Royal tourists, colonial subjects and the making of a British world, 1860–1911

Charles Reed

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CHAPTER TWO

Naturalising British rule

Shortly after the Prince of Wales’ 1875–76 visit to India, Lord Lytton, Viceroy of India, wrote to Queen Victoria complaining that, hitherto, British rule had relied too heavily on ‘costly canals and irrigation works which have greatly embarrassed our finances, and are as yet so little appreciated by the Hindoo rustic that they do not pay the expense of making them’.1 Instead of wasting British time through improvement projects and economic development, Lytton proposed, the British ought to hold a grand durbar to celebrate Victoria’s new title, Empress of India. This chapter explores how colonial officials embraced this impulse toward ornamentalism between 1860 and 1911 by developing a shared repertoire of ritual practices across the British Empire and how these efforts were made sense of by ‘native’ princes and chiefs in South Africa, India, and New Zealand.2

During the second half of the nineteenth century, imperial ritual emerged from an era of warfare and conquest to be a principal technology of British rule.3 The development of the royal tour, in particular, reflected both continuity with the ritual encounters that had characterised the imperial experience since the first boats arrived on the beaches and a new era of consolidation supported and legitimised by the mythology of the Great White Queen.4 The emergence of imperial ritual also reflected a profound anxiety over the failures of imperial governance and reform during the first half of the nineteenth century. The royal tours were central to an emerging order of rule that displayed British power, nurtured the mythology of the Great Queen, and appropriated local traditions into an imperial culture. Colonial officials developed the royal tour as a site of encounter where they expected to control and display an iconic order of empire, free of the everyday politics of rule.

The royal tours also reflected efforts by imperial administrators and activists to naturalise British rule in Africa, South Asia, and the Pacific by appropriating local modes of legitimacy and systems of order into
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an imperial culture. Colonial administrators, such as Lord Lytton in India or Theophilus Shepstone in Natal, sought to naturalise British rule by reimagining themselves as Mughal governors or African chiefs in an imperial hierarchy, atop of which sat the Great Queen. The adoption of Mughal ceremonies in the Raj is the best-known example of this phenomenon. Yet there were many others. ‘Secret’ Malay performances, usually performed in the dead of night, and Zulu ‘war dances’ were performed for Prince Alfred during his tour to South Africa in 1860. Broken chiefs and handpicked rajas were trotted out as symbols of imperial progress and supremacy. The unknown and dangerous of an earlier era were transformed and appropriated into the known and the safe of imperial ritual. They became incorporated into an imperial culture.

Colonial officials developed customs and practices such as royal visits in a long-term cultural dance with Native Americans, South Asians, Africans, Maori, and Australian Aborigines, one dominated by Europeans but informed by the (imagined or real) demands and expectations of their colonial partners. British imperial rituals were themselves a product of colonial knowledge, made and remade, translated and mistranslated through encounters with local people. At the same time, the practices and ideologies of imperial rule were produced in and disseminated through a larger imperial culture, with India often serving as the model. The result was a set of cultural practices used with princes and chiefs across the empire, perhaps most spectacularly in the Raj, during the Imperial Assemblage of 1877, the ‘Curzonation’ of 1903, and the 1911 coronation durbar, and during durbar-inspired rituals in New Zealand, South Africa, and even Nigeria.

When these imagined traditions confronted the more complicated and messy realities of colonial rule, as they did during the royal tours, the results reflected the degree to which British colonial administrators were captives of their own fantasies about ‘native’ political cultures and how local elites could capitalise on, or suffer at the expense of, this captivity of mind. The royal tours demonstrate the conceptual dissonance between the imagined traditions of rule, as products of colonial knowledge, and the slippery and elusive nature of local political cultures, which could never be fully grasped or controlled. While the royal tour as a technology of rule functioned in the immediate term to display British power, it failed to naturalise in the long term British rule by successfully nurturing loyalty to an imperial hierarchy or a belief in an imperial culture.

This interpretation challenges David Cannadine’s understanding of British ‘ornamentalism’ and imperial rule. According to Cannadine,
the British saw the social order of the empire as analogous to their own society, that is, ‘as an unequal [one] characterised by a seamless web of layered graduations’. His understanding represents a fundamentally Schumpeterian vision of empire as an atavism of British society, made and ruled by conservative, rural, and hereditary elites who identified Indian princes or African chiefs as their social (but not racial) equals and partners (if unequal ones) in governance. Yet, as the case studies in this chapter demonstrate, the recognition of social rank by colonial officials was a fundamentally practical consideration, aimed at producing technologies of rule. For British officials, ornamental ritual represented a less expensive and more practical method of rule more than it did any sense of shared status or values. Moreover, imperial rituals of the British imperial fantasy were performed in contested political spaces, which local political rulers often used to negotiate the terms of or contest British rule or to accentuate their own authority and legitimacy. The planning and performance of imperial rituals were also characterised by a political and cultural insensitively on the part of the British toward princes and chiefs in Africa, South Asia, and the Pacific that widened rather than narrowed the gap between the rulers and the ruled.

The colonial encounters of this chapter reveal a diverse array of experiences, all of which demonstrate the limits of imperial ritual as a technology of rule. Continuing from the experience of Sandile, it begins in southern Africa in 1860, with Prince Alfred’s meetings with Moshoeshoe, the King of Basutoland, and a Zulu government chief named Ngoza. Moshoeshoe used the royal tour to demonstrate his own chiefly authority and to circumvent the authority of Governor George Grey by appealing directly to the Great White Queen. Ngoza, whose power was made by British rule, was cast (wrongly) as the paramount king of the Zulu, in service to British rule and his own political ambitions. Moving in time and space to 1868 New Zealand, I will explore the implications of Alfred’s unfulfilled encounter with the Maori king, whose legitimacy and authority the British governor George Bowen sought unsuccessfully to undermine. The chapter then continues on to the Prince of Wales’ tour of India in 1875–76, where the tales of the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Gaekwad of Baroda explicate the limits of the royal tour as a technology of rule. Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the 1901 royal tour as a way of understanding the consolidation and limits of British ornamentalist politics, which had reached their developmental zenith as methods of imperial rule at precisely the moment they were being effectively transcended in imperial political culture by modern forms of citizenship and dissent.
By 1860, when the fifteen-year-old Alfred, Queen Victoria’s second son, visited South Africa, King Moshoeshoe, or Moshesh, of Basutoland was an old man of over seventy. A state-builder on the southern highveld of southern Africa, Moshoeshoe incorporated a diverse array of subjects – including those fleeing the expansion of the Zulu kingdom and the growth of European settlement – under his rule by offering patronage and security. He was not a hereditary chief leading a timeless tribe, but someone who used the instability brought on by shifting local politics and colonial intervention to create political sovereignty. In this sense, the nature of his rule was not a novelty to the political culture of southern Africa but the very essence of it. In effect, his kingship was an African invented tradition.

A savvy political leader, Moshoeshoe won the fealty of his subjects through generosity, protection, and accommodation; he spoke both Sesotho and Zulu, enabling him to easily converse with most of his subjects, and rewarded loyal Basuto through a cattle-loaning system called mafisa. In 1840, one of Moshoeshoe’s Zulu-speaking subjects told the French missionary Thomas Arbousset’s translator that those who had fled to Basutoland ‘are no longer foreigners in your [Arbousset’s] country … [the reigning Zulu king] Dingane, I served him for a while; I have also served his father…. Believe me, friend, Dingane is nothing to me any more, nor to my family. We are Basotho.’

While the mythology of Moshoeshoe as the founder of a modern Basuto nation is a product of later Basuto chiefs’ ideological work to fend off incorporation into the Union of South Africa, he did effectively build an identifiably modern, non-ethnic state that appealed to and appropriated both African political traditions and facets of European culture.

Over the course of his reign Moshoeshoe paid tribute to the feared king of the Zulu, Shaka, with cattle and ostrich feathers and avoided conflict with later Zulu kings in the same manner; he also fended off attacks by the Nguni-speaking Amangwane and by the Amandebele, to whom he offered cattle as gifts in exchange for their retreat. By the 1830s, Moshoeshoe had forged alliances with other chiefs in the region to emerge as the most powerful ruler in the region, the Morena e Moholo or Paramount Chief.

Conflict with white settler farmers in the fertile Caledon Valley, however, threatened his sovereignty and the territorial integrity of his kingdom. Moshoeshoe allowed European settlers, mostly Boers, to graze their herds in his territory, informing them in a ‘Circular’ that his permission did not constitute permanent settlement and that they were required to respect his paramountcy. While the farmers had
petitioned Moshoeshoe for this right, proof that they recognised his authority in the territory, they soon claimed ownership of the land as property, which had never been Moshoeshoe’s intention. In 1843, the Governor of the Cape, George Napier, made a treaty with Moshoeshoe that officially recognised his sovereignty between the Orange and Caledon Rivers, and 25 or 30 miles north of the Caledon. The motivations behind the protection of Basutoland as a ‘colonial enclave’ was not entirely or even primarily altruistic, however; it was principally aimed at checking Boer expansion in the interior of southern Africa.

British intervention in Basutoland left Moshoeshoe with a quasi-sovereignty that recognised him as the Paramount Chief for the purposes of colonial rule but largely relinquished the territorial control of his kingdom to British administrators. In 1845, Governor Maitland ceded ‘alienable’ territories to the Boers; three years later, Governor Harry Smith annexed the territory between the Orange and the Vaal, giving more land to the Boers and separating Moshoeshoe from his African neighbours.

In 1854, the British abandoned this arrangement and left Moshoeshoe to deal with his land-hungry settler neighbours on his own. The British government renounced its sovereignty north of the Orange River and recognised the Orange Free State, an independent Boer republic in Moshoeshoe’s backyard. In 1858, Moshoeshoe’s well-positioned military force was able to fend off an army mustered by the Free State. In the aftermath of this war, Governor George Grey negotiated a new boundary, but Moshoeshoe knew that the white settlers encroaching on his kingdom would not be appeased.

His requests for imperial protection ignored by George Grey, Moshoeshoe used the 1860 tour to bypass the colonial bureaucracy and appeal directly to Prince Alfred, handing him a letter to the Great White Queen herself. Despite the capricious nature of British protection in the past, the Basuto king continued to assert his loyalty to the Queen and his alliance with the British as the only hope for the long-term stability and autonomy of his besieged kingdom even in the context of British abandonment. After all, Victoria was not the first powerful chief to whom Moshoeshoe had paid tribute, and the skilled diplomat understood the British to be a lesser evil than the Free State Boers.

The meeting between Moshoeshoe and Prince Alfred at Aliwal North on the Orange River was, like other royal encounters, pre-scripted by colonial officials. The meeting place was a symbolic one; it was at Aliwal North that Moshoeshoe had signed a deal brokered by George Grey in 1858 to settle Basutoland’s boundary with the Orange Free State and where he would later, in 1869, be forced to cede rich territory to the Orange Free State in a second treaty. J. Austen, the Superintendent
of the Wittebergen Native Reserve, brought 600 armed locals, performing war-songs and appearing appropriately ‘native’, to meet Alfred. By inviting Moshoeshoe to meet Prince Alfred in an act of imperial theatre, complete with native warriors pacified by British rule, colonial administrators in southern Africa sought to incorporate the great chief into their understanding of imperial culture. Moshoeshoe was cast in a small role as the loyal African chief, who came on-stage to express loyalty to and submit to the Great Queen.

The British viewed Moshoeshoe in deeply ambiguous terms. Part of this ambiguity was a reflection of Moshoeshoe’s uncertain relationship with the British state in South Africa, as not wholly inside or outside of its dominion. He was the unconquered sovereign of a semi-independent African kingdom. On one hand, Moshoeshoe was represented as a brave general and a skilled politician. He was described as sympathetic to European missionaries and loyal to the Great Queen. His conflict with local settlers from the Orange Free State was depicted as a struggle against Boer tyranny. On the other hand, while dressed as a respectable Victorian gentleman, complete with a top hat, Moshoeshoe was described by colonial observers as a comedic product of cultural mimicry, like a child in his father’s suit. It troubled the progressives in Cape Town, who otherwise petitioned on his behalf, that Moshoeshoe was ‘still professedly … a heathen’, despite his openness to Christian missionaries. In particular, he was judged harshly for his acquisition of many wives and for the distribution of women to loyal subjects. Moshoeshoe was seen as astute but potentially menacing, cunning but absurd.

