

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

## ADAM KOK'S GRIQUAS

### AFRICAN STUDIES SERIES

#### *Editorial Board*

John Dunn, Lecturer in Political Science and Fellow of King's College,  
Cambridge

J. M. Lonsdale, Lecturer in History and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge

D. M. G. Newbery, Lecturer in Economics and Fellow of Churchill College,  
Cambridge

A. F. Robertson, Director of the African Studies Centre and Fellow of Darwin  
College, Cambridge

The African Studies Series is a collection of monographs and general studies which reflect the interdisciplinary interests of the African Studies Centre at Cambridge. Volumes to date have combined historical, anthropological, economic, political and other perspectives. Each contribution has assumed that such broad approaches can contribute much to our understanding of Africa, and that this may in turn be of advantage to specific disciplines.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## BOOKS IN THIS SERIES

- 1 *City Politics: A Study of Leopoldville, 1962–63* – J. S. La Fontaine
- 2 *Studies in Rural Capitalism in West Africa* – Polly Hill
- 3 *Land Policy in Buganda* – Henry W. West
- 4 *The Nigerian Military: A Sociological Analysis of Authority and Revolt, 1960–67* – Robin Luckham
- 5 *The Ghanaian Factory Worker: Industrial Man in Africa* – Margaret Peil
- 6 *Labour in the South African Gold Mines, 1911–1969* – Francis Wilson
- 7 *The Price of Liberty: Personality and Politics in Colonial Nigeria* – Kenneth W. J. Post and George D. Jenkins
- 8 *Subsistence to Commercial Farming in Present Day Buganda: An Economic and Anthropological Survey* – Audrey I. Richards, Ford Sturrock and Jean M. Fortt (eds.)
- 9 *Dependence and Opportunity: Political Change in Ahafo* – John Dunn and A. F. Robertson
- 10 *African Railwaymen: Solidarity and Opposition in an East African Labour Force* – R. D. Grillo
- 11 *Islam and Tribal Art in West Africa* – René A. Bravmann
- 12 *Modern and Traditional Elites in the Politics of Lagos* – P. D. Cole
- 13 *Asante in the Nineteenth Century: The Structure and Evolution of a Political Order* – Ivor Wilks
- 14 *Culture, Tradition and Society in the West African Novel* – Emmanuel Obiechina
- 15 *Saints and Politicians: Essays in the Organisation of a Senegalese Peasant Society* – Donal B. Cruise O'Brien
- 16 *The Lions of Dagbon: Political Change in Northern Ghana* – Martin Staniland
- 17 *Politics of Decolonisation: Kenya Europeans and the Land Issue, 1960 to 1965* – Gary B. Wasserman
- 18 *Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth Century Africa* – B. G. Martin
- 19 *Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate: Historical and Sociological Perspectives* – Joseph P. Smaldone
- 20 *Liberia and Sierra Leone: An Essay in Comparative Politics* – Christopher Clapham
- 21 *Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa* – Robert Ross

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

# ADAM KOK'S GRIQUAS

A study in the development of  
stratification in South Africa

ROBERT ROSS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE

LONDON · NEW YORK · MELBOURNE

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521102339](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521102339)

© Cambridge University Press 1976

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1976

This digitally printed version 2009

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Ross, Robert, 1949–

Adam Kok's Griquas : a study in the development of stratification in South Africa.

(African studies series ; 21)

Bibliography: p.

Includes index.

1. Griquas. 2. Kok, Adam, 1811–1875. I. Title.

II. Series.

DT764.G7R67 301.44'0968 75-43368

ISBN 978-0-521-21199-4 hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-10233-9 paperback

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)**CONTENTS**

Preface	vii
Note on terminology	ix
Abbreviations	xi
Glossary	xiii
1 Introduction	1
2 The early history of the Griquas	12
3 The establishment of the Philippolis Captaincy 1826–37	22
4 Griquas, Boers and the British in Transorangia	41
5 The years of the sheep	66
6 Land and authority	81
7 The Griqua trek	94
8 Nomansland	104
9 Annexation, rebellion and disintegration	124
10 Conclusion	134
Appendix 1: Genealogy of the Kok family	139
Appendix 2: The sale of farms in the Philippolis Captaincy	140
Appendix 3: The growth of South African exports and the shift to the east	141
Notes	142
Notes on sources	172
Select bibliography	175
Index	190
<i>Maps</i>	
1 Southern Africa c 1850	xiv
2 Griqualand West and surrounding areas	40
3 The route of the Griqua trek	95

