape Town. But then the wind and sea abated to a certain extent, and Popham decided to risk a landing.

On the morning of 6 January Popham ordered that a small merchantman be scuttled next to a sandbank at Losperds Bay (now Melkbosch) to form a breakwater, and Baird started landing his troops, although the sea was still so rough that 36 soldiers drowned when their boat capsized. There was light resistance from some skirmishers of the Swellendam light dragoons, but Janssens did not dare to muster any forces along the shoreline because of the

danger that they would be bombarded by the British warships, and the invaders' advance started without delay.

It was a race to reach the commanding heights of Blaauwberg, and the British won by a hair, although only after great suffering in dragging their artillery pieces over the dunes.

Robbed of Blaauwberg's commanding heights, Janssens formed an extended line on the plain beneath it, with his left flank protected by the burghers and Swellendam light dragoons on an outcrop of Blaauwberg called Kleinberg. His plan was to hold the British left flank with his right, allowing him to roll up the British line with his left flank.

When his men were in position he rode up and down the line, exhorting and encouraging them. In spite of their perilous situation the soldiers cheered him, all except the Austrian and Hungarian mercenaries of the Regiment Waldeck, who maintained a sullen – and, as it transpired, ominous – silence.

Baird divined Janssens's intentions and divided his force into two columns – the left column consisting of the Highland Brigade (the 71st and 93rd Regiments) under Brigadier-General R C Ferguson, and the right, consisting of the 24th, 59th and 83rd Regiments, under his brother, Lieutenant-Colonel John Baird. There were also between 500 and 600 sailors and marines, dragging two howitzers and six small field-guns.

The battle commenced at 5am on 8 January, with the 24th Regiment attacking the burghers

on Kleinberg and finally dislodging them after a fierce fight that left a captain and at least 15 men dead, and many other British soldiers wounded. By now the Highland Brigade was advancing amid general cannon-fire from both sides, and some cannon-balls landed among the Waldeck regiment's right flank, causing great despondency. The Highlanders fired their muskets and then fixed bayonets and charged, shouting terrifying Gaelic war-cries while their bagpipes screamed their ancient battle-music.

The Waldeckers allowed the Highlanders to approach within 100 yards of their front. Then, instead of mowing them down with a volley at close range, they broke and ran. The left wing of one Batavian battalion, the 22nd Regiment of the Line, was now unsupported and also began to crumble; Janssens managed to rally it, but the momentary failure had sowed a fatal weakness in the Dutch line.

Now Janssens's other Batavian battalion, the 9th Batavian Rifles, also started to withdraw as its flank was threatened. The Frenchmen stayed in place, although both their flanks were now unsecured, till being forced back after suffering heavy casualties. The handful of Batavian dragoons also stood fast, but Janssens eventually ordered them to withdraw as well to prevent their unnecessary annihilation.

The remainder of Janssens's force - the burgher commandos and light dragoons, the Hottentot Light Infantry, the Muslim Malay artillerymen, and the Batavian horse artillery – did not follow suit. Although outgunned and vastly outnumbered, they doggedly stood their ground in the face of intense fire. Eventually Janssens, fearing for their very survival, ordered them to retire, which they did in good order. Only one Batavian gun was lost, due

to the gun-horses being killed, and the gunners made sure to spike it so that it could not be turned on them.

Although they suffered severely for their bravery, they succeeded in delaying the British advance long enough to allow Janssens's "tail" to escape to Rietvlei. There he regrouped his forces – all except for the Waldeckers, most of whom he sent back in disgrace to Cape Town – and withdrew to the Hottentots Holland mountains. Thus ended the Battle of Blaauwberg, the only true battle to be fought within sight of Cape Town in 400 years.

Although it was not a huge bloodletting by the standards of the Napoleonic Wars, it had cost Janssens's small army dearly, particularly his Cape men - 337 on the Dutch side were not there to answer their names when the rolls were called afterwards.

What did they achieve?

The sacrifice of the Cape men and the others who stood fast, the Frenchmen and the Batavian horse artillery, was not in vain, because they performed one all-important service: they held the British line long enough to allow Janssens to withdraw most of his forces, including his supply wagons and spare horses.