In meeting Prince Alfred, Moshoeshoe played his role but infuriated George Grey by deliberately going off script, upstaging the teenaged Alfred and openly defying Grey’s authority as governor. He arrived on horseback, with 300 followers amid muskets firing, to ‘the hurrahs and shouts both of Europeans and natives’. When the fire and smoke cleared, the chief ‘took off his hat, bowed gracefully, and stretched out his hand’ in the direction of Alfred. He caused much excitement, even more than Alfred did, and the assembled group of onlookers crowded around him, hoping to shake his hand. When one observer, a local writer, suggested that Moshoeshoe might retire after his long ride, he said to ‘let them come. I like to see them, and will tire them all out yet.’ While imagined as a minor player in an act of imperial theatre by colonial officials, Moshoeshoe played a major role in what he saw to be his own show.

Nevertheless, the local natives brought to Aliwal North dutifully played their roles as tamed savages. Moshoeshoe’s entourage was equipped with flags and banners, with messages in Sotho about Alfred
and his mother: ‘God save the Queen’, ‘You are welcome, chief, son of the Queen’, ‘[The] Basuto place their trust in the Queen.’ Local people from the native reserve were lined up on each side of the road, those dressed in European-style clothing on one side, ‘the more savage-looking ones in the native war-dress’ on the other. The Cape Argus described their responses in detail:

[Those wearing European clothing], as the Prince and his party passed, all bowed to the ground, shouting ‘Khosi! Khosi! Khosi!’ while the line of savages gave a simultaneous shudder and shrunk behind their shields, against which they rattled their assegais. The gesture was a very horrid one, but was meant for a very respectful and dutiful greeting, and the Prince bowed from one side to the other, as if they had been so many ladies and gentlemen in Hyde Park.

Such a ‘horrid’ performance demonstrated the placidity and progress of previously threatening natives and the effectiveness of imperial rule. As the local natives performed ‘war dances’ and ‘burst forth into the tune of “God Save the Queen” in their own language’, Moshoeshoe, Alfred, and Grey paraded beneath the banners and arches to a house for Dutch religious services, after which the gifts were exchanged.

The exchange of gifts was always an important ritual of royal encounters with indigenous people, and the meeting between Moshoeshoe and Alfred was no exception. It was a practice most clearly associated with expensive royal visits and durbars of the Raj but had been a part of British imperial culture in some form since the earliest days of British exploration. Moshoeshoe gave Alfred three tiger-skin karosses, one from his brother Letsie, who was too ill to come. Moshoeshoe, according to colonial accounts, asked the prince for ‘some token in the prince’s handwriting … that he might take back with him and show his people’. Alfred obliged, giving the Basuto king a signed photograph of himself, the gift of a royal image that was so typical of such exchanges.

On the surface, this encounter appears to conform exactly to the message that Grey sought to convey through the royal tour: a rather savage, unsophisticated present from the African chief and a product of British progress and technology, if basically a trinket, from Alfred. The kaross from Moshoeshoe might be seen as a symbolic investment in British rule as Moshoeshoe ultimately appealed to Queen Victoria as a loyal ally who sought her protection and patronage. Moshoeshoe’s interest in the photograph shows it offered a powerful, even magical, representation of the monarchy’s efficacy. As Thomas Spear has argued, political legitimacy is always ‘subject to local discourses of power’, and Moshoeshoe was reascribing and inventing his own sovereignty.
and authority, in part by appealing to his relationship to Britain and its Great Queen. While what Alfred and Moshoeshoe discussed is unknown, their interviews were translated by George Grey, giving him the power to embellish, omit, and invent the language of the encounter. After the gift-giving, Alfred retired for much-needed rest as locals bustled around the illuminated village and a massive bonfire in the market square.

The next day Alfred and Moshoeshoe met again. The ceremonies commenced with more ‘war-dancing and the chanting of songs in an aboriginal fashion’. The settlers of Aliwal and the French missionaries from Basutoland addressed the prince, expressing their loyalty to the Queen. After delivering a letter addressed to Queen Victoria to the prince, Moshoeshoe and his counsellors sat for a photograph, which remains the best-known image of the Basuto king. Photography, as scholars have argued, was a form of colonial knowledge that acquired and appropriated the ‘other’ into the realm of the known. The photograph of Moshoeshoe represented a cultural appropriation of his image into imperial culture, proof of a civilisation-giving and liberal British imperialism.

At the same time, Moshoeshoe used his role in imperial rituals, his relationship with the Great Queen, and even his own photograph to remake his own symbolic role in the ‘nation’ of Basutoland. Moshoeshoe came to see the teenaged prince not because he longed to pay his respects to the Great Queen but because he understood that imperial intervention might be the only thing that stood between his kingdom and the settler ‘scourge’. While the British reports convey a Moshoeshoe amazed by the presence of a flesh-and-blood prince – proof that the Great White Queen did really exist – the Basuto king was no stranger to the potential risks of inviting British ‘protection’. He also recognised, from experience, that the British were fickle allies and that imperial protection was limited and subject to the political winds in Cape Town and London. Thus, regardless of British policy toward his kingdom, he would continue running guns and stockpiling arms to defend his kingdom against British and Boer alike.

Yet, as a political strategist, Moshoeshoe also recognised the value of loyalty to the Queen and allegiance to the empire in fending off the settler threat. He knew that being attached to the British Empire was the only way to protect his kingdom from local settlers and sought to use it to reinvent his own political authority. As colonial administrators such as Grey sought to channel local protest into the fundamentally apolitical formulation of imperial ritual, Moshoeshoe used the opportunity to express to Alfred ‘a hope that the relations which existed between him and the British government in the time of Sir
Harry Smith and other Governors might be restored’, that is, some degree of British protection against the incursions of Boer settlers.49 Grey immediately moved to end this unscripted conversation, telling the Basuto chief that ‘his best course would be to embody his request in a letter to the Queen instead of addressing himself to the Prince’ and that ‘Prince Alfred will not hear anything further on the subject’.50 The effect of his performance and his letter to the Great White Queen was probably nil, but the attempt reflects on the ways that the symbolic space of imperial rituals could be used and subverted by their participants.

Moshoeshoe’s political genius lay not only in the creation of a ‘nation’ of Basutos but in his brand of realpolitik informed by the experiences of his long reign. His foreign policy, with both Africans and Europeans, relied on peace-making, alliances, and incorporation when possible, gunrunning and warfare when these détentes expired.51 As his performance in 1860 suggests, Moshoeshoe’s use of realpolitik prevented the complete annihilation of his sovereignty.

Despite his political achievements, he let ‘the snake in the house’.52 His successors, increasingly sewn in by European settlement, were less successful in maintaining local sovereignty. In 1871, Basutoland came under British protection, administered by the Cape Colony, and subjected to what amounted to a British residency.53 While it remained a quasi-independent African state under British protection through the twentieth century, the most fertile lands of Moshoeshoe’s kingdom, the crest west of the Caledon, were ceded to land-hungry Boers. During the late 1870s, when several chiefs including Moorosi rebelled against Cape-appointed magistrates, its administration was taken over by London. Major-General Charles Gordon’s proposition to replace the magistrates with British residents modelled on India, while rejected, reflects the slow devolution of Basuto as a political state from sovereignty to quasi-sovereignty.54 As the 1901 tour will demonstrate, Moshoeshoe’s successors had few opportunities to challenge the symbolic space of the royal visit. While Moshoeshoe’s political compromise with the British helped preserve some Basuto land for future generations, it created a morass for his successors, who lacked Moshoeshoe’s political genius and were increasingly sewn in by more and more land-hungry European settlers.

_Ngoza (1860)_

Alfred met another chief while visiting Natal in 1860, who was described by colonial officials as the supreme chief of the Zulu. Ngoza had served in the Zulu army under King Dingane and entered the
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colony of Natal in 1843, where he worked in a settler's kitchen until he caught the attention of the Secretary of Native Affairs in Natal, Theophilus Shepstone, in 1847. Working as an agent for Shepstone against a 'recalcitrant' local chief, Ngoza was installed as a native strongman (induna) in the Mngeni valley of Natal. Shepstone placed more and more African settlers under Ngoza's authority, and he became 'a government chief, one of the iziphakanyiswa – those 'raised up'. The Anglican bishop of Natal, John Colenso, was most impressed with Ngoza during his tour of Natal in 1854, describing him as:

dressed neatly enough as an European, with his attendant Kafir waiting beside him.... [He] is Mr. Shepstone's head man, and, though not an hereditary chief, has acquired considerable power, and is practically a chief of as much authority as any in the district, which he owes partly to Mr. Shepstone's patronage, partly to his own modest and amiable character. There are probably, (by reason of refugees having flocked to him, who had left their own chiefs behind,) more pure Zulus under Ngoza than under any other chief in Natal.

Both Shepstone and Ngoza were participating in an African tradition of reimagining chiefship.

The appropriation of Zulu titles and political traditions, as the British imagined them, were central to the imperial culture that the royal tours were designed to nurture. When Alfred came to southern Africa in 1860, the Zulu kingdom was represented not by King Mpande and the independent Zulu kingdom north of Natal but by Shepstone's government chief Ngoza in 'war dances' choreographed by Shepstone himself. Instead of wearing the attire of a respectable African chief, he wore a dramatic costume of monkey tails, tiger skins, and ostrich feathers that borrowed from some combination of local traditions and European ideas about what a Zulu chief ought to look like. Alfred encountered the Zulu assembled in a semicircle, each man carrying an oval ox-skin shield. As the supreme chief, Ngoza led the dances 'under the effective management and direction of T. Shepstone':

Gozza's bands began the ball, coming up towards the spectator like a surging line of inky surf, making, at the same time, a whole hurricane of noise. They advance, they retreat, they leap aloft into the air, they kneel and crouch to the ground, placing their shields before them. They become frantic, brandishing their spear-sticks, and kicking with knee and foot against their shields. They see the enemy, and yell at him like a pack of demoniac hounds. How they would tear and rend him if they could but get him! Now they retreat, holding their shields behind them, and hissing like a host of wriggling serpents between their teeth. Awful fellows!
The performance represented British dominance over the feared Zulu and, therefore, the success of colonial rule over native peoples. Shepstone offered an address ‘that had been agreed upon for the sake of brevity by the native chiefs’. The settler newspaper Natal Mercury understood it as proof that ‘these barbarous things’ had been ‘tamed’ under the ‘easy yoke of the British Government’, which offered protection and safety from the cruelty of local chiefs. The fierce dance by one young Zulu prompted the Mercury to explain that, while such a man would have aroused horror and fear in London, ‘Natalians know [that the] poor creature is perfectly harmless, and would repeat the performance on any day of the week for a pinch of snuff.’ These carefully choreographed performances were designed to tout the successes of British rule and to incorporate local traditions into an imperial culture, into the realm of the safe and the knowable.

The government chief Ngoza performed as the representative of the Zulu chiefs and master of ceremonies, an act that ignored both the reality of Zulu politics and the dominant role of Shepstone and his officers in crafting the performance. The subjugated Zulu king was a former kitchen worker without regal ancestry; the legitimate kingdom of Shaka to the north was ruled by Mpande and remained outside of the British pale. Ngoza dressed for his performance in the attire of a savage rather than that of a subordinate colonial administrator. The Zulu war dances were adapted, even invented, by Shepstone, who choreographed them to maximise the intended effect.

