

Besprekingsartikel

Review Article

M. Adhikari, *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide: The Extermination of the Cape San Peoples*

UCT Press, Cape Town, 2010

120 pp

ISBN 978-1-91989-544-4

R99.00

The forgotten killing fields: “San” genocide and Louis Anthing’s mission to Bushmanland, 1862–1863

*José Manuel de Prada-Samper**

It cannot, therefore, be matter of surprise if the antipathy of the colonists to like plunderers is carried pretty far, and that it is scarcely considered as a crime if in the pursuit of these flying hordes some of them are, from time to time, killed. That regular parties, however, are made by the colonists to hunt them down, as some late writers have asserted, I must say is untrue.¹

Thus wrote Heinrich Lichtenstein in 1807, referring to the treatment of the “Bojesmans” (Bushmen or San) by the Dutch farmers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This odd mixture of flat denial and awkward justification was to be long-lived in the history of settler writings about the San. In 1843, John Centlivres Chase, an 1820-settler, after reflecting that “[t]he fate of the savages is melancholy enough, and need not be made worse by the power of fiction”, complains bitterly that

an attempt ... has been made to tamper with the best feelings of our nature, and to bring down (not only upon the colonists of a past age, but also upon those of our own times) the indignation of good men, who, not having been placed in similar circumstances, are unable to judge dispassionately of the measure of provocation which operated upon the Dutch settlers.²

If Lichtenstein had in mind what travellers like Anders Sparrman, Carl Peter Thunberg and John Barrow had reported about the very unedifying dealings of the Boers with the San,³ Chase was clearly aiming at John Philip’s *Researches in South Africa* where the learned missionary had brought to the notice of his readers the order issued by the Council

* José Manuel de Prada-Samper was born in Barcelona, Spain. At present he is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Curating the Archive, University of Cape Town, where he is conducting archival research and field work on the |Xam San narratives of the Bleek and Lloyd Collection and the documents connected with Louis Anthing’s mission to Bushmanland, of which he is preparing an annotated edition.

1. H. Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806*, translated by A. Plumtre (Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1928 [1812]), vol. 1, p 143.
2. J.C. Chase, *The Cape of Good Hope and the Eastern Province of Algoa Bay* (P. Richardson, London, 1843), pp 70–71.
3. A. Sparrman, *A Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope towards the Antarctic Polar Circle Round the World and to the Country of the Hottentots and the Caffres from the Year 1772–1776*, translated by J. and I. Rudner (Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1975–1977 [1789]); C.P. Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape of Good Hope, 1772–1775*, translated by J. and I. Rudner (Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1986 [1788–1793]); and J. Barrow, *An Account of Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa in the Years 1797 and 1798* (Cadell & Davies, London, 1801).

of Policy in the 1770s to “extirpate” the Bushmen,⁴ something which Donald Moodie and other contemporaries of Philip sought to deny.⁵

The notion that the Boers hunted the San as vermin (and all too often without the slightest provocation on their part) was quite commonplace in the nineteenth century in publications about the Cape colony, and is mentioned in popular publications from at least the 1830s onwards.⁶ Whatever conclusion is reached on whether or not this constituted genocide, there can be no doubt that in the period, say, from 1700 until 1890 (when the fragile colonial “rule of law” had reached the remotest areas of the colony) thousands of San perished at the hands of commandos organised by frontier farmers, not always white, and that an untold number of women and children were forced to become serfs of the murderers or their families.

The extermination, extirpation or uprooting of the San, whatever authors choose to call it, has cast a long shadow in South African historiography and yet as Mohamed Adhikari rightly asserts in this book, few scholars have subjected it to critical analysis, not even in the post-1945 period when the concept of genocide was coined by Rafael Lemkin and the United Nations Convention on Genocide was signed.

The first book entirely devoted to the issue of genocide in relation to the San peoples of southern Africa is Miklós Szalay’s *The San and the Colonization of the Cape* (1995), a slim and well-illustrated volume which as the author himself admits, is actually a chapter from a larger work published in German over a decade earlier, in 1983. Szalay’s main thesis is that the San were not exterminated but rather that under the pressure of farmer violence and missionary work they were assimilated into the labour-hungry colony. According to Szalay, the notion that they were exterminated is a “stereotype” that runs against the documentary evidence.⁷ As Adhikari (p 85) states, Szalay’s “arguments do not stand up to critical scrutiny”. Rather than weakening it, the documents tend to reinforce the case for systematic extermination while missionary records show that all missions to the San, whether north or south of the Orange River, ended in failure and that the stations established in their territory either closed down or their proselytising efforts very soon focused on another group.⁸

-
4. J. Philip, *Researches in South Africa Illustrating the Civil, Moral and Religious Conditions of the Native Tribes* (James Duncan, London, 1828), vol. 1, pp 41–53.
 5. See R. Ross, “Donald Moodie and the Origins of South African Historiography”, in R. Ross, *Beyond the Pale: Essays on the History of Colonial South Africa* (Wesleyan University Press, Hanover and London, 1993), pp 207–208; A. Bank, “The Great Debate and the Origins of South African Historiography”, *Journal of African History*, 38, 1997, pp 261–281; and A. Bank, “The Politics of Mythology: The Genealogy of the Philip Myth”, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 25, 1999, pp 461–477.
 6. See for example, J. Aspin, *Cosmorama: The Manners, Customs, and Costumes of All Nations of the World* (John Harris, London, 1834), p 166; Anon., “Aborigines of the British Settlements – South Africa”, *The Penny Magazine*, 380, 3 March 1838, p 84; J.G. Wood, *The Uncivilized Races of Men in All Countries of the World* (J.B. Burr & Hyde, Hartford, 1872), vol. 1, pp 267–268; and Anon., “Bushmen”, *Encyclopaedia Britannica: A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and General Literature* (A. and C. Black, Edinburgh, 1876), vol. 4, p 576.
 7. M. Szalay, *The San and the Colonization of the Cape, 1770–1879: Conflict, Incorporation, Acculturation* (R. Köppe, Cologne, 1995), p 110.
 8. Compare the various publications by Karel Schoeman, which offer a wide sample of the records available for two of the main mission stations: K. Schoeman, *The Mission at Griquatown, 1801–1821* (Griekwastad Toerisme Vereniging, Griquatown, 1997); *The Griqua Captaincy of Philippolis, 1826–1861* (Protea Book House, Pretoria, 2002); and *The Griqua Mission at Philippolis, 1822–1837* (Protea Book House, Pretoria, 2005). See also N. Penn, “The First Mission to the Cape San”, in P. Skotnes et al. (eds), *Claim to the Country: The Archive of Lucy Lloyd and Wilhelm Bleek* (Jacana Press, Cape Town, 2008), pp 90–115.