This meant that he could take up new positions inland and negotiate terms of capitulation that contained the most favourable possible

conditions for the people of the Cape and their soldiers, particularly the Hottentot Light Infantry, which had particularly distinguished itself.

It would have been very different if his army had been destroyed at Blaauwberg, because that would have meant an unconditional surrender in which the Cape people would have had no say about their future.

As it was, the transition of the Cape from Batavian possession to full-blown British colony took place as smoothly and painlessly as possible, thanks largely to the small but valiant band of forgotten heroes of the Battle of Blaauwberg.

Why did they do it?

Why did this little multi-racial, multi-faith Cape contingent fight so hard?

One reason might well have been that regardless of their origins or personal differences they were Cape-born men rather than settlers or expatriates, and knew no other home.

A third reason was surely that they all had a great deal riding on the outcome of the Battle of Blaauwberg. The Swellendammers had been Batavian sympathisers for years, and had tasted the fruits of prosperity as a result of the Janssens-De Mist reforms. For the men of the Hottentot Light infantry the coming of the Batavian Republic had surely opened up a new vista for the future. The Malays were obviously intensely aware of the fact that the Batavians had given full protection and recognition to their religion, and initiated the process of abolishing slavery altogether.

No doubt this is why the historical records say that Janssens was cheered by his Cape soldiers, and indeed all the others except the soon-to-flee Waldeck Regiment, as he made his final inspection just before the battle.

So the Cape men had a great deal to lose, and indeed they lost it all. Instead of being abolished, slavery lingered on till the 1830s, and the Cape became a crown colony, ruled by a non-elected Governor (it would not taste even limited internal self-government for another half-century).

But the larger picture shows that far greater and more significant things happened as a result of Janssens's defeat. The second British conquest of the Cape radically changed the likely history of the entire southern portion of the African continent.

To the British, the 1806 invasion was no more than a logical follow-on to the victory at Cape

Trafalgar, the tying up of a loose end in their long, hard war against Napoleon; by the nature of things neither they nor their unenthusiastic new subjects at the Cape had any inkling of the pattern of events that were to follow as a result of their conquest.

The most fundamental consequence of the British victory at Blaauwberg was the mass migration which started in the late 1830s and became known as "the Great Trek".

Disgruntled by frequently insensitive treatment, including a badly bungled slave-emancipation process and a disregard for Dutch - the first language of virtually all Cape people – in spite of solemn undertakings in the articles of capitulation, a substantial number of farmers and others resolved to pack up their belongings and move beyond the British writ. This they did, not as a co-ordinated mass migration into the interior but a series of ventures, both large and small, spread over a number of years

Most of the Voortrekkers moved inland, into the chaotic power and population vacuum left by the societal collapse resulting from the campaigns of King Shaka of the Zulus; others followed the eastern coastline towards the Zulu kingdom. Decades of roving and intermittent warfare followed, with British influence never far behind, so that by the beginning of the 20th Century all of what is now South Africa was in British hands.

The last local entities to be conquered by the British, once Zulu and Xhosa independence had been destroyed, were the two Boer states founded by the Voortrekkers, the South African Republic and the Orange Free State Republic.

Historical hindsight is not always as clear as is sometimes believed, but one could speculate as to what might have happened if there had been no invasion in 1806. For instance, it might reasonably be speculated that:

- Slavery would have been abolished at the Cape a quarter-century before it was finally done away with by the British government.
- "South Africa" would have been merely a geographical expression for one Dutch colony (the Cape) and an assortment of independent tribal kingdoms, vassal states and trading outposts; the Cape of Good Hope probably would have turned into a pleasant and rather unimportant little multi-racial Dutch colony like Suriname, and eventually received its independence in the 1960s.

Is there a positive message emanating from Blaauwberg if the speculation above is accurate? It depends on one's outlook. It could be said that Blaauwberg brought immense suffering and troubles in its wake. It could also be said that in a very real sense it changed world history for the ultimate good, and that the South African nation that arose in its wake might yet be Africa's salvation.

What no-one can dispute is that when the first redcoat planted his boots on the sands of Losperd's Bay the future of Southern Africa, and the world, took a turn that not one of the men who were soon to be frantically loading and firing their muskets amid the roiling clouds of powder-smoke at Blaauwberg could have anticipated in their wildest imaginings.