Ngoza’s chiefship, then, was a product of colonial rule, made by Shepstone to appropriate local forms of political authority. But what Shepstone and other colonial officials failed to appreciate was that political traditions in southern Africa (and elsewhere in the empire) were always in the making. Successive forms of political authority, as the transformation of minor chiefs Moshoeshoe and Shaka into great kings demonstrates, did not reflect the natural persistence of ancient traditions or tribal bloodlines but were products of innovating and reimagining local political culture. In the context of African politics, the creation of Ngoza and other chiefs reflected the profound disruption of the Shakan period on African polities in the region, a disorder that the British used to the benefit of colonial rule by organising new chiefships as a bulwark against the Zulu kingdom. For Shepstone, as we shall see, making his own Zulu ‘tribe’ in the borderlands of the British Empire was one part of a more ambitious programme. Ngoza, a former soldier and labourer, used his invented chiefship to make a place for himself in the world, one where he was theoretically an important ruler, if in practice a low-level colonial administrator. In a sense, both Shepstone and Ngoza were participating in a local tradition of political adaptation.
Recent work on Shepstone, or Somtsewu kaSonza (something like ‘father of whiteness’), as Africans knew him, has offered a complex portrait of a colonial administrator driven by a profound opportunism, an insidious desire to control and manipulate African politics for the purposes of colonial rule, and sympathy for what he considered to be ‘African interests’.

Jeff Guy and Thomas McClendon point out Shepstone’s upbringing, speaking ‘Kaffer from childhood’, in Xhosa-speaking areas of the Eastern Cape by Wesleyan missionary parents equipped him to be a skilled observer of local politics and culture. Guy posits that Shepstone personally occupied and monopolised a cultural space between African oral traditions and written colonial knowledge, which he used to accentuate his own status and power in both conceptual universes. While the ‘Shepstone system’ of indirect rule angered the frontier settlers of Natal, who understood his native reserves as both inhibiting European use of the land and limiting their access to native labour, its principal objective was to ‘secure white power in a colony which had never been conquered’ and where European settlers represented a tiny minority.

The crowning of Ngoza as a Zulu king represented Shepstone’s grand designs in their infancy. His system of indirect rule and role as a kingmaker would reach their maturity in 1872 when he participated in the ceremony that installed Cetshwayo as the king of Zululand. During the ceremony, Shepstone performed as the great founder of the Zulu kingdom, Shaka. In his official reports of the event, Shepstone overstated the importance of his presence and its implications for British power in Zululand, a reflection of his systematic attempt to mythologise himself as the great white chief in the eyes of both Europeans and Africans. In this context, he played up his role as a law-giver to the Zulu, whose failure to adequately appreciate his gift later justified the invasion of Zululand. As Carolyn Hamilton’s skilful analysis of the event demonstrates, however, the ceremony began before Shepstone arrived, a subtle act of subversion that demonstrates that Cetshwayo and his counsellors comprehended Shepstone’s intentions and sought to undermine them. Moreover, the Anglo-Zulu War (1879) reveals the limits – or the insidiousness – of the Shepstone system and British impatience with any semblance of independence on the part of local rulers.

The performances of Ngoza and his ‘tribe’ during the royal tour of 1860 demonstrate the colonial appropriation of local traditions for the purposes of rule and for the personal opportunism of Shepstone, as an occasion to embellish his status as the great white chief. It also shows the artificiality of indirect rule, which tried to appropriate African political traditions but failed to fully control local symbolic spaces.
Ngoza and other enterprising African men, those intermediaries and interpreters who occupied the places in between two or more cultural universes, could ascend from the white man’s kitchen to become the heir to the great Shaka.

**Kingitanga (1869–70)**

In 1869–70, Prince Alfred, now captain of his own ship, visited New Zealand as part of a much longer voyage across his mother’s empire. George Bowen, the Governor of New Zealand, worked tirelessly to schedule a meeting between Prince Alfred and Tawhiao, the Maori king, as part of a scheme designed to undermine the political and cultural legitimacy of the Maori King movement. Kingitanga was a political and cultural movement that sought to create a zone of sovereignty to counter British rule. It was consciously modelled after Queen Victoria, the story goes, inspired by the 1852 encounter of Tamihana Te Rauparaha, the son of chief Te Rauparaha, with Queen Victoria during a visit to Britain. Founded as a pan-Maori movement, it was aimed at uniting the diverse populations of Maori people across the islands of New Zealand in a context of intensified land acquisition by the Crown legalised and institutionalised by the Treaty of Waitangi. In 1858, Potatau Te Wherowhero was elected and crowned the Maori king, his kingdom centred in Waikato on the North Island and supported by a collection of local communities (iwi). Well into the 1860s, the King movement survived the military and political onslaught of the colonial government, much to the irritation of Bowen and the colonial government.

In time, Kingitanga developed its own cultural symbols of authority (mana), such as a national flag, and articulated its counter-sovereignty by establishing King institutions and an imagined community of print using government documents, in works of history, and through a series of King newspapers, including *Te Hokioi o Niu Tiren e Rere atu na* (January–May 1863). For a period in the 1860s and 1870s, Pai Marire, a syncretised religious movement comparable to the cattle killing and other millennial movements in South Africa, rapidly spread among adherents of the King movement; although influenced by Christianity, it rejected European influences and interactions, and its most radical believers used it to justify violence against European settlers. King territory was marked off by an almost cosmic territorial pale, or aukati, over which no unauthorised European could cross, and which provided a source of settler resentment and a ‘constant reminder of the Crown’s failure to crush Maori independence’. The Maori state claimed legitimacy and sovereignty through an imagined pan-Maori
community, which the British saw as a clear threat to colonial rule in New Zealand and the myth of empire. Kingitanga claimed loyalty to Queen Victoria, their treaty partner, but rejected government and settler encroachments as a violation of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Potatau’s son Tawhiao (r. 1860–94) would inherit the ire of the British Empire. During the 1860s, the British government sought to alienate non-aligned chiefs from the movement through diplomacy and warfare. Governor Gore Browne and his replacement Sir George Grey sought to isolate Kingitanga and ‘dig around the [movement] until it fell’. Browne was sacked for his failure to crush local Maori assisted by Kingite troops during the 1860–61 Taranaki War. Grey would bring a native policy developed during his first tenure as Governor of New Zealand (1845–54) and his time as Governor of the Cape Colony (1854–61) and a missionary zeal to the government campaign against Kingitanga.

Using questionable intelligence-gathering tactics and relying on untrustworthy native informants, Grey built the case and ‘pumped reports into London alleging a widespread Maori conspiracy to attack Auckland’. An 1863 ultimatum from Grey demanded submission to Queen Victoria, but colonial troops crossed over the aukati before the Maori could even respond, beginning the Waikato War (1863–46). Tawhiao finally retreated to Tokangamutu (Te Kuiti) in Ngati Maniapoto territory. As a consequence, the colonial government confiscated 1.2 million acres of Maori land, including most of the Waikato district in a process the Maori called Raupatu. In response, Kingitanga isolated itself even further from the British and from loyalist kupapa, or Queenite, Maori. Tawhiao sought to prevent the land court from operating within areas controlled by the Maori king by banning the surveying and selling of land. It was in this context – of an un suppressed King movement and continued violence between Maori and the British, most often blamed on the Kingitanga – that Prince Alfred arrived to New Zealand during 1869 as part of an extensive world tour.

Governor George Bowen sought to use Alfred’s royal visit to negotiate the surrender of Tawhiao, by enticing him to violate his own sacred aukati and to culturally undermine his claims to sovereignty by submitting to the son of Queen Victoria. Two years earlier, in 1867, George Grey had encouraged a meeting between Alfred and Tawhiao, telling the Maori king that if he was ‘willing to give up [his] weapons of war to a great chief [Alfred], none greater than this chief will ever come near you’. Grey sought unconditional surrender, and Kingitanga’s leaders sought restoration of confiscated land and recognition of Tawhiao in King country. Both Grey and Kingitanga rejected the other party’s preconditions, and the meeting did not happen.
In response to Bowen’s new proposal, the King movement organised a conference at Upper Waikato at the end of April 1869. The Resident Magistrate (RM) in Waikato, William Searancke, was invited to the meeting and described its composition: 1,700 armed men, ‘besides some friendly natives’, Maori leaders, and many civilians – a mass meeting that totalled around 3,500 attendees. The RM noted that, while the Maori king’s followers were considered rebels by the British government, they overwhelmingly rejected the recent violence on part of Te Kooti, a Maori guerrilla fighter on the North Island who had recently escaped from imprisonment on the Chatham Islands, some 800 kilometres off the coast of New Zealand. Searancke judged Tawhiao’s speech to be ‘couched in ambiguous language’ but ‘pacific in tone’. When Searancke pressed Tawhiao to meet with Prince Alfred, the Maori king agreed to consider the proposition. Despite the conciliatory tone on the part of Tawhiao, Bowen noted that ‘nothing can be absolutely certain in dealing with a race liable, as are the Maoris, to be actuated by sudden and fanatical impulses’. Bowen’s failure to make sense of Kingitanga is reflected in his troubled ethnography of Maori motives.

As diplomatic messages passed between the government, the Maori king, and other Maori chiefs, the settler press was accusing Tawhiao of planning an uprising and of supporting Te Kooti’s raids on the North Island. But the threat that the King movement posed to the British government was not violence, as Tawhiao had rejected violence unless directly threatened, but counter-sovereignty beyond the pale of British control. In this context, Bowen sought to used Alfred and the mythology of Queen Victoria’s greatness and power to undermine this counter-sovereignty by forcing Tawhiao to submit to British rule. Bowen complained to the Colonial Office that the ‘adherents of the so-called Maori king’ had ‘since 1860, either been in arms against the Crown, or have dwelt apart in their mountains and forests in sullen and hostile isolation, like the Jacobite clans in the Scotch Highland’.

In his letter to the Colonial Office in London, Bowen focused his attention on demonstrations of loyalty by ‘friendly’ Maori while Kingitanga and the ongoing raids by Te Kooti were framed as fringe movements, minor disturbances far outweighed by overall Maori gratitude for British rule. The governor assessed the prince’s visit as an occasion to confirm and reward ‘the loyalty of the clans now in arms for the Crown’. Despite his efforts to minimise Maori resistance, his dispatches to the home government also asserted the necessity of limiting Alfred’s travels to the cities and avoiding the interior of the North Island, where conflict continued to rage.
The chiefs of the North Island met Alfred at Auckland, those of the lower North Island and South Island at Wellington. Bowen was most interested in symbolic acts of submission by chiefs to the British Queen. During the ceremonies, ‘several of the Maori Chiefs have laid at the feet of the “Queen’s Son” as tokens of homage, the hereditary ornaments which had been treasured by their ancestors for many generations’, which he compared to the Scottish Brooch of Lorn. For instance, Tamihana Te Rauparaha, the son of the Ngati Toa chief Te Rauparaha, presented Alfred with a greenstone ornament representing Kaitangata, a character of Maori mythology, which had ‘been an heirloom in his tribe for five-hundred years’. The message of this exchange was abundantly clear to Bowen: that the Maori chief was giving over a traditional symbol of Maori authority to the British monarchy.

During the 1830s and 1840s, Tamihana ‘s father Te Rauparaha, like Kingitanga, had resisted European efforts to purchase more land and refused entry to surveyors, inciting settlers to send a vigilante expedition that tried (unsuccessfully) to arrest him. Settler rumour and paranoia encouraged fear of Te Rauparaha, whose control of much of central New Zealand inspired much resentment, and in 1846 Governor George Grey had him arrested and held on the naval ship Calliope for ten months without charge. He was released to his people in Otaki in 1849, left to live out the last year of his life as a broken man.

His son Tamihana Te Rauparaha was baptised by the CMS missionary Octavius Hadfield in 1841 and travelled the islands as an evangelical missionary. He lived on a European-style estate, his lucrative sheep farm, wore European clothes, and kept servants. It was in 1852, when he travelled to Britain with other Wesleyan Missionary Society missionaries aboard the John Wesley, that he was introduced to Queen Victoria as an example of a ‘civilised native’. Despite being a founding member of Kingitanga, he broke with the movement in 1860 over what he saw to be the king’s antagonistic positioning. By the mid-1860s, he was serving as the senior land assessor for the colonial government. Tamihana was not a collaborator, but someone who sought to engage constructively with the Crown and maintained hope that it would adhere to the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi. He also sought, however, to use new cultural and political forms inspired by Christianity and the British monarchy to invent new traditions aimed at protecting local people by uniting them.