As for “assimilation” and incorporation into the farm-economy, the evidence simply tends to corroborate that this was often a brutal and sometimes even murderous process. Certainly this was the opinion of Louis Anthing, civil commissioner and resident magistrate of Namaqualand, when writing to the government about the situation in Bushmanland in the early 1860s. The testimonies of the |Xam informants of Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd, who came from the same area, abound in references to people killed or maimed while working for farmers, as exemplified by the well-known story told by Diä!kwain (or Ruyter) a young labourer who was tied to a wagon on a farm called “Yong-gra” and kicked to death by his European master, one Koos Struys, who accused him of having stolen a sheep.⁹ There is reason to believe that this was the case in other areas and earlier times.¹⁰ Speaking of Anthing, his letters to the colonial government sent from Namaqualand and Bushmanland in 1861–1862 are essential for any in-depth investigation on the extermination of the San. Although Szalay does occasionally quote from them, he underplays their relevance and dismisses them as being “based primarily on hearsay”, concluding that in connection to the events to which the letters refer, “we do not know what really happened”.¹¹ Adhikari himself, although he is satisfied that the documents tell us “what really happened”, concurs with Szalay in that they are “second hand and circumstantial” (p 75 note 10). We will return later to Louis Anthing and his allegedly unreliable reports.

Mohamed Adhikari’s *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide: The Extermination of the Cape San Peoples* like Szalay’s, is a slim volume and cannot be considered more than a synthesis. The book begins with an interesting section dealing with the definition of genocide which seeks to extend the meaning of the term beyond what is stated in the UN Convention of 1948. This is thoughtful of Adhikari, because whether or not a given set of atrocities is considered genocide often hinges not on how the term is construed. Since its earliest formulation in 1944 it has been subject to contestation and debate, both in the legal and political arenas, and also to frequent (mis)application on political, humanitarian and historical grounds.

At the beginning of the introductory section, Adhikari states his conviction that to a large extent the dispossession and extermination of the San took place in the eighteenth century, under Dutch rule. This, as I will argue below, is in the face of available evidence quite a problematic statement. He then proceeds to contextualise the destruction of Cape San societies in the larger history “of the absorption, displacement and destruction of hunter-gatherer communities by farmers” during the last 12 000 years (p 18). Towards the

-
9. Manuscripts and Archives Division, University of Cape Town (hereafter MAD): Bleek and Lloyd Collection (hereafter BL.C) 151, LV 23, pp 5872–5880. Most of this testimony, directly transcribed from the original text dictated by Diä!kwain can be read in S. Watson, *Return of the Moon: Versions from the |Xam* (Carrefour Press, Cape Town, 1991), pp 69–70. Incidentally, this Koos Struys of “Yong-gra” was doubtlessly Jacobus Coenrad Straus of the farm Jankora, north of Calvinia, who in November 1864, together with other farmers in the area, assured, St George Boyes, the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Clanwilliam, that Anthing had engaged in illicit trading during his mission in Bushmanland. See Western Cape Archives Repository (hereafter CA), Colonial Office (hereafter CO) 4416, no. 54. Ironically, despite his violent tendencies, Straus is said in this document to be a justice of the peace.
 10. Compare S. Newton-King, *Masters and Servants on the Cape Eastern Frontier* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999), pp 116–149; and N. Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier: Colonist and Khoisan on the Cape’s Northern Frontier in the 18th Century* (Ohio University Press and Double Storey, Athens: OH and Cape Town, 2005), pp 137–154.
 11. Szalay, *San and the Colonization of the Cape*, p 31.

end of the introduction, Adhikari refers to the very limited presence that the extermination of the San people has had in public life in South Africa, and the “woeful public ignorance” on the fate of the San in South African society (p 21). The purpose of his book, says Adhikari, is “to heighten awareness of the catastrophic impact of colonial conquest” on the Cape hunter-gatherer societies, and to make the case that the annihilation of these societies was indeed genocide (pp 21–22). As he says, although these events have often in the past been referred to as genocide, no one has yet analysed them specifically in such terms.

What follows in the remainder of the book is, primarily, as stated above, a survey – based almost exclusively on published sources – of the data and sources on the treatment of the San in South Africa from the inception of the colony in 1652 until the late nineteenth century, although with special emphasis on the eighteenth century (to which both chapters 1 and 2 are devoted). This is because in Adhikari’s view the nineteenth-century historiography on the subject is “patchy”. Chapter 3, which is devoted to the period of British colonial rule, is quite sketchy, something which cannot surprise us because the period lacks anything like Moodie’s compendium of primary sources, *The Record*, or detailed historical studies of the eighteenth century such as those by Nigel Penn on the northern frontier and Susan Newton-King on the north-eastern border zone.¹² Adhikari himself acknowledges this. Yet, as I will show below, this reliance on published materials seriously compromises his treatment of this period, for which abundant primary sources exist, one of them the very crucial body of documents generated by Louis Anthing’s mission to Bushmanland in the early 1860s.

In the fourth chapter, Adhikari argues the case for genocide in connection with the demise of the Cape hunter-gatherer societies, and addresses the different objections that have been put forward to contest this claim. In my opinion, this chapter is the most interesting and valuable of the book, because Adhikari summarises a series of opinions about the extermination of San communities which, as he explains in a footnote (p 87 note 11), can rarely be found in published form. The more surprising of these opinions is that it would be anachronistic to consider the extermination of the San as genocide because the concept was not developed until the mid-twentieth century. As Adhikari argues, this notion borders on the absurd (p 91).

As a synthesis, Adhikari’s work is useful and often thought-provoking, yet it does not add much that is new to what historians such as Nigel Penn, Susan Newton-King and John Wright have contributed in the last four decades on the extermination of the San peoples of southern Africa.¹³ His exclusive reliance on published materials diminishes the value of the book, especially on the period of British rule, because there is a substantial amount of evidence in manuscript archival documents, as well as in a number of not easily accessible contemporary printed sources such as newspaper articles, official publications and traveller accounts. A thorough study of the extermination of hunter-gatherer communities in southern Africa in the nineteenth century requires an extensive search for these primary sources, which every so often are to be found in what we could call the margins of the archive.