The forgotten heroes of Blaauwberg

The Cape men who fought so heroically at Blaauwberg have been forgotten. There is no memorial, or even a simple plaque on any wall, to celebrate their deeds and mourn the passing of those who fell. There is no list of their honoured dead, they are not even mentioned in most history-books, and the Battle of Blaauwberg itself is dismissed in a few cursory paragraphs.

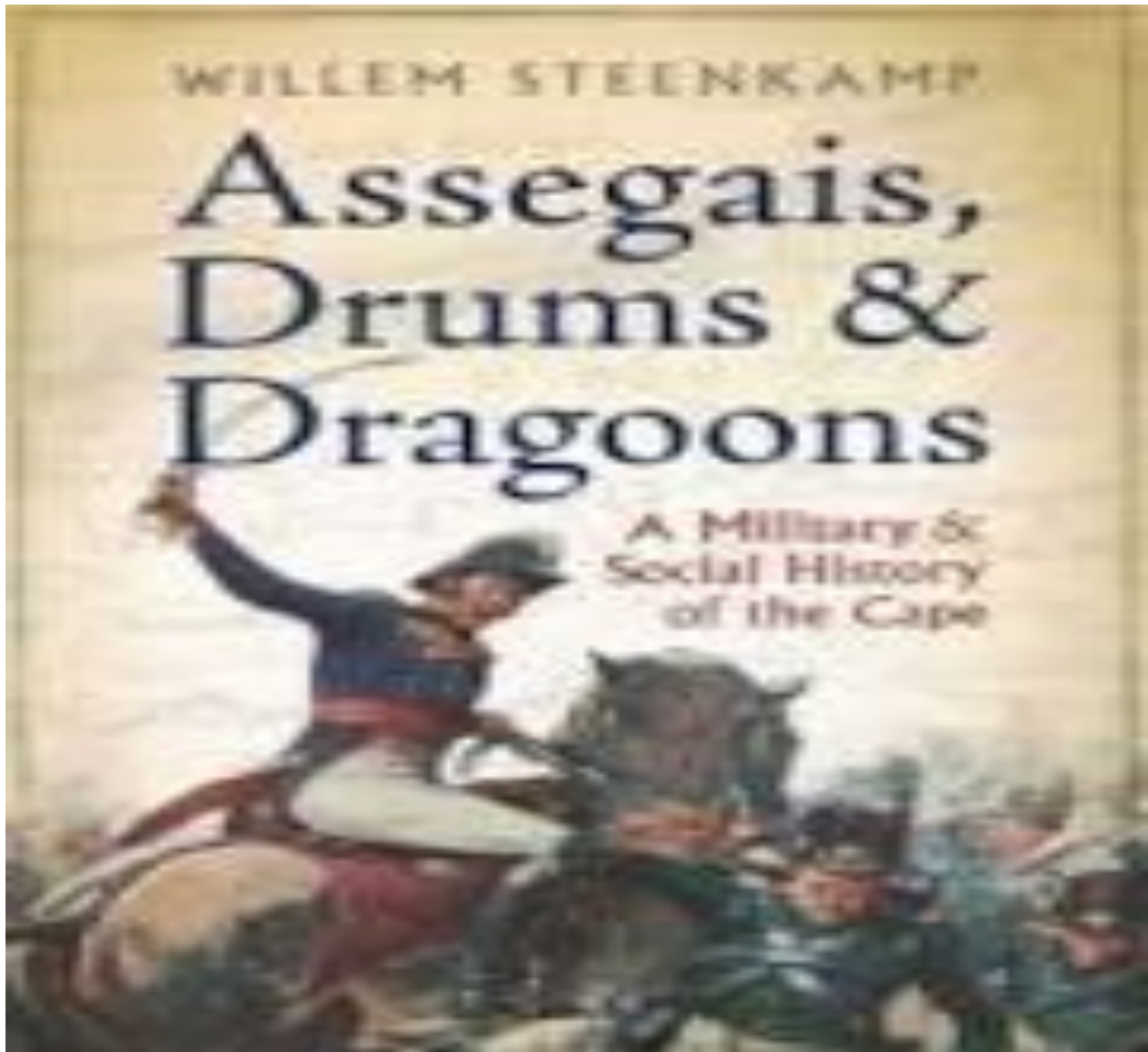
It is almost as if they never existed except in legend, even though thousands of their direct descendants live in Cape Town to this day, a mere cannon-shot from where they died, and the bones of at least some of them must still lie under the soil of the battlefield.