In this context, the handing over of a sacred symbol of his father’s mana offers a message far more ambiguous than the one imagined by Bowen. Te Rauparaha was a man broken and beaten by the British despite his earlier partnership with European settlers and his later
reluctance to fight them, in spite of settler pressure to sell his land against what he saw to be the agreed terms of the Treaty of Waitangi.

His son’s presentation of the Kaitangata greenstone could hardly represent a tribal submission of ‘traditional’ Maori rule to the great and powerful British monarchy. Tamihana imagined himself to be a modern, Christian Maori, a product of the colonial encounter. His gift to Prince Alfred might better be considered an investment. For the Maori, gifts created reciprocal bonds and obligations.

In investing his family’s legacy in the British monarchy, and in effect co-opting it for Maori culture, Tamihana sought the patronage and protection of the Great Queen. He declared loyalty to the Queen, not to the colonial government. Of course, colonial officials saw the handover as the absorption of local hierarchy and tradition into imperial culture. According to Bowen, ‘this last survivor in a long line of Chieftains and warriors’ told him that, ‘as there were none of his name and lineage to succeed him’, as ‘his house was gone, like the Moa [Maori birds hunted to extinction by the Maori]’, he had, as it were, bequeathed this dearly prized talisman of his fathers, as a token of love and honour, to ‘the Son of the Queen of England and New Zealand’. His family’s mana, like his father, had gone the way of the moa. Colonial officials such as Bowen may have imagined the royal tour as a way to incorporate Maori chiefs into the great imperial hierarchy, but the encounter on the ground reflected a far more complicated and ambiguous relationship.

Shortly before Prince Alfred’s scheduled departure in May 1869, he was invited by two loyalist chiefs from Waikato, Wi Patene and Te Wheoro, to a proposed ‘meeting [with Tawhiao’s] Maoris, at Ngaruawahia, the old Maori capital’. Its purpose, they said, was ‘to tell you [Prince Alfred] and the Governor their thoughts, so that peace and goodwill may arise in this Island of troubles’. The Maori king, they claimed, wanted to see him, the prince of the Queen, for, ‘although the Governor represents the power and authority of your Mother … you are Her own Child; You are the Queen Herself; therefore it is that the Maori tribes long to see your face’. The chiefs assumed that the prince’s presence would be helpful to negotiations between the government and the King movement.

It is unclear if the colonial government had any role in prompting the meeting although it had worked for months to arrange a meeting between Alfred and the Maori king. One letter to the editor of the Taranaki Herald argued later, when Alfred returned to New Zealand in 1870, that ‘a chief who claims independent sovereignty’ meeting Prince Alfred was ‘almost equivalent to a recognition of his claim’.

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Perhaps the loyalist Maori recognised an opportunity for Tawhiao to make peace in the presence of British royalty. The Maori knew, as the Xhosa did, that leaders who went to negotiate with the British often did not come back. And they knew, after the Treaty of Waitangi, that the protections offered in signed treaties did not count for much. They perhaps assumed that the presence of the Queen’s son might offer some insurance – that the Great Queen, knowing that the agreement was made with her son’s involvement, might intervene to defend its stipulations.

Bowen was ‘convinced that it is of vital importance to endeavour to arrive at a peaceful understanding, not inconsistent with the sovereignty of the Queen, with the so-called “Maori King”, by which title his adherents appear to mean little more than a great Chieftain and Magistrate analogous to the semi-independent Rajahs of British India’. While refusing the legitimacy of Tawhiao as a monarch, and thus comparable in some way to Queen Victoria, Bowen also lamented that the Maori king had not been militarily crushed when the government had the resources available. To supplement the sword, he sought to culturally destroy the Tawhiao’s legitimacy by persuading him to submit to Victoria’s greatness and power. Rewi, one of Tawhiao’s principal generals, urged the Maori king to attend on the grounds that he had ‘long fought the Pakeha [white settlers], but that war had caused the Maoris to lose many men and much land, and that he was now as strong for peace as he had been for war’.

Tawhiao never crossed his aukati and never met Prince Alfred, who left on 1 June. The Taranaki Herald offered, at the royal tour’s conclusion, a far more nuanced and complicated picture of this non-event than that offered by colonial propaganda:

[Prince Alfred’s] stay in Auckland was the longest, where he enjoyed himself, a greater part of the time, with pheasant shooting.... He was to have left on the 28th May, but owing to a wish expressed by some of the inhabitants of Auckland, that he should stop and visit the Maori King, who they were trying to persuade to come half-way to meet the Prince, His Royal Highness postponed his departure till the 1st June. We cannot see what good was likely to have resulted from the interview, but it might have done a great deal of harm. Old political questions would have been raised, and Tawhiao would have quoted scripture largely to bear out his arguments, which we fear, his Royal Highness would have found it difficult to refute. Altogether we think that Tawhiao (the Maori King), has shown greater wisdom in refusing.... [The prince] will... only take away a very different impression of the Colony to what it really is; for he has only visited the cities of New Zealand. Had he called at some of the smaller towns, or gone where the rebellion was rife, and seen a ‘real war
dance’, he would have had a better knowledge of the place, the peoples, and of the difficulties.116

For the next several decades, Tawhiao refused various concessions from the colonial government in exchange for an oath of allegiance. In 1884, he went to Britain to appeal directly to Queen Victoria: to ask her for an independent Maori parliament and inquiry into land confiscations. Instead, he met with the Colonial Secretary, Lord Derby, who told him that the imperial government would not intervene in local affairs. The reality of the Great White Queen fell far short of the mythology.

Inspired by the Great Queen, Kingitanga appealed to the idea of indigenous political and cultural unity as a means of challenging imperial rule. It was an invented tradition in its most real sense, a new movement that transcended older rivalries and political traditions. It did not reject the authority of Queen Victoria, but demanded a political and cultural sovereignty – one that its adherents made real in print, institutions, and symbolism, and which they saw as the rightful legacy of Waitangi. The royal tour, as imagined by colonial administrators, sought to inspire obedience and loyalty in ‘traditional’, ‘tribal’ leaders, who would submit to the authority of the Great Queen and the legitimacy of the great imperial hierarchy of rule. In New Zealand, Prince Alfred encountered a much more confusing empire, but not the Maori king, who refused to submit.

The Gaekwad of Baroda (1875)

In 1875, the Prince of Wales travelled to the western Indian princely state of Baroda to meet with its gaekwad, a ten-year-old boy named Sayaji Rao III, whom Albert Edward described as ‘a very intelligent boy, quite overloaded with jewels’.117 In Bombay, the Prince of Wales spent time talking to the lad, who was only a few years older than his eldest son Albert Victor, about ‘illuminations and horsemanship’ (he encouraged him to pursue his interest in the latter).118 During the return visit to Baroda, the young gaekwad grasped the Prince of Wales’ right hand and led him toward an elephant that would carry him to the durbar for local dignitaries at the British Residency.119 Later, the British prince was treated by the young gaekwad to rhinoceros and elephant fights and a hunting exhibition for cheetahs.120 Despite the good feelings expressed by the Prince of Wales and the Gaekwad of Baroda toward each other during the visits, a far more unsavoury reality lay behind the delicate façade of ornamental spectacle.

The practices developed during the royal tours demonstrate that the science of observing and acquiring knowledge of Indian traditions,
practices, and mentalities for the purposes of rule profoundly informed the relationship between the British and their South Asian subjects. It also reveals that colonial knowledge by its very nature was a partial and incomplete reflection of reality, based on limited and flawed knowledge. Thus, when the fantasy of imperial rule became practice during the royal tours, the political and cultural distance between the rulers and the ruled often widened instead of narrowed.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, British officials constantly sought to refine and improve the elaborate and time-consuming system of imperial rituals. Without a sense of irony, British administrators sought to modernize the ‘feudal’ institutions of the Mughal royal tour and durbar for use by the viceroy, governors, and visiting royals during imperial visits of state. Raj officials carefully studied the historical relationships between different South Asian states and princes – as a reflection of a timeless social order rather than of the push and pull of local politics – in order to determine a proper ritual order. Philip Wodehouse, the Governor of Bombay, conveyed his ‘fear that some of the Native Princes, so tenacious of their privileges, might resent any disregard of their rights in matters of ceremony & etiquette, especially with regard to the exchange of visits’. British officials in India obsessed over gun salutes, ceremonial rankings, and placement to such a degree that it is rather difficult to determine where Indian practices ended and British fantasies began.

British administrators also sought to simplify imperial rituals. For instance, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Prince of Wales could not logistically pay return visits to the many rulers whom they encountered during their visits to India. To solve this problem, formal return visits were limited to the most prominent Indian princes; less important chiefs were housed in government buildings or hastily constructed tent villages, where the British prince could, in a matter of hours, pay return visits to dozens of South Asian princes at their ‘home residences’. In 1875, Wodehouse established that Indian rulers who received less than a seventeen-gun salute would not be granted the traditional return visit from the Prince of Wales. This arrangement left Albert Edward with ‘only six visits to be paid at their own houses and nine concentrated visits’.

At these temporary princely hotels, royals such as Alfred and Albert Edward met with Indian rulers in rapid succession. Princely elites were hurried into and out of their visits with the British prince, for which they had often travelled long distances and at great expense. Moreover, their attendance was not considered optional by British officials. In Ajmere in Rajasthan, tour planners expected the Prince of Wales to meet with twelve chiefs in less than two hours, with ten
minutes allotted for each prince. Even Alfred’s complaint to his mother (Chapter 1) about the tedium of imperial ceremonies was stirred by such an event. Even for twenty-one-gun princes who were granted more respect and attention and who received return visits at their residences rather than in a tent or a government apartment, the royal tour represented an expression of imperial domination more than a British respect for India’s ‘natural rulers’.

Similarly, when the Prince of Wales complained to his mother of the ‘rude and rough manner’ of British political agents toward Indian princes (Chapter 1), he echoed the complaints of many Indian observers, including the independent South Asian press, about the ritual practices of the royal tour. From this perspective, South Asian princes were often abused and disrespected during imperial rituals. While some princes profoundly enjoyed entertaining a fellow prince – taking the Duke of Edinburgh or the Prince of Wales hunting for game or treating him to animal fights and local cuisine – these princes often retained some semblance of sovereignty, far away from the administrative dominance of Simla, Calcutta, and Bombay. South Asian elites were far more likely to visit the prince in a tent hotel temporarily designated an official residence and to experience the ‘rough and rude manner’ of their British handlers than to embark on a private hunting exhibition with the Queen’s son. If Cannadine’s Ornamentalism describes the British fantasy of imperial rule, the experience of the Gaekwad of Baroda reflects the reality of it.

The Prince of Wales encountered the young Gaekwad of Baroda near the end of a long political drama: the poisoning of the British Resident of Baroda and the subsequent ousting of the Malhár Rao, the previous Gaekwad, by the British government of India. While the British officials in India imagined the royal tour of 1875–76 as an opportunity to solidify the traditional hierarchy that they had been nurturing since 1858, the ouster of Malhár Rao coloured the meaning of the royal visit for many South Asian princes, intellectuals, and activists, for whom the British removal of an ‘independent’ prince revealed the rotten and corrupt core of British rule in India.

A ‘quasi-independent’ state ruled by an Indian gaekwad, Baroda’s structure was typical of the system of princely rule invented by the East India Company, arguably in the tradition of the Mughals, and reinforced by the settlement of 1858. The gaekwad was allowed to govern the internal affairs of Baroda, with the advice of a British Resident. While Indian princes were more independent in practice than African chiefs, who often acted as little more than the bottom rung of the colonial hierarchy, the gaekwad’s rule was always subject to British ‘advice’ and intervention, though the most blatant and obvious interferences...
were mostly avoided. On the eve of the Prince of Wales’ visit, however, the British Resident of Baroda, Colonel Robert Phayre, found arsenic in his sherbet, leading to a series of events that demonstrated the British theory of paramountcy and limits of indirect rule.