-
12. D. Moodie, *The Record or, A Series of Official Papers Relative to the Condition and Treatment of the Native Tribes of South Africa* (Balkema, Amsterdam, 1960 [1838]); Newton-King, *Masters and Servants*; and Penn, *Forgotten Frontier*.
13. J. Wright, *Bushman Raiders of the Drakensberg, 1840–1870: A Study of their Conflict with Stock-Keeping Peoples in Natal* (University of Natal Press, Durban, 1971); Newton-King, *Masters and Servants*; and Penn, *Forgotten Frontier*.

Another major weakness of Adhikari’s argumentation is in the fact that he builds it around “the San”, without distinguishing carefully between specific groups and geographic areas. After all, “San” or “Bushmen” are abstract categories that tend to oversimplify the enormous linguistic and ethnographic complexity of what is actually a constellation of peoples.¹⁴ Adhikari is aware of this, and in the introductory chapter refers to the concept of San as being “very much a colonial construct”, adding that he considers it “a meaningful social and analytical category” (p 26). Although other disciplines may indeed be justified in using this category, in the case of historical studies it only serves to oversimplify matters and underplays the great diversity of the peoples normally referred to as “San”.

For instance, contemporary Kalahari communities are divided into groups such as the Ju|hoansi, the !Xun, the Nharo, the Hei|om and the Khwe, among others, which are spread over an extensive area and speak different languages. Although Wilhelm Bleek was convinced that all the colonial San spoke the same language,¹⁵ namely the |Xam spoken by his own informants, such diversity was no doubt also a feature of the populations that lived in what is now South Africa,¹⁶ and it is quite likely that even people that spoke mutually intelligible dialects of the same language considered themselves as belonging to distinct communities.

In addition to this, factors such as differences in rainfall levels; the presence or absence of permanent water sources; the ruggedness of the terrain; and other topographical features, contributed to this diversity which, incidentally, to a large extent accounts for differences in the rock art of different areas. These “environmental frontiers”, as Nigel Penn calls them,¹⁷ played a substantial role in the dynamics of occupation by farmers, European or African, of the territories that from a distant time had belonged to the San. The more fertile and desirable areas were invaded and settled first, and only when there were no other options available to them did the settler farmers venture to occupy the more arid or rugged territories. This is one of the reasons why rather than talk about “the San”, it is methodologically sounder to distinguish clearly between the different San populations. In my opinion, only this approach has the potential to explore the history of the San peoples of southern Africa in all its complexity and diversity, and to ascertain, in connection with their fate at the hands of farmers – no matter whether white, coloured or black – if the concept of genocide can be used everywhere or, as seems to be the case, whether there are areas where it is better to talk of dispossession and assimilation.

The greatest disappointment of Adhikari’s book, however, is his narrow-minded approach with regard to the identity of the perpetrators of the atrocities he writes about. For most of his argumentation, he places the weight of the blame on “Dutch-speaking pastoralists”, and says that most of the killings took place during the eighteenth century. Also, early in the book, he claims that the relationship of the San with the Khoi and Bantu speakers was characterised by “interaction” (p 25). Only towards the end of his book (p 73) does he refer to the involvement of Griqua and Baster farmers in the killings. Adhikari underplays the involvement of these groups, since both Anthing’s reports and missionary records from Griqualand West confirm that the involvement of mixed-descent groups in the carnage in Bushmanland and the territories north of the Orange was quite intense.

14. A. Barnard, *Hunters and Herders of Southern Africa: A Comparative Ethnography of the Khoisan Peoples* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992).

15. W.H.I. Bleek and L.C. Lloyd, *Specimens of Bushmen Folklore* (George Allen, London, 1911), p 442.

16. A. Traill, “The Khoesan Languages”, in R. Mesthrie (ed.), *Language in South Africa* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002), pp 27–49.

17. Penn, *Forgotten Frontier*, pp 21, 82.

From what we know thanks to the Bleek and Lloyd |Xam records and from archival documents, the Korana also engaged in exterminatory practices against the hunter-gatherers that lived south of the Orange. This involvement of the Korana in the destruction of the |Xam is again underplayed by Adhikari, who chooses instead to stress an alleged “alliance against their common enemy” between the two groups (p 78) whereas, if this actually existed it was quite limited in time. Lastly, Adhikari does not refer at all to the involvement of Bantu-speaking pastoralists in the extermination of the San. Although this is much less well documented, it certainly existed. In the light of this and of the contemporary policies of the Botswana government towards the San populations of that country (certainly not genocidal, but quite redolent of ethnocide) Adhikari’s assertion that the destruction of the South African San “might add significantly to white burdens of guilt about racist crimes of the past” (p 93) is to say the least, over simplistic. I would rather say that both blood and responsibility are much more widely distributed than Adhikari’s book leads us to understand.

What is clear in any case is that with regard to commando activity, it is no longer possible to consider the eighteenth century as the period in which this activity was at its height and in which most of the San killings took place. It is true as Adhikari points out (p 57) that the number of people killed by the commandos is impossible to quantify, but we must keep in mind that our more detailed knowledge of those that took place in the eighteenth century under VOC rule stems from the fact that they were officially organised and have left substantial archival evidence in the form of, among other things, the reports and journals of their commanders and the tallies of the San killed. The commandos that operated during most of the nineteenth century in Bushmanland, Griqualand West, Gordonia and other areas north of the Orange, were in most cases illegal raids that had no official sanction at all and were organised hundreds of kilometres away from the nearest magistrate, very often in areas beyond the official boundaries of the British territories. Anthing himself refers to this in one of his communications to the government:

There is a general practice of hunting Bushmen[.] This is done secretly – The parties who go out with the ostensible object of hunting game divide when in the veld[.] one portion pursuing game & the other going to hunt & shoot Bushmen – Little is known of what occurs on such occasions but what is afterwards accidentally overheard by the servants, of conversations between their masters[.]¹⁸

Although Anthing’s mission was very much an anomaly in a period during which the authorities preferred to look the other way, his investigation was rigorous and thorough enough to confirm that the carnage was appalling in the extensive area he covered in his enquires. These nineteenth-century commandos could very well have killed and enslaved at least as many people as those of the preceding century.