Every year Capetonians gather to pay tribute to the heroes of Delville Wood and El Alamein, and all the other famous battles in which our soldiers fought; but the heroes of Blaauwberg sleep in the undeserved obscurity to which we, their flesh and blood, have consigned them through our own neglect.

The High Level road graveyard that commemorated our fallen Panglima Muslim Malay men that died that day was sold in the 1970's to private developers with no hindsight of our history by some of scrupulous religious leaders.

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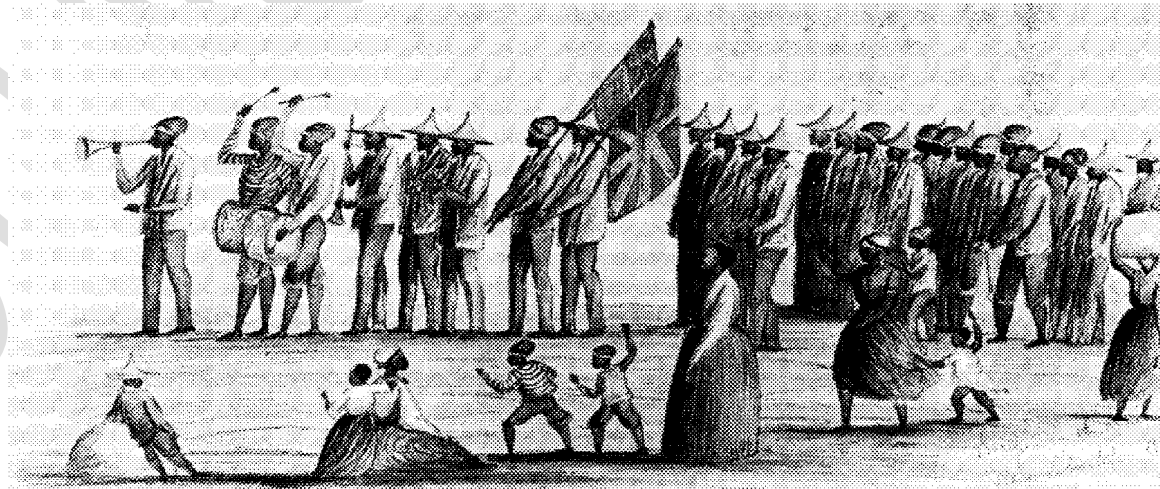
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Battle of the Axe 1846

