

TIMOTHY J. STAPLETON: MAQOMA. XHOSA RESISTANCE TO COLONIAL ADVANCE. Jonathan Ball, Johannesburg, 1994.

A very timely and valuable addition to the biographical literature on the history of prominent Black leaders. Maqoma's name is linked with the struggles on the Eastern frontier in the first half of the nineteenth century. Born in 1798 as the Right Hand Son of Ngqika, king of the Rharabes, Maqoma strongly opposed his father's ceding of the land between the Fish and Keiskamma rivers. He challenged the authority of the Cape government by returning to the Neutral Zone in 1822 from which he was forcibly expelled in 1829. On Ngqika's death Maqoma became regent for Sandile, who was still a minor. Maqoma

played a central role in the Sixth and Seventh Frontier Wars. In 1857 Maqoma was condemned to twenty years imprisonment on Robben Island for receiving stolen goods. After his release in 1869 Maqoma tried to return to his original lands. He was arrested and banned to Robben Island for a second time where he died in 1873.

With the help of oral evidence and intensive field work Stapleton has succeeded in reconstructing a convincing history of Maqoma's chequered career.