The need to refer to specific times, places and communities when writing about the history of the San, the importance of archival sources, and the complexity of the question of who is to blame for the crimes against them, are all clearly exemplified in the case of the |Xam of the Northern Cape, the Southern San group about whom we possess the most information. This information is both linguistic and ethnographical in the form of the

18. CA, CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 8 May 1862.

Bleek and Lloyd Collection, and historical in the documents on Louis Anthing's mission to Bushmanland, supplemented by other archival and printed sources.¹⁹

Yet if the Bleek and Lloyd collection has generated a growing number of studies and publications over the last 30 years, Louis Anthing's mission, although mentioned by early historians like G.M. Theal and J.S. Marais,²⁰ is still largely neglected by scholars. In 1977, Deborah Findlay submitted as her History Honours thesis at UCT a detailed study of the mission, based mostly on the unpublished documents.²¹ Unfortunately, this remarkable piece of scholarship was never published and until recently did not have much influence on the work of later researchers of the |Xam. Szalay ignores it completely and Adhikari only mentions it in a footnote which shows that he has misread Findlay in connection with the contemporary controversies on Anthing and his mission (p 75 note 13). A fresh look at the original documents might well have encouraged Adhikari to take Anthing more seriously. As things are, he only mentions him in passing and also quite uncritically, in another footnote. Adhikari embraces Szalay's opinion that the evidence Anthing collected is "second hand and circumstantial". We will see that internal evidence leaves no doubt that Anthing's conclusions about what was taking place in Bushmanland are based on first-hand testimonies. He collected substantial numbers of these before and during his extended sojourn in Bushmanland. It was in fact his faith in the colonial system of justice, and his obsession (quite unusual and certainly dangerous for the times in which he lived) with truth and fairness, that landed him in trouble in the end and generated the controversies that Findlay mentions in her study. Yet it is this same obsession that makes him a very reliable source for the events in Bushmanland from the late 1840s (when, according to his informants, the first massacres took place) until 1863.

In many regards Anthing was a model civil servant. Born in 1829 in Venlo, Holland, the fifth child of Johann Philip Anthing (a member of the Dutch-German military) and Charlotte Johanna Gottliebe, née Liesching, a South African of German extraction, he lived in the Netherlands until 1838, when his widowed mother returned to the Cape.²² He entered the civil service in 1850 as clerk in the office of the master of the Supreme Court and quickly rose through the hierarchy.²³ In 1859 he became resident magistrate and civil commissioner of Springbokfontein (modern day Springbok), in the recently created division of Namaqualand, one of the remotest outposts of the colony but home to very productive copper mines. In September 1861, while examining a San prisoner

-
19. My research on Anthing, both in the archives and on the field, has largely been possible thanks to the support of the University of Cape Town's Centre for Curating the Archive (CCA), to whose director, Pippa Skotnes, I would like to express my gratitude. It is the intention of the CCA to make online quality scans of the original documents of Louis Anthing's mission available on the CCA's website in the near future.
 20. G.M. Theal, *History of South Africa since September 1795* (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1908); J.S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652–1937* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1962 [1939]).
 21. D.A. Findlay, "The San of the Cape Thirstland and L. Anthing's 'Special Mission'", BA Honours thesis, University of Cape Town, 1977.
 22. For the data on Louis Anthing's birth certificate, see the Genlias Database at <http://www.genlias.nl/en/searchDetail.jsp?val=3&extr=23074288&vgr=3> (accessed 27 April 2010). Information on the Anthing family, including the date of return to the Cape of Charlotte Johanna Gottliebe Anthing (née Liesching), is to be found in A.W.M. van der Poel Hiddingh, *The Genealogy of the Van der Poel and Hiddingh Families of the Cape of Good Hope* (Brighton Herald Office, Brighton, 1891), p 8.
 23. Anthing's early career in the civil service can be traced in the *Cape of Good Hope Almanac and Annual Register* from 1851 onwards; also in the "Statement of Service" in the Colonial Office List for 1863 (137) and 1867 (194).

called Jacob Fluik who had been accused of murder, he learnt from him that “many of his countrymen, and amongst them some of his relations[,] had at different times been killed by border farmers”.²⁴ Anthing decided to make further enquires and also examined a friend of Fluik’s, Ou Booï, who took him to Namies, the place south of Pella where Ou Booï’s uncle, Oumaap, together with his wife and their children, had been killed by a commando composed, wrote Anthing, “of Bastards, Europeans and their Hottentot servants”.²⁵

Anthing wrote immediately to the attorney-general, William Porter, forwarding him the depositions taken from Jacob Fluik and Ou Booï and asking for further instructions. Anthing must have known William Porter well and there is reason to believe that at least to a certain extent, he was a protégé of the attorney-general.²⁶ He must certainly have been aware of Porter’s liberal ideas on the treatment of indigenous peoples, ideas very similar to those expressed by Anthing himself in the letters he sent to the colonial government during his mission. An example of this can be seen in Porter’s speech, “On the Frontier”, delivered to the legislative council on 2 October 1845. At the end of the speech, Porter questions the “doomed race” theory, according to which “the brown man is destined everywhere to disappear before the white man, and that such is the law of nature”,²⁷ in terms similar, albeit not as radical, as those employed by Anthing in one of his letters from Kenhardt to the government.²⁸ It was surely this awareness of their ideological affinities that led Anthing to include in his letter to the attorney-general a statement like this:

To assert as the Border Colonists do that the [Bushmen] cannot be brought under civilizing influences is to pronounce their doom. But it is a libel upon the human race[.] The habits of the Bushmen are no doubt very barbarous but (though I have come in contact with but three or four altogether) it has so happened that I have witnessed traits of character which evinced a nobleness of soul that made me feel, unmixed with my sense of superiority, that he and I are of the same race.²⁹

Porter replied that given the hideousness of the crimes reported, it was Anthing’s duty to prosecute. In order to do so, it was necessary to conduct “a full judicial investigation” which Anthing himself should undertake, since Porter considered it “a fortunate thing for the ends of justice” that such a mission fell on a magistrate of Anthing’s “zeal, ability, and thorough independence”.³⁰

Anthing set out for Bushmanland on 12 February 1862. After a detour to Nisbeth Bath (modern day Warmbad in Namibia), beyond the borders of the colony, a ruse to hide his true intentions from the people he was going to investigate further south, Anthing reached Kenhardt at the end of March 1862. His investigations there corroborated what his Springbokfontein informants had told him, but revealed a situation that no doubt went well beyond his worst fears.