Military procession

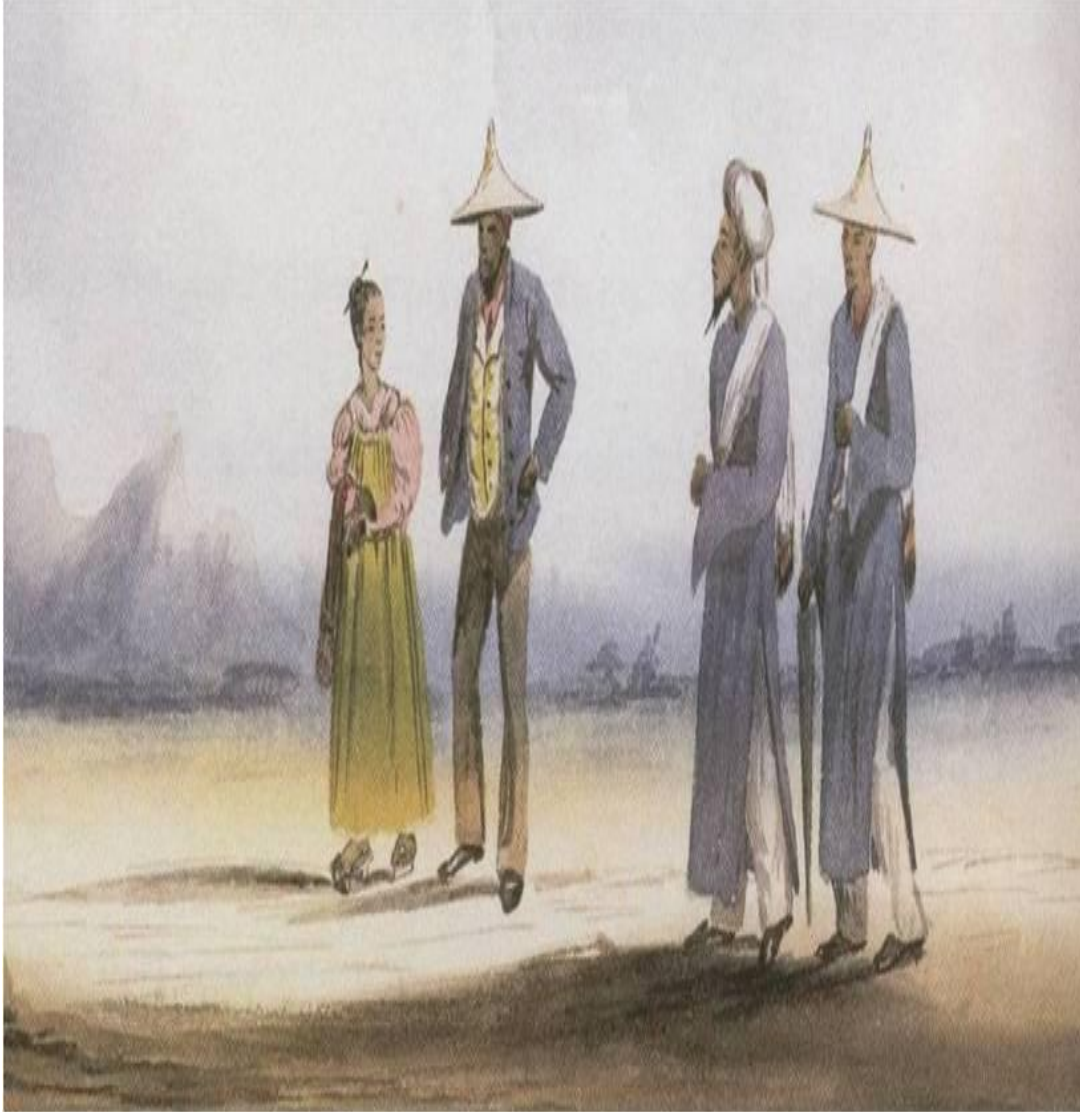
1846 Frontier wars



Military procession

As the this is an sure indication of two wars that we as Cape Malay Panglima was involved in some local historians would led us to believe that this was an coon carnival.

Some other sketches of Cape Malay people in 18th and 19th century





KAAPSE MALEIERS
CAPE MALAYS



MALAY BOY (1849). According to Angas this boy had a Creole strain, the one on the right being pure Malay.



MALAY BOY (1849). Children dressed like their parents were miniatures of their elders.

From Angas: KAFIRS ILLUSTRATED. (By courtesy of the South African Public Library)





MALAY (late 19th century). With *toering* (conical straw hat) and *kaparrings* (wooden sandals).
 (From a print in possession of the author).



MALAY PRIEST (late 19th century).