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## PREFACE

This book is a micro-study, an attempt to illumine the history of southern Africa during the nineteenth century by focusing on the activities of one small group, who formed part of the mosaic of disparate but increasingly interrelated social units of the southern part of the continent. It is to be hoped that a view of that history looking outwards from Philippolis and Kokstad will provide a perspective rather different from those otherwise available. On the other hand, it is my hope that the story of the Griquas will prove interesting and, in a sad sort of way, enjoyable in its own right, so this work may be judged for its story-telling as well as for its purely academic value.

Nevertheless, this book is the product of extensive research, during the course of which I incurred many debts of gratitude, which I would like to acknowledge, if not fully repay, here. The Social Science Research Council and the Smuts Fund for Commonwealth Studies financed my research. Various aspects of my work as it progressed were presented to seminars of the Universities of Cambridge and Cape Town and of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, and the participants in these meetings were most useful in directing me away from blind alleys into which I was heading, while the Thursday mornings at the ICS in Russell Square, in particular, did much to provide the context within which my ideas have developed.

I must also thank most heartily all those people who have given me hospitality in the course of a research project more peripatetic than most. A host of friends, friends of friends and casual acquaintances have from time to time allowed me to use their spare beds or their floors, and for this I am most grateful, as I am to the numerous people who have taken pity on a man standing by the side of the road with his thumb out.

Above all the loose society that gathered around the School of African Studies of the University of Cape Town made a long stay in a foreign country most enjoyable, and to them I owe my deep thanks. On a more formal level, the staff of the two dozen archives and libraries in which I worked were uniformly helpful. If I single out Miss Irene Fletcher of the London Missionary Society, it is because

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Preface*

she inducted me into the ways of archives with the consideration for which she has been legendary among generations of students.

Various individuals require to be given special mention, although the customary absolution from responsibility for any errors in this work must of course apply. Professor Ronald Robinson, now of Balliol College, Oxford, fostered my original interest in South African history. Moreover, he suggested that I should work on the Griquas, once again giving evidence of his uncanny nose for an interesting problem. Dr Martin Legassick provided many of the first contours within which my work developed and has been a constant encouragement and stimulus ever since. My Ph.D. examiners, Professors Eric Stokes and Shula Marks, made what might have been a terrifying ordeal an immensely valuable one, while Anthony Atmore and my sister, Anne Stevens, read the typescript of this work and made many useful suggestions.

Various portions of chapter 8 have previously appeared in R. Ross, 'Griqua government', *African Studies* 33 (1) (1974), 36–40, and in an article of mine in Robin Derricourt and C. C. Saunders (eds.), *Beyond the Cape Frontier, Studies in the History of the Transkei and Ciskei* (Cape Town, 1974), and are reprinted by permission of the Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, and the Longman Group Ltd, respectively. In a similar vein, Hendrix von Aswegen of the Rand Afrikaans Universiteit and Christopher Saunders of the University of Cape Town kindly allowed me to quote from their unpublished theses.

I owe special thanks to four people. Jeff Leeuwenburg not only drove me round South Africa and survived the two months' close proximity that this entailed but also used his great knowledge of the Griqua patois and culture to make a far better interviewer than I could ever have done. Moreover, he received and demolished many more of my ideas than was his due. John Iliffe's patient supervision and encouragement did as much as possible to overcome my own slapdash habits and make this work approach professional canons. Lastly, my parents' encouragement and concern have always been a great support and comfort to me, and to them I dedicate this book.

*Leiden*

R.R.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

With two exceptions, the names of the various African peoples and areas follow those of the *Oxford History of South Africa* (eds. M. Wilson and L. M. Thompson (2 vols., Oxford, 1969, 1971), I, viii–ix), eliminating all prefixes and suffixes and keeping traditional spellings for areas but not for peoples – thus ‘Mpondo’ but ‘Pondoland’.