24. CA, Namaqualand Magistrate (hereafter 1/SBK) 5/2/1: Louis Anthing – Attorney-General, p 1.

25. CA, 1/SBK 5/2/1: Louis Anthing – Attorney-General, p 5.

26. Porter, a crucial figure in the political and social life of the nineteenth-century Cape colony deserves a detailed biography. Thus far, the only biographical study available is J.L. McCracken’s brief but highly informative *First Light in the Cape of Good Hope: William Porter, the Father of Cape Liberalism* (Ulster Historical Foundation, Belfast, 1993).

27. W. Porter, *The Porter Speeches: Speeches Delivered by the Hon. William Porter, during the Years 1839–1845 Inclusive* (Saul Salomon, Cape Town, 1886), pp 425.

28. CA, CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 1 April 1862, p 21.

29. CA, 1/SBK 5/2/1: Louis Anthing – Attorney-General, p 3.

30. CA, Attorney-General (hereafter AG) 2164: Louis Anthing – Attorney-General, 13 September 1861, pp 50–52.

Not only were unlawful commandos being directed against the San, but their objectives were much more ambitious than mere retaliation for alleged cattle thefts. One of these commandos, Anthing told the government, was organised in two divisions, “the [West] division composed of the Europeans, proceeding to the vicinity of the Hartebeest River, the right [East], composing the Bastards, taking the direction of the Karreebergen”.³¹ A quick glance at a map shows that this two-winged commando covered a vast area, practically all the territory then called Bushmanland. Such an operation can only be understood as part of a premeditated and planned campaign aimed at the complete extermination of the San inhabitants of Bushmanland. Anthing himself was very much aware of this, because in his first report from Kenhardt he wrote to the government that what was going on in the area was “the systematic destruction of a race of men”, conducted “as if it were a necessary transaction in the business of colonial life”.³²

In the same report, Anthing told the government that to apprehend the people guilty of these atrocities was not at all easy, because

I find now that the transactions *are* more extensive than did at first appear. I think it not unlikely that we shall find that almost all the farmers living near this border are implicated in similar acts ... At present I have only heard of coloured farmers (known as Bastards) as being mixed up with these matters. But as the investigation leads me on from point to point very probably their European neighbours may be found equally guilty.³³

Another worrying fact that Anthing realised soon after reaching Bushmanland was that some of the |Xam had organised themselves, not to steal cattle, but to retaliate against the atrocities of the farmers. The unpublished documents tell with moving detail the story of the leader of this group, a man known to the farmers by the name of Herklaas, but whose |Xam name, as we know from information given by ||Kabbo and |A!kunta to Wilhelm Bleek in 1872, was !Ki ||k"atten tu.³⁴ Some years before organising the resistance against the farmers, !Ki ||k"atten tu had miraculously escaped the massacre of all his people at a place called Bosduif. A few months before the arrival of Anthing, one of his sons had been brutally murdered by farmers for stealing a sheep.³⁵ The rebel leader told Anthing “that his son had crept into a hole after being wounded, and had afterwards been dragged out and ripped”. It is astonishing that given these circumstances and, as he puts it, “the wrongs of a generation”,³⁶ Anthing managed to convince the rebel leader that he was there to bring justice for all, and that !Ki ||k"atten tu gave himself up. Anthing mentions several times in his communications to the government the fact that he had managed to obtain the peaceful surrender of armed San even in situations in which the local farmers, white and coloured, assured him that violence was unavoidable.³⁷

Both in his field reports and in the published letter to the House of Assembly Anthing took pains to state clearly the causes of the thefts of which the |Xam were accused, in this way contradicting the long-cherished conception in the colony that the hunter-gatherers were “born thieves” for whom cattle-rustling was a way of life. The San,

31. *Message to His Excellency the Governor, with Enclosures relative to Affairs in the Northern Districts of the Colony*, Government Publication A39-'63, 1863, p 10.

32. CA, CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 1 April 1862, p 27.

33. CA, CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 1 April 1862, pp 10–11.

34. MAD, BLC Notebook B.IX: 908.

35. CA, CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 8 May 1862, pp 12–13; *Message to His Excellency*, A39-'63, pp 5, 11–12.

36. CA, CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 8 May 1862, p 18.

37. CA, CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 17 February 1863, pp 11–12; *Message to His Excellency*, A39-'63, p 7.

Anthing told his superiors, were driven to stock theft because the farmers had deprived them of their means of subsistence, having exterminated the game, appropriated the waterholes and destroyed with their herds the grass and other plant foods on which their subsistence depended. It was hunger, Anthing wrote to the government, that had driven the |Xam to “to invade the flocks and herds of the intruders, regardless of the consequences, and resigning themselves, as they say, to the thought of being shot in preference to death from starvation”.³⁸

In his published report, dated 16 June 1863, Anthing proposed a number of measures to protect the life of the survivors and guarantee their wellbeing, among them the establishment of a magistracy in Kenhardt, and also “the forming of locations for the remnant of the Bushman race, and the sale of some of the land for the purpose of providing these people, who had been deprived of their means of subsistence, with some stock”.³⁹

Under the impression, “and not an entirely false one”, as Findlay says, that the government had given him the go-ahead for establishing a magistracy at Kenhardt, Anthing drew a large amount of public funds through his replacement at Springbokfontein, E.A. Judge. When the latter warned the government about this, the new governor, Philip Wodehouse, was more concerned about these expenses than about the fate of the remnant San.⁴⁰ Anthing was summarily ordered to withdraw from Bushmanland and return to Springbokfontein. Instead of doing so, arguing later that he thought the order was due to a mistake⁴¹ he travelled all the way to Cape Town and arrived there on April 1863. He brought !Ki | |k"atten ttú and several other |Xam with him; two of them had been accused of killing a farmer. He hoped that they would be tried by the Supreme Court and that the trial would give the San the opportunity to inform both the judges and colonial public opinion at large of the treatment they had received from the hands of the settlers.