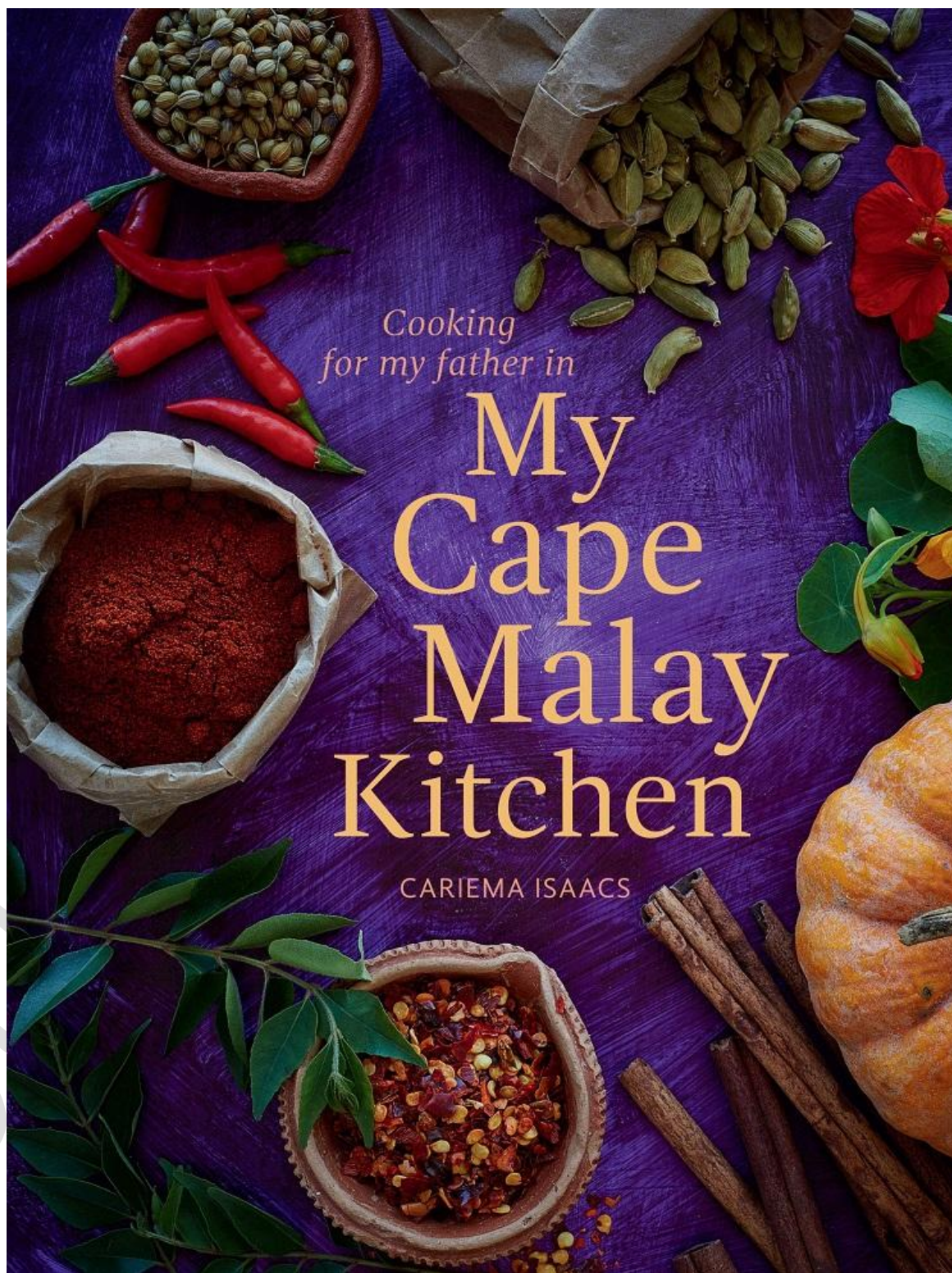
(From a print in possession of the author).

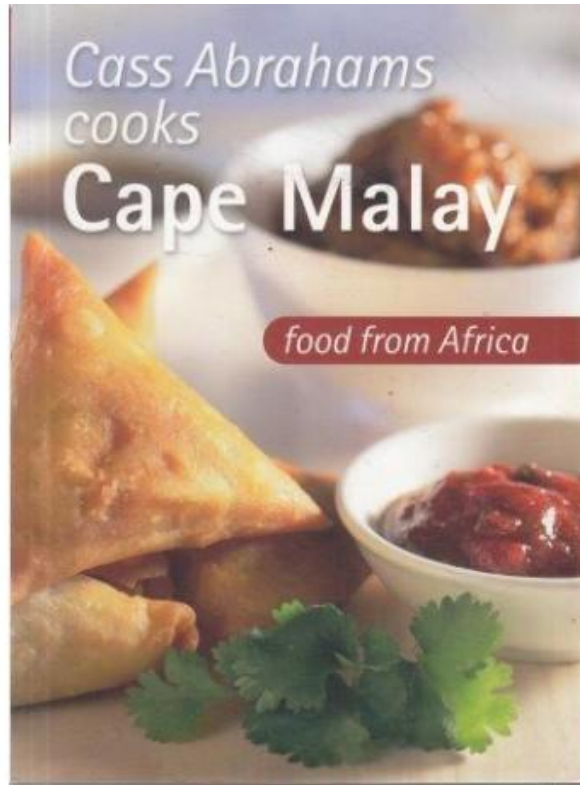
(From a print in possession of the author).