Historians have described the removal of the gaekwad as a defining moment in the relationship between the Raj and local princes. Lauren Benton has argued that British officials were deliberately evasive in defining legal and political sovereignty in ‘colonial enclaves’ such as Baroda, simultaneously asserting respect for local traditions (‘divisible sovereignty’) and claiming British paramountcy in the tradition of the Mughal and Maratha: as Benton puts it, the British sought ‘to decide where law ended and politics began’.133 Charles Lewis Tupper, a British official in the Punjab during the 1890s, argued that South Asian princes ‘whether by compulsion or otherwise’ had historically rendered themselves subordinate with ‘the hegemony of some paramount power’.134 To the English legal scholar John Westlake, the distinction between the princely states and ‘the dominions of the Queen’ became, over the course of the nineteenth century, ‘niceties of speech’, a strategy of rule rather than a legal or political reality.135 The Baroda case crystallised and forwarded British claims of unlimited paramountcy. As an expression of British unlimited sovereignty, it signalled ‘more than a gap between theory and practice’.136 More importantly, the case demonstrates that colonial officials defined the relationship between the Raj and South Asian princes with a purposeful ambiguity that allowed imperial rule to expand and contract without the requirement of legal precedent.

Baroda’s relationship with the British government in India was rather strained by the 1870s.137 In 1872, Malhar Rao was accused of poisoning his predecessor’s diwan (chief minister), but he refused an inquiry by the British and disposed of the body without an examination.138 Philip Wodehouse, the Governor of Bombay, appointed Colonel Robert Phayre as the British Resident in 1873 with the intention of reining in the gaekwad; Phayre apparently had little patience for princely rule or ornamental politics and sought even greater control over the gaekwad than the British government would allow. Phayre’s dogged resolution to challenge corruption and misrule in Baroda, often against the wishes of officials in Bombay and Calcutta, demonstrates the importance of local ‘men on the ground’ in shaping global imperial politics.

Phayre wasted no time in developing an antagonistic relationship with the gaekwad and local notables. Soon after his appointment, Phayre reported to the British government a public flogging during which one victim died and requested a commission to investigate
general misrule in Baroda, including the gaekwad’s treatment of the hard-pressed countryside. During a meeting with the sardars of Baroda, he informed them that he was forming a revenue commission to investigate the state’s finances and that if they misrepresented their wealth, he would ‘find them out’. Phayre ‘sent increasingly alarming accounts of conditions to the Bombay Government’, reporting even the most minor problems to the government. Only ‘latent insanity’, Phayre claimed, could explain the gaekwad’s ‘inordinate thirst for wealth and self-gratification’ but he also blamed ‘evil advisers’, particularly his allegedly illiterate and inexperienced diwan, Sivaji Rao, and his finance ministers for ‘the positive reign of terror’ in Baroda. Phayre, it seems, subjected the gaekwad to an ideal of British principles of rule, constantly antagonising and prodding him: hardly the relationship between an independent ruler and a British ‘adviser’.

Prompted by Phayre’s alarms, the Bombay government decided to act decisively against the gaekwad, but Lord Northbrook in Calcutta disagreed, and argued that an investigation was needed to determine whether or not Phayre’s claims were overstated. The struggle between the central British administration in Calcutta and the local British government in Bombay to control official policy in Baroda is a clear example of the kind of push and pull that occurred between a multiplicity of cores within the British Empire. Northbrook sought to control what he saw as an overzealous policy of interference by Phayre and the government of Bombay (though the Governor of Bombay, Philip Wodehouse, was generally a restraining force in his council’s desire to control Baroda’s governance). Nevertheless, Northbrook established a commission to investigate Phayre’s allegations, appointing Colonel Robert Meade, Chief Commissioner of Mysore, as chair, as well as Faiz Ali Kan, former Diwan of Jaipur.

Malhár Rao soon called upon the lawyer Dadabhai Naoroji, who in 1872 had unsuccessfully argued on the gaekwad’s behalf on another matter and who had made a case for him in London during the current crisis, for assistance. Naoroji, a Hindu intellectual educated at Elphinstone College, was a forerunner of the loyalist respectables examined in Chapter 4. Living much of his adult life in Britain, he dedicated his intellectual career to educating the British public about the inequity of British rule in India – most famously in Poverty and Un-British Rule in India, which underlined the extraction of wealth from India by the British – and became, in 1892, the first British MP of South Asian descent. By recruiting Naoroji to his cause, the gaekwad, quite ingeniously, sought to utilise the emerging political strategies and tools that would soon so effectively serve Indian nationalist politics.
As Naoroji returned from Britain in 1873 to take up his position as the gaekwad's adviser, Northbrook's Baroda Commission began its meetings. The commission completed a far more limited investigation than Phayre sought. It dismissed many of the complaints put forward by Phayre but ultimately decided against the gaekwad, voting for the replacement of his ministers and more direct control of Baroda's affairs by the British Resident. Northbrook held back, giving the gaekwad the opportunity to respond to the report. Northbrook warned that 'the Gaikwar himself [would be responsible] for the good government of his State under a warning that, if before 31st December 1875, he [did] not reform his administration he [would] be deposed from power'. It appears that the gaekwad did aspire to reform his court, if only for the purposes of self-preservation, but was prevented by Phayre's obstructionist tactics.

On the night of 9 November 1875, Phayre noticed a strange-looking substance in his sherbet. Upon examination, the residency surgeon confirmed the presence of arsenic in the drink. Phayre immediately blamed the gaekwad but ignored the advice of Northbrook to resign his post. Against Wodehouse's counsel, Northbrook removed Phayre, replacing him with the more experienced Lewis Pelly as Agent to the Governor-General, who reported directly to him. Pelly, the gaekwad, and Naoroji commenced an ambitious programme of financial reform. The gaekwad and Naoroji rapidly grew apart, however, ultimately resulting in Naoroji's departure and a rather abrupt halt to the British-sponsored reform.

During the following investigation, a servant soon confessed that the gaekwad had provided the poison and instructed him to use it against Phayre. After the evidence was vetted by the Advocate-General of Bombay, Pelly urged the immediate removal of the gaekwad. The commission appointed by the viceroy, three British officials, and three prominent Indians from other princely states could not agree on the gaekwad's guilt; regardless, he was ultimately deposed on grounds of 'misrule'. Since the British claimed no criminal jurisdiction over Baroda, the removal of the gaekwad was 'an act of State, carried out by a Paramount Power'.

The arrest of the gaekwad was ritualised both by the British administrators at Baroda and by the gaekwad himself. While the reported stir of anticipation in the air on the morning of the gaekwad's arrest was partially spontaneous, it also reflected a fetish with spectacle on the part of British officials as well as a desire to make an example of the troublesome gaekwad:

Early this morning, the cantonments were in a flutter of excitement. The newly-arrived troops, which had taken up their quarters in the maidan
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[public space] opposite the Residency, were all astir; the 9th Native Regiment marched, to the stirring music of their band, to the vicinity of the new encampment; by the red, yellow, and blue ropes, which did duty as reins and ornaments to the saddler, stood in the Residency compound; near the main gate a saluting party of the 9th infantry were drawn up, and as it was their duty to present arms, when officers or civilians passed in or out from the presence of Sir Lewis Pelly, they had plenty to do in consequence of the unusual pedestrian traffic which followed between the encampments and the Residency..... It required no soothsayer to affirm that something unusual was happening.154

The gaekwad surrendered in a ritual performance, which doubled as a final act of defiance. To British officials in India, the ritual arrest of the gaekwad represented the administration of British justice, the liberation of Baroda from a corrupt, Oriental despot. The removal of an ‘autonomous’ prince by means of ambiguous and questionable legal justifications, however, profoundly informed the meanings of another imperial ritual: the royal visit.

As the melodrama of Phayre and the gaekwad demonstrates, warm feelings on the part of British administrators toward traditional, hereditary rulers were hardly universal, and the methods of indirect rule were often unrefined, their motives conflicted and directed by multiple authorities. Moreover, while the Prince of Wales, his mother, and Lord Northbrook all scowled upon the removal of a hereditary ruler such as Rao, their reluctance was not enough to prevent the gaekwad’s removal, which was justified by the British government of India despite the less-than-airtight case against him.155

The affair informed the meaning of the Prince of Wales’ visit for urban elites and hereditary rulers of British India. For many of them, the removal of the gaekwad was not an anomaly or exception but exemplified the very nature of British rule in India. The urban elites of the Raj represented the royal visit as a logical extension of this brand of British despotism.156 The Rájshahye Samáchár (East Bengal) saw the prince’s visit as intended ‘to create an impression of the power of the British, and to wound the feelings of Native Princes ... for the object of making a parade before others of its popularity with the natives’.157 The Sádháraní (West Bengal) wondered how ‘the Native public ... [could] rejoice at the visit of the Prince of Wales, at a time when their hearts are sad with the deposition and misfortunes of Malhárrao’.158 In the minds of many of the Queen’s Indian subjects, the despotism of British rule demonstrated by the Baroda Affair and the charade of the royal tour represented opposite sides of the same coin.

Both British and Indian newspapers reflected on the political significance of the meeting in the context of the removal of Malhár Rao. They
drew vastly different conclusions. Many of the independent South Asian newspapers expressed a willingness to punish the gaekwad if proven guilty but argued that the evidence against him was limited.\textsuperscript{159} No matter how charismatic or gentle the Prince of Wales was in his interactions with the child prince who replaced the troublesome gaekwad, Albert Edward could never escape the perception of the Indian press that British rule was fundamentally illiberal. To many South Asian intellectuals, the rule of law – endlessly used by the British to legitimise imperial rule over local misrule and despotism – represented a tool of imperial rule, employed when convenient and abandoned when not.

To British observers, in contrast, the encounter between Prince Alfred and the young prince demonstrated the political revolution that was afoot in Baroda, where the guiding hand of British progress was transforming a corrupt Oriental despotism. The child prince would rule over his kingdom in a manner suitable to a loyal subject of the Queen. British administrators continued to direct a policy of purposeful ambiguity when legally and constitutionally defining their relationship with the gaekwad; Pelly advocated making no new treaty with the princely state on the grounds that ‘a treaty more or less implies equality, and this has ceased to exist’.\textsuperscript{160} Meade reported to Northbrook his satisfaction that Albert Edward’s visit to Baroda had been an ‘entire success in every respect’:

We of course took all proper measures to ensure our being duly acquainted with any suspicious or doubtful proceedings on the part of those who are known to be dissatisfied with the new arrangements…. To the community generally the Prince’s visit has given the upmost satisfaction, and I feel convinced that it will be regarded as a seal to the new settlement, and will have a very important effect in checking intrigues from any and every quarter…. We may also hope that it will leave a deep and lasting impression on the young Gaekwar, and attach him firmly to the Crown.\textsuperscript{161}

Yet the encounter reveals the far more complex relationship between the rulers and the ruled. The removal of an Indian prince and the personal selection of his successor by the British administration demonstrate the instabilities of ornamental rule. The happy meeting between the Prince of Wales and a child prince could not undo the past or the perception by many South Asians that British rule was unjust and despotic and that imperial rituals served to legitimise it.

\textit{Nizam of Hyderabad (1875)}

Tour planners marvelled at the political effects of the royal presence on South Asian princes. In their minds, it demonstrated that ornamentalism
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represented an ideology and a set of ritual practices absolutely fundamental to imperial rule. Sir Henry Daly, the Political Agent for Central India, described to Northbrook the ‘miraculous’ effects of the Prince of Wales on the native princes of British India: ‘There is a sentiment in their feudalism which has been touched and reached.’

On the other hand, the Indian newspaper Rajshahye Samachär argued that the British wrongly ‘seem to think that, as Asiatics, we are very fond of glitter and sport; and it was only by such displays and demonstrations that the Mahomedan Emperors, though foreigners in both creed and language, succeeded in gaining the affections of the natives. This is not correct.’ Independent Indian newspapers chastised colonial officials for their abuse of the local princes and their failure to govern justly and equitably.