Although the publication of the report in June of 1863 shows that Anthing had fully persuaded the authorities of the need to do something about the state of affairs in Bushmanland, the fact is that the political and financial climate of the colony at the time was not the best to arouse the sympathies of public opinion for the sufferings of “savages” who lived and died more than 1 000 kilometres from Cape Town.⁴²

Even before the report went to press, the replacement of William Porter as attorney-general (Porter himself having returned to Europe on leave of absence in May

38. *Message to His Excellency*, A39-'63, p 5.

39. *Message to His Excellency*, A39-'63, p 3.

40. See Findlay, “The San of the Cape Thirstland”, pp 43, 54; see also the “Holograph Reminiscences by E.A. Judge”, MAD, BC 500, item B76, p 87. According to Judge, Anthing “had peculiar ideas about the civilization of the natives and spent a great deal of money in endeavouring to realize them”. This distorted view of what Anthing set out to do and what he actually accomplished appears to have been quite current in the decades that followed his mission and it is to be found in, among other sources, Theal’s *History of South Africa*, where he says that Anthing actually gave goats to the |Xam “at the cost of Government”; see Theal, *History of South Africa*, vol. 4, p 31. That Theal included in his historical work a piece of gossip without checking its veracity may not surprise us, yet Judge, who in 1882 gave Anthing a job as a minor clerk in Kimberley, must surely have known what actually had happened. In his reminiscences he says of Anthing (whose name he never mentions) that “[h]e was strictly honourable but very eccentric”; see Judge, “Holograph Reminiscences”, p 88.

41. *Message to His Excellency*, A39-'63, p 7.

42. See C.W. de Kieweit and A.P. Newton, “The Period of Transition in South African Policy, 1854–1870”, in E.A. Walker (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the British Empire* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1963), vol. 7, p 411.

1862) waived the prosecution of the |Xam brought by Anthing.⁴³ When the report was published in June 1863, it was subjected to harsh criticism. A very hostile editorial in the *Cape Argus* reduced Anthing's mission to a "wild goose chase" and dismissed the whole content of the report as "a mare's nest, not a single proof having been found of the truth of the statements made of the iniquities practiced by the Boers", and questioned "the power of civil commissioners to run up bills for attacking windmills, rescuing Hottentot Venuses, or clothing naked Bushmen". For the editorialist, "such young Solons [should] better be kept in some quiet asylum at the expense of the country, than suffered to roam at large, when that liberty has the effect of making the English Government the laughing-stock of native tribes".⁴⁴

The report, with its proposals to protect the survivors, was discussed in the colonial Assembly, but nothing came of it.⁴⁵ The Assembly refused to approve the funds needed for the creation of a magistracy at Kenhardt, although ironically enough, the lack of foresight on the part of the government regarding the Koranna forced the creation of such a magistracy only five years later.⁴⁶ Still more ironic is the fact that in a detailed report written on his way back to Cape Town in 1863, Anthing himself had warned the government that the situation on the Orange River would explode sooner or later.⁴⁷

The magistrate was ordered to return to Kenhardt and close the provisional establishment he had opened there. He had obtained a leave of absence and was planning to travel to England, but when he reached Bushmanland the desperate situation of the |Xam induced him to alter his plans. Using, as he explained later to the government, his "own savings and the contributions of friends", Anthing opened a trading post with the purpose of keeping alive as many people as possible until the summer migration of springbok allowed them to survive on their own.⁴⁸ Further details about the aftermath of Anthing's mission, and his eventual resignation from the civil service in 1868 are beyond the scope of this review article, although many of them can be found in Findlay's thesis.⁴⁹ It is, however, necessary to add that official documents from the late 1860s onward show that even although Anthing's mission failed in that the measures he proposed to protect the remnant |Xam were never implemented, it apparently contributed greatly to stop the commandos. The establishment of a Northern Border Magistracy in Kenhardt and Upington as a consequence of the Korana "wars" of 1868–1869 and 1879 also had a deterrent effect on the farmers, although isolated killings continued until at least the early 1890s.⁵⁰

43. *Message to His Excellency*, A39-'63, p 12.

44. *Cape Argus*, 27 June 1863.

45. Findlay, "The San of the Cape Thirstland", pp 46–47.

46. T. Strauss, *War along the Orange: The Korana and the Northern Border Wars of 1868–9 and 1878–9* (Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 1979); Findlay, "The San of the Cape Thirstland", p 57.

47. CA, CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 17 February 1863.

48. CA, CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 8 December 1864; Findlay, "The San of the Cape Thirstland", p 48.

49. Findlay, "The San of the Cape Thirstland", pp 47–52.

50. Strauss, *War along the Orange*; M. Legassick, "From Prisoners to Exhibits: Representations of 'Bushmen' on the Northern Cape, 1880–1900", in A.E. Coombes (ed.), *Rethinking Settler Colonialism: History and Memory in Australia, Canada, Aotearoa New Zealand and South Africa* (Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 2006); and W. Dooling, "Reconstructing the Household: The Cape Colony in the Aftermath of the South African War", *Journal of African History*, 50, 2009, pp 399–416.

In light of Szalay’s and Adhikari’s view that the documents on Anthing’s mission are “second hand and circumstantial”, I think it is important to refute such a view and to establish the importance of this material not only for the study of the genocide of the |Xam, but also in the context of genocide studies in general. It seems clear to me that Anthing’s published report and the unpublished documents related to it, make the extermination campaigns against the |Xam in the second half of the nineteenth century the first officially documented account of genocide.⁵¹

As stated above, Anthing described what was happening in Bushmanland as “the systematic destruction of a race of men”. These words bring to mind, of course, the accusations made by Reverend Philip in 1828 that had aroused the ire of Chase and many of his contemporaries. They also convey to us in the twenty-first century, the gist of the definition of genocide as spelt out in the 1948 UN convention. Unlike Philip, Anthing was not basing his statement on the study of historical documents of the VOC period or information gathered from native informants and fellow missionaries. He was reporting from the very scene of the events in question, and his sources were survivors and witnesses of the atrocities. Besides the depositions of Fluik and Ou Booi that were sent to Porter and which motivated the mission, Anthing mentions several times that he took down testimonies from a variety of people during his sojourn in Bushmanland.⁵² From this we can infer that he collected a substantial amount of information directly from the lips of those in a better position to provide it. Unfortunately, all attempts to locate these depositions have thus far been unsuccessful. The only complete statement we possess is that by the trader J. Nicholson, whom Anthing met at a place called Roodepad near the Orange River, and then copied in full in his letter of 1 April 1862.⁵³ Fortunately, the published report has preserved, quoted verbatim or summarised, substantial excerpts from the missing depositions.⁵⁴ A comparison of these excerpts with the letter sent by Anthing to Porter on 13 September 1861 shows that all of them come from the depositions taken from Jacob Fluik and Ou Booi.⁵⁵ It is to the latter that these words must be attributed:

They surrounded the place during the night, spying the Bushmen’s fires. At daybreak the firing commenced, and it lasted until the sun was up a little way. The commando party

-
51. One of the anonymous peer-reviewers finds this statement “a little strong”, refers to the earlier commandos and asks if the documentation by Anthing could be considered “systematic enough”. As I argue in this article, the large amount of depositions collected by Anthing in the field over a period of more than a year can be considered a thorough documenting work, especially since Anthing’s witnesses included not only San victims. The materials about the eighteenth-century commandos come from the perpetrators’ side, and although they do indeed document genocidal practices cannot be compared with those produced by Anthing, who, on the one hand, was conducting a “a full judicial investigation” on the criminal nature of the commandos at the request of the attorney-general and, on the other hand, realised on the basis of his observations in the field that “a system of extermination” was being carried out in Bushmanland. I may be wrong, but I think that it is not until Arnold Toynbee’s *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire* (Foreign Office, London, 1916) that one finds a similar corpus of documents referring to what can only be considered as genocide. Roger Casement’s reports about the atrocities in Congo (1903) and the rubber plantations of the Amazon (1912), while documenting crimes against humanity cannot be seen as referring to cases of genocide under the terms of the 1948 United Nations Convention. See Séamas Ó Síocháin, *Roger Casement: Imperialist, Rebel, Revolutionary* (Lilliput Press, Dublin, 2008). This said, the parallels between Anthing and Casement are remarkable.
52. CA, CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 17 February 1863, p 14; CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 10 August 1862, p 2; *Message to His Excellency*, A39-’63, p 6.
53. CA, CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, April 1862, pp 39–45.
54. *Message to His Excellency*, A39-’63, pp 10–11.
55. CA, 1/SBK 5/2/1.

loaded and fired, and reloaded many times before they had finished. A great many people (women and children) were killed that day. The men were absent. Only a few little children escaped, and they were distributed amongst the people composing the commando. The women threw up their arms, crying for mercy, but no mercy was shown them. Great sin was perpetrated that day. I was taken by my master to hold his horses. I did not join in the shooting. I had no gun.⁵⁶

From what Anthing says in the letter to Porter, this testimony refers to a large commando composed by coloured people and led by a certain Van Neel, the corporal of Pella. The targets were the |Xam of Namies, an area very rich in water that is only a few kilometres from Pella. Note that the victims were all women and children, and that the commando had not the slightest interest in taking prisoners except for the occasional survivors of the slaughter. This fact contradicts the notion that the objective of many of the commandos against the San was the capture of women and children to work for the farmers.⁵⁷ Certainly this was not the case in the period and area covered by Anthing's reports and strongly suggests that the Bushmanland commandos acted more as death-squads than as labour-recruiting gangs. This reinforces Anthing's conviction that these commandos were part of an effort to wipe out completely, or at least reduce to powerlessness, the San population of the area.

The data supplied by the magistrate also suggests that this effort was premeditated and well planned. Anthing gives approximate dates for the massacres about which he collected information and these dates show that the "system of extermination", as one of his witnesses called it,⁵⁸ had begun shortly after Bushmanland was annexed to the Cape Colony by decree of Sir Harry Smith in 1847. Prior to that, traveller's accounts and other historical documents show that the area was of limited interest to white farmers due to its extreme dryness, although they crossed it occasionally to reach the Orange River area, and also went into it with their flocks when rains had been good and the pans and vleis that abound in the territory were full.⁵⁹ Bushmanland had also been partially occupied since the late eighteenth century by coloured farmers who sought to escape the oppression to which they were subjected by white pastoralists in the colony.⁶⁰

It appears from available evidence that the potential of the territory for sheep farming and the expectations aroused by its annexation to the colony, unleashed the genocidal campaign against the San, the main perpetrators of which, according to Anthing's findings, were farmers from the Bokkeveld, Hantam and Roggeveld areas and also coloured farmers that already lived in the area.⁶¹ The memorial sent to the government by the farmers from the Hantam area in March 1848, when they feared that the newly annexed territory was being surveyed in order to be sold to private individuals, makes reference to the events of 1801, "when the daring and ceaseless inroads of the Bushmen" made it impossible for the farmers to move their herds to the area, which, together with the failure of the winter rains, caused the death of "the greater number of the Hantam cattle ... and

56. *Message to His Excellency*, A39-'63, p 10.

57. See Szalay, *San and the Colonization of the Cape*, pp 23–25.

58. CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 1 April 1862, p 41 (Nicholson deposition).

59. R. Moffat Jr., "Journey from Colesberg to Steinkopf in 1854–5"; and "Journey from Little Namaqualand Eastward, along the Orange River, the Northern Frontier of the Colony, &c. &c., in August, 1856", *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, 28, 1858, pp 153–173 and pp 174–187; see also Penn, *Forgotten Frontier*, p 98.

60. Penn, *Forgotten Frontier*, p 164.

61. CO 4414: Louis Anthing – Colonial Secretary, 8 May 1862; *Message to His Excellency*, A39-'63, p 12.

most of the inhabitants were compelled, in consequence, to remove to a remote part of the colony”.⁶²

This strongly suggests that the actions of these farmers were to a large extent informed by the experiences of their ancestors, whose own exterminatory efforts about two or three generations before, besides being to a certain extent checked by the VOC control of the commandos, had followed a more haphazard and unsystematic pattern leading in some cases to unwelcome acts of organised resistance on the part of the San and in areas further to the east, like the Sneeuwberg, to a virtual stalemate which had forced the abandonment of many farms.⁶³

Adhikari asks in the last section of his book if there is a case for labelling the extermination of the San peoples of South Africa genocide. From the discussion above, for the area investigated by Louis Anthing in 1861–1863, there is a very strong, I would say irrefutable case that a genocide took place there from at least the very late 1840s to the moment in which Anthing established his base of operations at Kenhardt in March 1862. For other areas and times the documentation thus far available is much scantier, but often points in that direction. As I said before, historical studies on the San would greatly benefit from a database which gathers as far as possible the widely dispersed relevant sources on this diverse group.