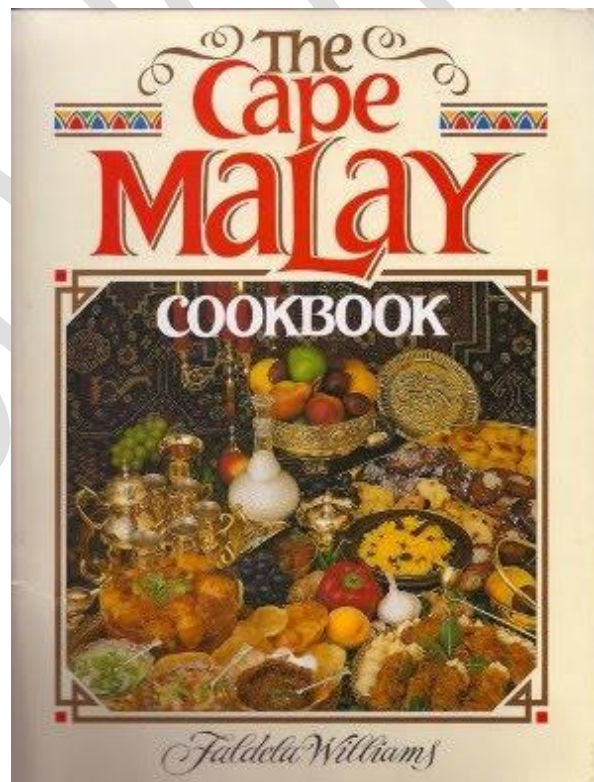
MALAY FISHERMAN. During the early 19th century these
Cape Town.
From a print in possession of Miss K. M. Jeff

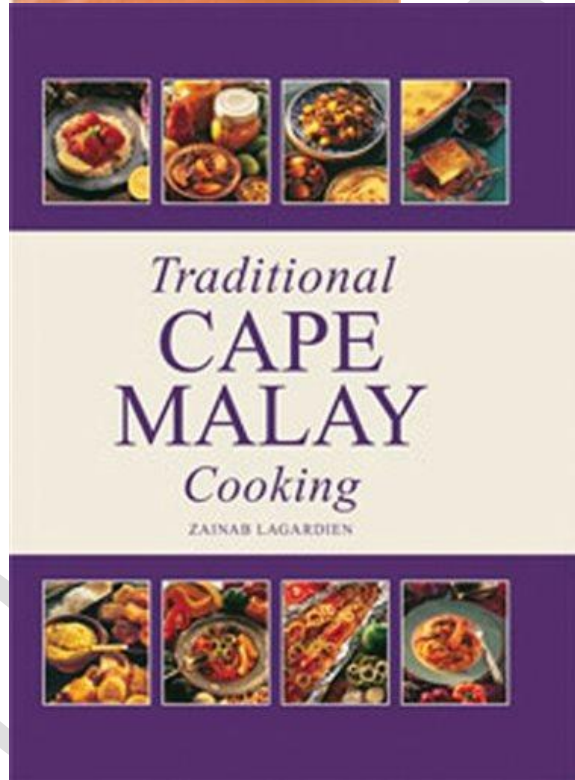
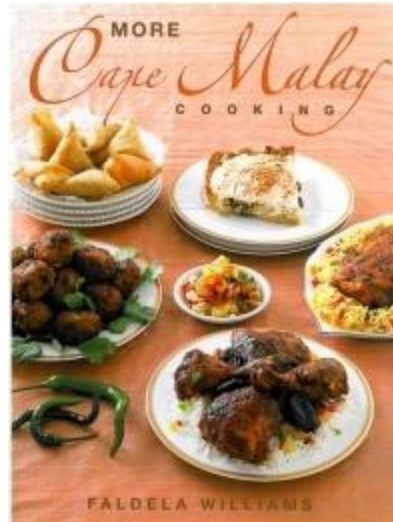