The worst excesses of the practices and policies crafted by tour planners in the name of Asiatic spectacle were exemplified in their treatment of the Nizam of Hyderabad. British policy toward the sickly nine-year-old nizam, prince of an expansive Muslim state in southeastern India, reflects the continuity between the Baroda controversy and the ritual practices of the royal tour. The unwillingness of Nizam Mahbub Ali Khan’s handlers to allow him to make the voyage to Bombay in 1875, in order to pay his respects to the visiting Prince of Wales, was a contentious issue in the political discourses of British India, a pitched political battle fought in the pages of the Anglo-Indian and South Asian newspapers.

The nizam was an odd choice for harassment by the Anglo-Indian press, which spearheaded the public relations campaign against the young prince; after all, he had been nurtured from birth to serve as a docile agent of British rule. He was given an ‘English schoolboy’s education’, supplemented by lessons in Persian, Urdu, calligraphy, and the Qur’an, by a British tutor. After his father died in 1869, he was led to a ceremonial rug, representing the throne of Hyderabad, and invested – hand in hand with his diwan and regent, Sir Salār Jung, and the British Resident of Hyderabad.

Yet colonial officials considered attendance at imperial rituals to be compulsory. Lord Northbrook wrote to Philip Wodehouse that, short of compelling circumstances, Indian princes were expected to attend the ceremonies. When the nizam’s court indicated that he was too sick to attend, Northbrook found the prince’s excuse to be ‘insufficient’. The Sulabh Samachär (Calcutta) complained that a British invitation was more akin to a summons. Sir Salār Jung attested to the nizam’s inability to make the arduous journey to Bombay and even considered making overtures for compromise, offering the nizam’s presence within a day’s journey of Hyderabad ‘in either the territory of
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169 The British Resident in Baroda, C. B. Saunders, had little sympathy or patience for the nizam's predicament and immediately doubted the claim, treating Jung, in the words of Sulabh Samāchār, ‘like a common clerk’.

170 Against the claims of the Anglo-Indian press, South Asian independent newspapers assumed the sincerity of the nizam’s illness and argued on his behalf. Further, the editors of the South Asian press used the opportunity to express their concern that the process of attending British ceremonies was often so humiliating to Indian princes that they would often rather stay home. In other words, the press claimed, South Asia’s hereditary elite would rather be accused of disloyalty by the British than experience the undignified process of being ordered around and having their status disrespected by colonial officials. Weeks later, when the Anglo-Indian Bombay Gazette criticised ‘the refusal of the Nizam to meet the Prince of Wales’ as ‘holding back the hand of friendship to the Heir to the Throne of England … [and] a sullen declaration of hostility to the British Government in India’, Native Opinion lambasted the comments of the Gazette as an effort ‘calculated to generate … feelings of distrust and antipathy to British power in India’.

171 Responding to the public controversy, Captain John Clerk, the nizam’s British tutor, wrote to Lord Northbrook ‘on the subject that is now before Your Excellency as to His Highness the nizam meeting His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales’. Clerk was a sympathetic observer of the child prince, although his account also reflects a more general European stereotype about Asiatic rulers and their weak disposition of health and nerve:

...notwithstanding all the pressure that the Resident has brought to bear on the Regency, and notwithstanding the malignantly worded telegram (from England), and subsequent newspaper articles in the Bombay Gazette, &c., which the Resident seems to regard as of so great importance.... When I came out (in January last) I found His Highness extremely weak and delicate; not a week passed that he was not in the hands of the doctors, either with fever or bowel complaint, or glandular swellings of the neck, resulting from his scrofulous inheritance. By dint of constantly – daily, I may say – urging the necessity of proper diet, open air exercise, and that they would allow him to take our medicines, tonics, &c., &c., gradually an improvement set in.... But when your Excellency considers all the circumstances attendant on a journey, and for the intended purpose which must inevitably lead to great excitement and nervousness to a boy who is eminently excitable and nervous – that His Highness has never been five miles away from his capital – that he has never been absent a day from his mother....Were His Highness older, and of a sound constitution, not only do I think the Regents, but also all
of the important Nobles of the state, would look upon the fact that His
Highness is going to meet and welcome His Royal Highness in India …
as conferring a very great honour on them all.173

British officialdom’s long-standing distrust of native information
required the more trustworthy information of a British observer. Even
this report, however, did not dissuade most British officials involved
from believing that the nizam’s illness was a ‘mere excuse’.174

Clerk’s reports to the British government in Calcutta on the press
and public opinion in Baroda also demonstrate the limits and instabil-
ities of colonial knowledge. He blamed the independent Indian
press for disseminating untruths about him and for encouraging the
resentment of the nizam’s subjects toward the British government
of India: ‘They set on every kind of report – that I had come to make
their Nizam Christian – that this was the first step in upsetting all
their old institutions and customs – that all would be made English
in a few years in ideas – and then that the Government of India
would step in and take the country.’175 Clerk understood these fears
as almost pathological, a product of the paranoid and fear-mongering
enemies of the British. The nizam’s court, however, was attended by
Saunders and a cadre of residency staff as well as Clerk, his tutor, who
complained in the very same letter that the young ruler knew very
little English because he spent too much of his study time reading
the Qur’an! On one hand, Clerk’s account of the nizam reflects the
blissful ignorance of the ambitious official on the ground, looking to
enact reforms on his own model of British education and scientific
rule. On the other hand, it reveals a more profound weakness in the
relationship between the rulers and the ruled – that the British offi-
cials on the ground failed to comprehend the effects of their practices
and policies on local politics.

The nizam was ultimately ‘excused’ from attending royal rituals
in Bombay by Northbrook after fulfilling, in the words of Native
Opinion, the ‘humiliating’ requirement of sending a ‘medical certifi-
cate’ as proof of illness.176 Saunders was removed, not because of his
adamancy that the nizam attend the rituals in Bombay but because he
was ‘injudicious and [dis]courteous’ in his treatment of the nizam.177
This controversy of treating the child prince and his diwan with such
enmity infuriated the editors of the independent Indian press and initi-
ated a battle of words between the ‘native’ press and the Anglo-Indian
newspapers. The Bhárat Sangskárak (Calcutta) even went as far as to
conceptually link the treatment of the nizam with the Baroda Affair,
as proof to the true relationship between British residents and Indian
princes.178
In the end, the Prince of Wales did meet the nizam’s regent and prime minister, Sir Sálár Jung. Jung was, according to Albert Edward’s secretary Francis Knollys, ‘the most astute and far seeing politician in India’. British administrators who attended to the Prince of Wales concluded that Jung was quite happy to rid himself of Saunders and would use the opportunity to pursue, ‘with oriental cunning’, the restoration of Berar Province. The assumption that Jung’s intentions were devious and insincere demonstrates why British ornamental politics could never succeed as long-term methods of imperial rule. Their culturally acquisitive processes reflected not merely the missteps they made in ‘dancing with strangers’ but also a more insidious desire to control political discourses that proved to be a counter-productive consequence of the interventionist nature of indirect rule.

The encounters between British royals and local hereditary elites at the turn of the century, during the world tour of the Duke and Duchess of York and Cornwall, illustrate the changes that British imperial culture had undergone in the previous forty years. Colonial officials increasingly closed off the limited public space created by public ritual through a developing system of colonial rule and reshaped local political cultures to serve British administrative desires, by eroding and appropriating the autonomy and legitimacy of hereditary elites. As local elites became dependants and functionaries of colonial rule, they were transcended in the realm of imperial and national politics by the ‘modern’ politics of Western-educated respectables, who often had little patience for their ‘traditional’ practices. Those rulers who could not be controlled or neutralised were isolated, imprisoned, or destroyed by the British.

The New Zealand welcome for the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, who travelled the world in 1901 in order to celebrate Australian federation and to thank imperial troops for their service to empire in the South African War, incorporated and appropriated the symbols of local culture. In this context, Maori children singing the national anthem in their native language and battle sites of the New Zealand Wars were co-opted as symbols of a national-imperial culture. Upon the duke’s arrival at Auckland, the Premier of New Zealand, Richard Seddon, presented him with an ornate box, made with native woods and decorated with a Maori ‘war canoe’ and kiwi. On Victoria Street in Auckland, an arch welcomed the duke and duchess in English and professed ‘Aroha, Tonu, Ake, Ake, Ake’ (translated as ‘Love for Ever and Ever’). Of course, triumphal arches representing different
ethnicities were standard decorations for royal visits, but the 1901 empire tour was perhaps most remarkable for the ways in which local customs and traditions were remade and appropriated both for the purposes of imperial rule and as part of the development of nascent national mythologies.

The duke and duchess participated in a durbar-like ceremony in Rotorua, near the Bay of Plenty on the North Island. Colonial officials invited each Maori group to send a hundred representatives to pay tribute to the Duke of York. Local Arawa Maori, in the tradition of imperial rituals, performed a ‘war dance’, waving ceremonial battle-axes and singing a song of welcome. The main event at Rotorua, however, was the Haka, where representatives from many of New Zealand’s Maori groups assembled. In the grand ceremony, the Maori chiefs ‘in full battle array, faced the Duke and Duchess when they entered the Royal pavilion’. Performing the role of the paramount chief, the duke wore ‘across the shoulders, a kiwi mat, and carried a greenstone mere, the genuine native insignia of chieftainship’.

In a colonial exhibition of the Maori nations, men and women performed, professed their loyalty, mourned the loss of Queen Victoria, and brought gifts. The Poverty Bay Herald, commenting on the sheer number of gifts received by the duke, proposed that a ‘Maori Museum’ ought to be built in Rotorua so that New Zealand could preserve the ‘Native relics’ still left in the colony. By bringing together the diverse groups and cultural practices of the Maori, which had threatened the stability of European expansion in the Pacific in previous decades, the Haka transformed them into safe and controlled symbols of imperial culture – proof of ‘how completely the Maori hatchet has been buried’.

Still outside of the pale, the Maori king was nowhere to be found at Rotorua. While the settler press portrayed the Maori king’s absence as evidence of the colonial policy of isolation, the historical record suggests that colonial administrators retained the hope that the duke’s visit might present the opportunity to penetrate the symbolic space of Mahuta, the Maori king. After initially agreeing to come to the Haka with several hundred followers, Mahuta stated that he was ‘not inclined’ to go but invited the duke and duchess to the capital of King country. The government refused to alter the duke’s plan so that he might stop at Mahuta’s capital. Thus the Maori King movement, by resisting both military and cultural colonisation, continued to challenge the processes of acquisition so central to British rule.

Similarly, when the Duke of York visited war-torn South Africa, colonial officials adopted the ritual practices that had been perfected in the Raj, bringing together ‘Chiefs of all of the principal Tribes in the
Cape Colony, of Basutoland and Bechuanaland’. As Indian officials during the tours of the 1860s and 1870s had found, this method was far more effective than having the King’s son trek around southern Africa, as Alfred had, and ensured the protection of an heir to the throne visiting a warzone. During earlier tours, individual attention from visiting royalty was meant to demonstrate British respect for the most important local elites, with less important notables left to meet with the prince in groups or during brief interviews. Not surprisingly, there was a significant correlation between elites deserving of personal attention and those who had not fully come under the control of British rule. By 1901, these individual visits were extremely rare outside of India.

The most prominent guests at this durbar-like ceremony in Cape Town were Lerothodi of Basutoland (Lesotho), the grandson of Moshoeshoe, and King Khama of Bechuanaland (Botswana), who had visited Britain in 1895 to ask Queen Victoria for protection from the land-hungry mining magnate and politician Cecil Rhodes. Both Basutoland and Bechuanaland had effectively come under British rule over previous decades.

With a dozen tiger, leopard, and silver jackal rugs, their gifts to the duke, lying on the ground, the chiefs gathered in a semi-circle, facing the duke and duchess, who were sitting under a tree. Each approached the heir to the British throne and, introduced by the Resident Commissioners and interpreted with the help of John Smith Moffat, the son of Scottish missionary Robert Moffat, or African interpreters, expressed his loyalty to the King and mourned the loss of the Great Queen. The gifts presented by the chiefs – cheetah or jaguar karosses, leopard and jackal skins, as well as Zulu shields and assegais – demonstrate one ethnographic accomplishment of the previous half-century, that the distinctions between different political and social groups could be collapsed into a single category of ‘traditional rulers’. This ceremony reflected the consolidation of colonial rule in South Africa over the previous forty years and the ways that royal ritual had been developed through encounters across the empire.