Yet as Adhikari rightly states near the conclusion of his book, the ignorance and misinformation in modern day South Africa about what could justifiably be considered the worst tragedy in the country’s history, are appalling. If the average American knows about the infamous practices of past US governments towards their indigenous people, the average South African appears to be at best, completely unaware of the fate of the San. Attitudes like those of Lichtenstein and Chase in the nineteenth century have been replaced in more recent times by a series of myths about the San that nowadays can be heard from the mouths of many South Africans, both black or white. I myself have heard them from among others, Zulu guides in KwaZulu-Natal game reserves and white farmers in the Upper Karoo. The most common of these myths are:

- That the San were not wiped out from a given territory. They “retreated” to more arid areas. This is why today you still find them in the remotest reaches of the Kalahari.
- That the San helped themselves from settler herds because they believed that God had given them the right to hunt all animals on the land and they were thus unable to distinguish the wild antelope from the domestic beasts of the farmers.
- That the San never surrendered and when cornered fought to the last man so this is why many commandos ended by killing everybody.
- That infanticide was a common practice among the San, and parents had no qualms about selling their older children to the settlers.

62. *Correspondence on the Subject of the Trekvelde near the Zak River*, Government Publication A113-’61, 1861, p 3.

63. Penn, *Forgotten Frontier*, pp 134–135.

- That the San killed their elderly people when they became too weak to keep up with the rest of the band.

All these myths are untenable, yet they are still quite common despite some of them first being circulated about 200 years ago. Equally common are many of the objections to labelling the killing of the San as genocide; Adhikari discusses these at the end of his book (pp 87–93). The falling into obscurity of a tragedy of this magnitude is in itself frightening; it deserves to be studied on its own because it means, among other things, that the genocides of the San communities were established crimes for which nobody has ever been held accountable. Yet there were survivors, and many of their descendants still inhabit the land of their ancestors, “culturally nearly extinct, though genetically very much alive” as John Parkington has phrased it.⁶⁴ Subject to the ravages of foetal alcohol syndrome, chronic unemployment and widespread illiteracy, abandoned by welfare organisations and governmental policy-makers, and ignored by social scientists as the uninteresting residues of the early stages of colonial history, they still carry the burden of the unmemorialised tragedy that deprived their ancestors of their language, their land and their way of life – a tragedy that the reconciliation and redress policies of the new South Africa obstinately still chooses to ignore.

Abstract

Mohamed Adhikari’s book *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide* is a synthesis of the research on the extermination of the San peoples of South Africa and aims to establish that such extermination must be considered genocide. Unfortunately, the book is based exclusively on published sources, and especially with regard to the nineteenth century, fails to consider archival and other sources that throw much light on the fate of the San, most notably the corpus of documents on the mission that the resident magistrate and civil commissioner of Namaqualand, Louis Anthing, undertook in 1862 to investigate reports of massacres of San bands in Bushmanland. Adhikari’s book also suffers from the fact that he refers to “the San”, while it is methodologically more correct to distinguish clearly between the different San populations and to address the history of specific groups in specific areas of southern Africa. Another major weakness is his placement of almost exclusive blame for the extermination of the San on “Dutch-speaking pastoralists”, downplaying sources that point to the heavy involvement of Baster, Griqua and Khoi groups in the destruction of the hunter-gatherer bands. The case study of Louis Anthing’s mission to Bushmanland, which proves that there was indeed genocide in Bushmanland in the second half of the nineteenth century, is presented in detail to show that an engagement with archival sources is essential to grasp the tragedy of the San in all its complexity.

Key words: Anthing, Louis; Baster; Bushmanland; Cape Colony; genocide; Griqua; historiography; Kenhardt; Korana; San; |Xam.

Opsomming

Die vergete moordvelde: Die “San”-volksmoord en Louis Anthing se sending na Boesmanland, 1862–1863

64. J. Parkington, D. Morris and N. Rusch, *Karoo Rock Engravings: Marking Places in the Landscape* (Living Landscape Project, Cape Town, 2008), p 122.

Mohamed Adhikari se boek, *The Anatomy of a South African Genocide*, is ’n sintese van die navorsing oor die uitroeiing van die San-groepe van Suid-Afrika en het ten doel om te bewys dat hierdie uitroeiing as ’n volksmoord beskou moet word. Helaas is die boek totaal gebaseer op gepubliseerde bronne en, veral met betrekking tot die negentiende eeu, neem dit nie argivale en ander bronne in ag wat veel lig op die lot van die San werp nie. Dit is veral die geval met die korpus dokumente rondom die sending wat die magistraat en siviele kommissaris van Namakwaland, Louis Anthing, in 1862 onderneem het om gerugte van die slagting van San-groepe in Boesmanland te ondersoek. Adhikari se boek skiet verder tekort deurdat hy na “die San” verwys onderwyl dit metodologies beter sou wees om duidelik te onderskei tussen die verskillende San-bevolkings en om die geskiedenis van spesifieke groepe in spesifieke areas van suidelike Afrika te ondersoek. Nóg ’n groot tekortkoming is dat hy die blaam vir die uitroeiing van die San feitlik uitsluitlik plaas op “Nederlandssprekende pastoraliste” en minder ag slaan op bronne wat dui op die wye betrokkenheid van Baster-, Griekwa- en Khoi-groepe in die verwoesting van die jagter-versamelaars. ’n Gevallestudie van Louis Anthing se sending na Boesmanland, wat bewys dat daar inderdaad ’n volksmoord in Boesmanland gedurende die tweede helfte van die negentiende eeu was, word hier in detail aangebied om te demonstreer dat dit noodsaaklik is om argivale bronne te betrek ten einde die San-tragedie in sy volle kompleksiteit te begryp.

Sleutelwoorde: Anthing, Louis; Baster; Boesmanland; Griekwa; historiografie; Kaapkolonie; Kenhardt; Korana; San; volksmoord; |Xam.