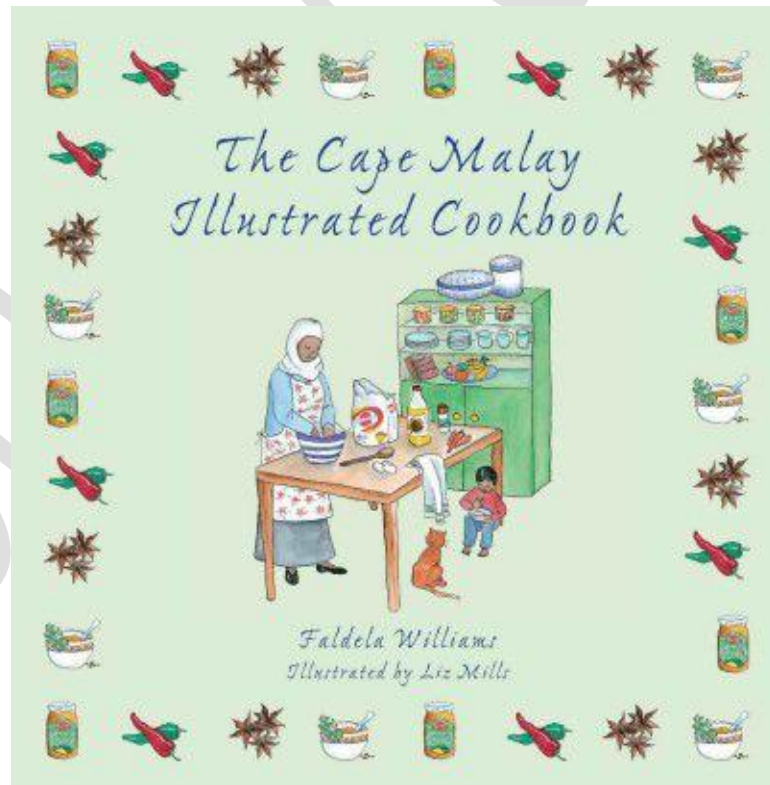
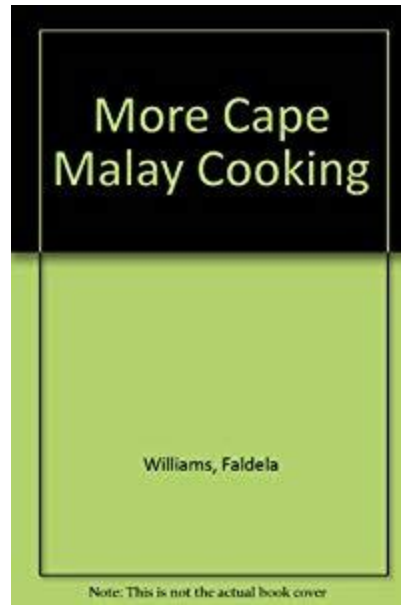


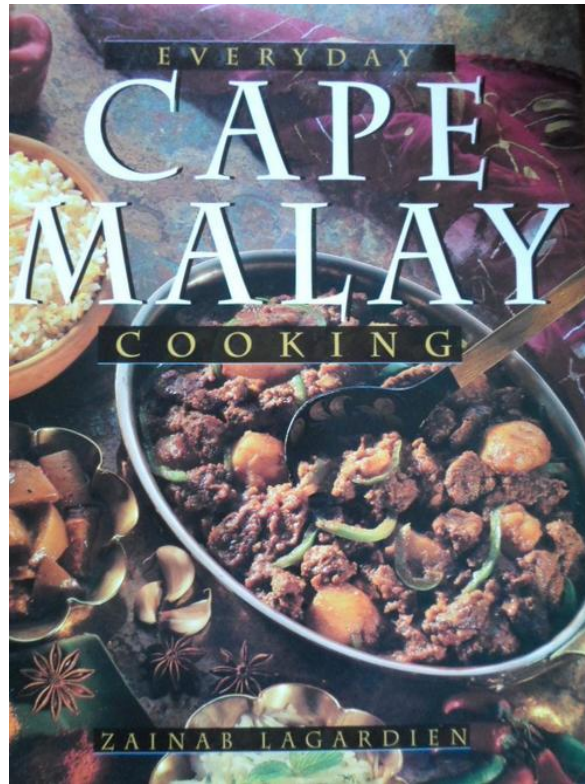


Some Cape Malay cookery books









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