Reminiscent of the performances staged by Shepstone in 1860, S. O. Samuelson, the Under-Secretary of the Native Affairs Office, choreographed and directed Zulu war dances for the Duke of York’s visit. During the spectacle, the Zulu ‘chiefs and their followers advanced with leaps and wild gesticulations [toward the prince] brandishing their spears, shields, and clubs, till they reached a white chalk line which marked the place where they were to halt’. The appropriation of Zulu culture had long been important to the ideological work of colonial rule in what is now KwaZulu-Natal from the days of Shepstone. This work had taken a dramatic and violent turn in 1879, when British
troops defeated the Zulu under Cetshwayo at the Battle of Ulundi. Cetshwayo was deposed, and the divided Zulu kingdom erupted into civil war. The colonial policies aimed at neutralisation and annexation of the Zulu kingdom in the aftermath of the war proved more important than the war itself, however, and represented continuity rather than change, part and parcel of the British desire to control and appropriate the symbols and political legitimacy of the Zulu dynasty and the legacy of Shaka.

As in other ornamental rituals, the chiefs of Zululand expressed their loyalty and mourned the loss of the Great Queen in a single address ‘translated’ by Samuelson and delivered through Henry McCallum, the Governor of Natal. The duke’s response acknowledged the Zulu as worthy opponents of the past and loyal subjects of the present, while he appealed to the mythology of the Great White Queen, most notably her adoration of her ‘native children’. By 1901, the ritual precedents had been firmly established, pioneered by administrators such as Grey and Shepstone. South Africa’s hereditary elites resembled, in terms of their political ability to act and control their fates, Sandile far more than they looked like Moshoeshoe, and the political discourses of the colonised had been effectively usurped by the educated respectables of South Africa’s burgeoning urban communities.

The significant exception to this decline and growing dependency of hereditary elites in the context of British imperial culture, were those political traditions that were able to resist colonial appropriation by nurturing their own proto-national identities. For the Basuto, the state-building of Moshoeshoe and the development of a Basuto identity and culture centred on the mythology of Moshoeshoe helped promote imperial protection of the kingdom as different from the rest of southern Africa. The Maori King movement succeeded, with similarly limited yields, in resisting colonial appropriation and retaining some semblance of autonomy into the twentieth century. The mythology of Shaka and a Zulu national identity lingered in the historical memory of southern Africa, re-emerging most prominently in moments of crisis, such as the Bambatha ‘uprising’ [1906], and much later in the tribal-nationalist politics of the Inkatha Freedom Party.

* * *

The royal tours and other imperial rituals were practices that reflected British fantasies more than colonial realities. After decades of colonial wars, most notably the Indian Mutiny, British administrators sought to close the ritual spaces that had served as sites of negotiation since the earliest days of the British Empire. These processes of cultural appropriation had difficulty isolating local political traditions because
they were not the static and ancient customs they were imagined to be. Local politics were elusive, slippery, and always in the making. British officials often misunderstood them – or delegitimised them by adapting them to the purposes of British rule, making local elites little more than tax collectors and labour recruiters. Local hereditary elites used similar tactics, of incorporating imperial culture or constructing counter-discourses of identity, to challenge these efforts. Over time, for these very reasons, the challenges to the royal tour as a cultural practice were articulated less by hereditary elites, who became dependent on the British Empire as their reason for existence, and more and more by the educated *respectables* who came to dominate local political discourses.

These Western-educated elites, who serve as the leading historical actors of Chapter 4, criticised the excesses of imperial rule and the conceptual instability between the language of British imperialism and the practices of imperial rule. By and large, however, they did not challenge empire as an idea or the importance of the British Empire as their political, cultural, and social universe. They embraced an imperial citizenship, centred on Queen Victoria and their status as British people, to challenge the injustices of British rule as fundamentally un-British. While colonial administrators focused on methods of indirect rule, these historical actors relied on methods of modern politics, namely print culture, to adapt and remake local political cultures. In identifying themselves with the imperial, they came to dominate local political discourses, even if their voices were largely ignored by the British. As colonial subjects looked forward to an inclusive, liberal empire, colonial administrators were mired in their own fantasies of traditional cultures.

**Notes**

3 The use of the term ‘technology’ in this context reflects an understanding of colonial rule inspired by scholars such as Nicholas Dirks, Bernard Cohn, Michel Foucault and others – namely, that empire was sustained by a diverse constellation of methods from machine-guns and naval power to ritual, propaganda, and surveillance. The royal tours, while they appealed to ritual practices and ideas about political legitimacy that were not new, emerged during a particular moment during the nineteenth century [as I describe here] and were made possible by technological innovations.
5 This naturalisation of imperial rule was then reflected back on to history of the empire, as represented in the *Cambridge History of the British Empire* [1929–61]. The volume on ‘British India’, for instance, started in 1498 with Vasco da Gama!
Historical anthropologists such as Bernard Cohn and Nicholas Dirks have focused on the intimate relationship between knowledge and power in the colonial encounter, arguing that the accumulation of British knowledge about local peoples was appropriated, bastardised, and employed for the purposes of colonial rule. Bernard Cohn, ‘Representing Authority in Victorian India’, in The Invention of Tradition, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, 1983), 165–210; Bernard Cohn, Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge (Princeton, 1996); Nicholas Dirks, Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India (Princeton, 2001). See also Colin Newbury, Patrons, Clients, and Empire: Chieftaincy and Over-rule in Asia, Africa, and the Pacific (Oxford, 2003); Terence Ranger, ‘The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa’, in The Invention of Tradition, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, 1983), 211–62.


Major John Cowell to Albert, 16 August 1860, RA VIC ADD/20/69.

Inga Clendinnen, Dancing with Strangers: Europeans and Australians at First Contact (Cambridge, 2005).


Joseph Schumpeter, Imperialism and Social Classes (New York, repr. 1955). Schumpeter’s sociological assessment of empire challenged the conceptualisations of his contemporaries, John Hobson and V. I. Lenin. Schumpeter argued that imperialism was not a function of industrial or financial capitalism, but an atavism of a previous age.

This does not mean to suggest that a powerful tradition of chiefship did not continue to profoundly influence local and national politics after 1901, particularly in the countryside and on African reserves. The argument here is one about British and imperial politics, the African voices of which became overwhelmingly urban and Western-educated. See Paul Landau, Popular Politics in the History of South Africa, 1400–1948 (Cambridge, 2010).


Thomas Arbousset, Missionary Excursion into the Blue Mountains, Being an Account of King Moshoeshoe’s Expedition from Thaba-Bosiu to the Sources of the Malibamatso River in the Year 1840, ed. and trans. David Ambrose and Albert Brutsch (Morija, 1991), 107.


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21 Eldredge, South African Kingdom, 50.
23 Eldredge, South African Kingdom, 51.
24 Leonard Thompson, Survival in Two Worlds: Moshoeshoe of Lesotho, 1786–1870 [Oxford, 1975], 175; See also Peters Sanders’ conceptually similar work on Moshoeshoe, published the same year, Moshoeshoe, Chief of the Sotho [Portsmouth, NH, 1975].
25 Thompson, Survival in Two Worlds, 169.
26 Thompson, Survival in Two Worlds, 268.
27 Saul Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness Prince Alfred Ernest Albert through the Cape Colony, British Kaffraria, the Orange Free State, and Port Natal in the Year 1860 [Cape Town, 1861], 75.
28 Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness, 76; Natal Mercury, 11 October 1860.
29 Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness, 76.
30 Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness, 76.
31 Cape Argus, quoted in Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness, 77.
32 Natal Mercury, 11 October 1860.
33 Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness, 77.
34 Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness, 77.
35 Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness, 77.
36 Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness, 78.
37 Cape Argus, quoted in Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness, 78; quoted almost verbatim in Natal Mercury, 11 October 1860.
38 Natal Mercury, 10 October 1860. Some of this performance was conducted by Moshoeshoe’s son, Isekelo. The settler newspapers, such as the Mercury, described these performances as spontaneous expressions of loyalty rather than choreographed imperial rituals. The Mercury also reported natives singing, ‘Our chief has come whom we longed for’ [presumably about Alfred].
39 From the first encounters, Europeans understood gift exchanges to be a requirement of local ritual cultures. The culture of gift giving was adopted as a standard ritual practice of imperial rule across the empire from its earliest days and might be better understood as a co-invention, made in the colonial encounter, rather than a British invention or a local ‘imposition’.
40 King William’s Town Gazette, 4 September 1860.
41 Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness, 79.
42 John Cowell to Albert, 19 August 1860, RA VIC ADD/20/69.
44 Natal Mercury, 10 October 1860.
45 Solomon, The Progress of His Royal Highness, 80.
46 Natal Witness, 12 October 1860.
48 Moshoeshoe to Alfred, 18 August 1860, Basutoland Records, ed. G. M. Theal [Cape Town, 1883], 568.
49 John Cowell to Albert, 19 August 1860, RA. It is unclear if Moshoeshoe was pandering to his audience by celebrating past British justice or if the period of British annexation now appeared to be, relatively speaking, a more promising arrangement.
50 Major John Cowell to Albert, 14 August 1860, RA VIC ADD/20/69.
51 Moshoeshoe’s skilful foreign policy with Europeans is clearly illustrated in his meeting with President Boshof of the Orange Free State and Governor George Grey of the Cape Colony in 1855. There is a clear narrative disjuncture between Moshoeshoe’s challenges to the political legitimacy of European complaints against him and the self-legitimising evolution of European policy toward war against him. See André du

52 Eldredge, *South African Kingdom*, 82.


56 John Robinson, the first Prime Minister of Natal (1893–97), called a ‘henchman of Mr. Shepstone’. John Robinson, *A Life Time in South Africa: Being Recollections of the First Premier of Natal* [London, 1900], 108. The index of his book refers to Ngoza as ‘Zulu attendant on Mr. Shepstone’.

57 Guy, ‘“A Paralysis”’, 54.


59 Solomon, *The Progress of His Royal Highness, 97; The Visit of His Royal Highness Prince Alfred to the Colony of Natal* [London, 1861], 19.

60 Visit of His Royal Highness, 18.

61 Visit of His Royal Highness, 97–8. This passage is reproduced in Guy, ‘“A Paralysis”’, 56.

62 Visit of His Royal Highness, 97–8.

63 Natal Mercury, n.d.

64 Natal Mercury, n.d.


68 Guy, ‘“A Paralysis”’, 37.


71 Hamilton, *Terrific Majesty*, 75.

72 McClendon, *White Chief, Black Lords*, 90.

73 McClendon, *White Chief, Black Lords*, 90.

74 By 1869, the colonial government determined policy toward Kingitanga, not the governor, though he presumably had some discretionary powers as the Queen’s representative in New Zealand.


Two other pan-Maori movements emerged in Taranaki during the 1850s: Kai Knarara, a religious movement, and the ‘anti-land selling’ movement. See Belich, Making Peoples, 232.


See Paul Clark, ‘Hauhau’: The Pai Marire Search for Maori Identity (Auckland, 1975); Bronwyn Elsmore, Mana from Heaven: A Century of Maori Prophets in New Zealand (Tauranga, 1989).

Vincent O’Malley, Beyond the Imperial Frontier: The Contest for Colonial New Zealand (Wellington, 2014), 125, 127.

While Kingitanga aspired to be pan-Maori, many Maori communities withheld support. For instance, the neighbouring Te Arawa abstained from the movement and later supported the Crown as loyalist, or kupapa, Maori.


Belich, Making Peoples, 235–6.

Belich, Making Peoples, 231. Grey even alleged that the Maori were working in concert with French missionaries. For a forensic analysis of Grey’s case for war, see Vincent O’Malley, ‘Choosing Peace or War: The 1863 Invasion of Waikato’, New Zealand Journal of History 47, no. 1 [2013]: 39–58.


Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869, NA CO 209/211/158–62.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869, NA.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869.

Daily Southern Cross, 5 July 1869, quoting Wanganui Times, 24 June 1869; Daily Southern Cross, 10 May 1869. See also Judith Binney, Redemption Songs: A Life of Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki (Honolulu, 1997).

Bowen to Colonial Office, 3 June 1869, NA CO 209/211/334–400.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 3 June 1869, NA.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869, NA.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 3 June 1869, NA CO 209/211/565–8.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869, NA CO 209/211/172–8.

Kaitangata was a Maori man who was sought after by a woman in the sky named Whaitiri (Thunder) because she mistakenly thought he was a cannibal. For an early anthropological account of Kaitangata, see J. F. H. Wohlers, ‘The Mythology and Traditions of the Maori in New Zealand’, Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New Zealand 7 (1874), 15. Bowen reported to the Colonial Office that Alfred had been given ‘the Kai-tangata’ (literally ‘Man-eater’).

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869, NA.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869, NA.

Steven Oliver, ‘Tamihana Te Rauparaha’, Dictionary of New Zealand Biography.

Oliver, ‘Tamihana Te Rauparaha’.

Oliver, ‘Tamihana Te Rauparaha’.

Oliver, ‘Tamihana Te Rauparaha’.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 2 May 1869, NA.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 3 June 1869, NA CO 209/211/334–400.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 3 June 1869, NA.

Bowen to Colonial Office, 3 June 1869, NA.
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110 West Coast Times, 11 June 1869.
111 Taranaki Herald, 10 September 1870.
112 Bowen to Colonial Office, 3 June 1869, NA.
113 Bowen to Colonial Office, 3 June 1869, NA.
114 Bowen to Colonial Office, 3 June 1869, NA.
115 Taranaki Herald, 5 June 1869; Daily Southern Cross, 4 June 1869.
116 Taranaki Herald, 9 June 1869.
117 Northbrook to Queen Victoria, 14 June 1875, Prince of Wales in India, 1875–76, vol. 1, 1875, RA VIC/MAIN/Z/468/23; Knollys to Ponsonby, 14 November 1875, Prince of Wales in India, 1875–76, vol. 1, 1875, VIC/MAIN/Z/468/102.
118 William Howard Russell, The Prince of Wales’ Tour: A Diary in India (London, 1878), 148. The British considered the Gaekwad of Baroda to be among the most important Indian princes, a twenty-one-gun prince in ceremonial terms. According to legend, General Archibald Wavell, the last Indian Viceroy before Lord Mountbatten, used the mnemonic ‘Hot Kippers Make Good Breakfast’ (Hyderabad, Kashmir, Mysore, Gwalior, Baroda) to help him remember the twenty-one-gun princes.
119 J. Drew Gay, The Prince of Wales in India; or, from Pall Mall to Punjaub (New York, 1877), 85. Gay was the special correspondent for the Daily Telegraph during the tour.
120 Gay, The Prince of Wales in India, 82–98.
122 Northbrook to Queen Victoria, no. 39, 14 November 1875, BL MSS Eur C144/8; Wodehouse to Salisbury, n.d., Prince of Wales in India, 1875–76, vol. 1, 1875, RA VIC/MAIN/Z/468/110; Northbrook to Wodehouse, enclosure, 3 August 1875, Wodehouse Papers, BL MSS Eur D726/7.
123 Philip Wodehouse to Northbrook, 22 October 1875, BL MSS Eur C 144/17.
124 Philip Wodehouse to Northbrook, 22 October 1875, BL.
125 Northbrook to Queen Victoria, no. 39, 14 November 1875, BL MSS Eur C144/8; Wodehouse to Salisbury, n.d., Prince of Wales in India, 1875–76, vol. 1, 1875, RA VIC/MAIN/Z/468 CFP.
126 Gay, The Prince of Wales in India, 41.
127 General Samuel James Browne, Memorandum to Accompany the Draft Program of the Tour of HRH the Prince of Wales to India, Enclosure C, Proposed Program on the Occasion of the Visit of HRH the Prince of Wales to Ajmere, BL MSS Eur F486/3.
128 Alfred to Queen Victoria, 9 January 1870, RA VIC/ADD/A/20/1304.
129 Prince of Wales to Queen Victoria, 14 November 1875, Prince of Wales in India, 1875–76, vol. 1, 1875, RA VIC/MAIN/Z/468 CFP/98.
130 One of the best examples is such encounters, between Jung Bahadur Rana and Prince Alfred in 1870, is richly documented in The Prince of Edinburgh in the Oudh and Nepal Forests: A Letter from India [Private Circulation, 1870].
133 See Benton, ‘The Geography of Quasi-Sovereignty’, 7–8, 34.
C. L. Tupper, *Our Indian Protectorate: An Introduction to the Study of Relations between the British Government and its Indian Feudatories* (London, 1893), 143. Cited in Benton, ‘The Geography of Quasi-Sovereignty’, 15. The British were not completely delusional to think that they were emulating the practices of Mughal rule. Local princes, who functioned as the imperial governors of Mughal rule, were subject to removal and annexation by the imperial core. Under Akbar and Jahangir, a sophisticated playbook of rule – from royal rituals to surveillance – was developed, foreshadowing in some ways the developments of British rule. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*.


The state’s ruling dynasty dated to the eighteenth century, and it had come under British protection in 1802. During the Mutiny of 1857, Gaekwad Khande Rao remained loyal to the British. In 1870, Khade Rao died, leaving his younger brother Malhar Rao, released from prison by the British, to serve in place of the unborn heir.

Under the Mughals, a diwan was a chief revenue officer. Later, the term was used to describe a chief minister (sometimes compared by Western scholars to a prime minister in a parliamentary system) or even the prince himself.

Moulton, *Lord Northbrook’s Indian Administration*, 131–2.

‘Crisis in Baroda’, BL MSS Eur D870.

Moulton, *Lord Northbrook’s Indian Administration*, 133.

Quoted in Moulton, *Lord Northbrook’s Indian Administration*, 134. Copland’s well-known 1968 article on the ‘Baroda crisis’ framed the dispute as one between two British governments, largely ignoring the gaekwad as an independent historical actor. Copland, ‘The Baroda Crisis of 1873–77’.

Moulton, *Lord Northbrook’s Indian Administration*, 137.


Moulton, *Lord Northbrook’s Indian Administration*, 139.

Moulton, *Lord Northbrook’s Indian Administration*, 141.

As Laura Benton amusingly notes, ‘Reading [Phayre’s] correspondence, one begins to suspect that there were others besides the Baroda ruler who took pleasure in imagining him dead.’ Benton, ‘The Geography of Quasi-Sovereignty’, 25.

Moulton, *Lord Northbrook’s Indian Administration*, 147.

Pelly was shocked by the resentment directed toward him and the sympathy for the gaekwad. He asked Northbrook, ‘What in your opinion is the real feeling of the people in the Gaekwad’s dominions on the whole affair? Is the sympathy of which I read in the newspapers real or bought? And if real, from what does it arise? … From an English view of the case it seems to be that the course the Government of India has taken has been calm and just, and that the sympathy expressed for a man who, in addition to more than the ordinary vices of an Asiatic ruler, and besides having oppressed his people, has brought himself, to say the least of it, under the strong suspicion of a cowardly act of trying to poison the British Resident, is either disloyalty to the British Government … or arises from some idiosyncrasy of the Native mind beyond my comprehension.’ Pelly to Northbrook, 27 March 1875, BL MSS Eur C 144/17.

Moulton, *Lord Northbrook’s Indian Administration*, 149.


The Prince of Wales wrote to his mother, ‘Natives of all classes in this country will, I am sure, be more attached to us and to our rule, if they are treated with kindness and with firmness at the same time, but not with brutality and contempt.’ Prince of Wales to Queen Victoria, 14 June 1875, *Prince of Wales in India, 1875–76*, vol. 1, 1875, RA VIC/MAIN/Z/468/23.


158 *Rájshahye Samáchár*, 31 August 1875, *Indian Newspaper Reports*, no. 34 of 1875, 2.

159 *Saptahik Samachar*, 9 January 1875, *Indian Newspaper Reports*, no. 3 of 1875, 4.

160 Pelly to Northbrook, 20 February 1875, BL MSS Eur C 144/17.

161 Meade to Northbrook, 23 November 1875, BL MSS Eur C 144/17.

162 Extract from a Confidential Report from Sir H. Daly to Northbrook, no. 29, Prince of Wales in India, 1875–76, vol. 1, 1875, RA VIC/MAIN/Z 468/29.


166 Northbrook to Wodehouse, 9 October 1875, Wodehouse Papers, BL MSS Eur D726/7.

167 Northbrook to Queen Victoria, 13 September 1875, no. 36, BL MSS Eur C144/8.

168 *Sulabh Samáchár*, 30 November 1875, *Indian Newspaper Reports*, no. 52 of 1875, 2.

169 Captain John Clerk to Northbrook, 10 September 1875, BL MSS Eur C 144/17. He omitted this suggestion from his final draft to the British Resident, fearing that he would make the sick boy travel even farther.

170 *Sulabh Samáchár*, 30 November 1875, *Indian Newspaper Reports*, no. 52 of 1875, 2. See also Russell, *The Prince of Wales’ Tour*, 76.

171 Native Opinion, 28 November 1875, 2.

172 Captain John Clerk to Northbrook, 10 September 1875, BL MSS Eur C 144/17.

173 Captain John Clerk to Northbrook, 10 September 1875, BL.

174 Lord Napier to Northbrook, 18 August 1875, BL MSS Eur C 144/17.

175 Captain John Clerk to Northbrook, 10 September 1875, BL.

176 Native Opinion, 31 October 1875, 1.

177 Ponsonby to Queen Victoria, 3 January 1876, Prince of Wales in India, 1875–76, vol. 2, 1876, RA VIC/MAIN/Z 469 CFP/4. British authorities feared that he would file a grievance against the British government upon returning to Britain.

178 *Bhárat Sangskárak*, 3 December 1875, *Indian Newspaper Reports*, no. 51 of 1875, 1.

179 Knollys to Ponsonby, 14 November 1875, Prince of Wales in India, 1875–76, vol. 1, 1875, RA VIC/MAIN/Z/468/102.

180 Ponsonby to Queen Victoria, 3 January 1876, Prince of Wales in India, 1875–76, vol. 2, 1876, RA VIC/MAIN/Z 469 CFP/4; Salar Jung to Saunders, 15 December 1875, BL MSS Eur E 190 1/32/4.


183 *The Colonist*, 20 March 1901.

184 Watson, *The Queen’s Wish*, 240.


187 *Poverty Bay Herald*, 14 May 1901.

188 *Poverty Bay Herald*, 25 June 1901. The sentiment that Maori artefacts were more easily located at the British Museum than in New Zealand reflects a nascent national consciousness, whereby New Zealand was more than an overseas extension of Great Britain. Curiously, the *Herald* compared New Zealand’s plight to that of Greece!


190 *Bay of Plenty Times*, 29 May 1901.
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191 *Hawera & Normanby Star*, 24 April 1901; *Wanganui Herald*, 18 May 1901.

192 *West Coast Times*, 29 May 1901.

193 Arthur Bigge to Governor Walter Hely-Hutchinson, 23 August 1901, NA CO 48/553/881; Watson, *The Queen’s Wish*, 328.


195 Richard Clay, ‘Review of Anthony Sillery, *Founding a Protectorate: History of Bechuanaland, 1885–1895*’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 29 (1966), 664. Basutoland, a British protectorate from 1868 and a Crown colony ruled by a British governor from 1884, had been forced to cede its arable land west of the Caledon River to the Boers, reducing the size of Moshoeshoe’s original kingdom by half. Bechuanaland south of the Molopo River came under British protection in 1885 and was governed by the High Commissioner of South Africa from 1891.


197 Watson, *The Queen’s Wish*, 329.

198 Watson, *The Queen’s Wish*, 350. While Dinuzulu, the last king, had returned to Zululand in 1898 from banishment at St Helena, he was not presented to the duke.

199 Watson, *The Queen’s Wish*, 322.


201 Watson, *The Queen’s Wish*, 322.

202 Watson, *The Queen’s Wish*, 324.

203 Again, it is important to note that chiefship remained a vibrant and important political tradition at the local level.