The exceptions are: (1) where necessary, I have added the character representing the ‘click’ in the Khoisan languages, which was occasionally omitted by the *Oxford History* – thus, specifically, ‘!Kora’ not ‘Kora’, and also ≠Kari and Tsuni-//Goam; (2) in order to stress that they were a Dutch-speaking people and therefore should be treated similarly to the Boers, I have anglicised the plural of the main subjects of this study – thus ‘Griquas’, not ‘Griqua’.

Other terms present problems. The *Oxford History* distinguished between physical anthropological, linguistic and economic classifications, but as it is part of the argument of this thesis that the racial classifications used in the nineteenth century were of great importance in shaping its history, I have used the term ‘whites’ as opposed to ‘caucasoids’, ‘speakers of Dutch’ or ‘farmers’, because this represented more exactly the concept then in use. The difficulty is that three of the racial terms of the time, Bushman, Hottentot and Kaffir – or later words such as Native or Bantu – are generally considered offensive. In this book, they are therefore rendered as San, Khoikhoi (with Khoisan being used for those whose status between the two was indeterminate) and African, except in direct or implied quotations from original material.

Again, many people who are now classified as ‘coloured’ regard such a designation as insulting, and normally describe themselves as ‘so-called coloured’ or, more usually, in translation of colloquial Afrikaans, as ‘brown people’. However, the first of these designations is unbearably clumsy and the second is unintelligible outside South Africa – and very widely within it. Therefore the term ‘coloured’ has been retained throughout this book, although it has always been put within inverted commas out of respect to those who dispute its value.

A further distinction is necessary, this time in the terminology used for whites. Following conventional historical usage, I have used the word Afrikaner



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

*Note on terminology*

to refer to all those self-designated whites who spoke Dutch as a main language, reserving the word Boer for those of them who were farmers, especially pastoralists, generally transhumant, and for those, such as the hunters and traders of the north, who were very closely connected with the farming community.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## ABBREVIATIONS

### *South African Archives*

The following refer to series in the Cape archives. They are expanded in the bibliography:

**BW; CBG; CMK; CO; GH; GLW; GO; GR; GWLC; LG; NA; RLR; VC**

The following refer to series in the Orange Free State archives. They are always preceded by (OVS) and are expanded in the bibliography:

**AC; AKT; BR; GS; HC; IB; SC; VR**

The following refer to series in the Natal archives. They are always preceded by (Natal) and are expanded in the bibliography:

**GH; PP; SNA**

### *Other*

**AS** Assistant Secretary

**ASLG** Assistant Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor

**AYB for SAH** *Archives Year Book for South African History*

**Bas. Rec.** G. M. Theal (ed.), *Basutoland Records* (3 vols., Cape Town, 1883)

**BPP** This refers to a House of Commons Parliamentary Paper and is followed by the command number and the date of the session. The titles of the various papers are given in the bibliography.

**CC** Civil Commissioner

**CPP** This refers to a South African Parliamentary Paper, mainly from the Cape Province. It is always followed by an initial to describe the authoriser of the Paper (A = published by order of the Cape House of Assembly, G = published by order of the Cape Government, SC = the report of a Select Committee of the Cape House of Assembly, UG = published by order of the Union Government). They are always followed by the command number and the session date. The full titles may be seen in the bibliography.

**Friend** *Friend of the Sovereignty* (after March 1854, *Friend of the Free State*) and *Bloemfontein Gazette*

**JAH** *Journal of African History*

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

*Abbreviations*

- KCL** Killie Campbell Library, Durban
- LMS** London Missionary Society. When followed by figures, as 11/3/C, these refer to the box number, the jacket number and the folder letter of the South African In Letters in the LMS archives.
- OHSA** M. Wilson and L. M. Thompson (eds.) *The Oxford History of South Africa* (2 vols., Oxford, 1969, 1971)
- PEMS** Paris Evangelical Missionary Society
- RCC** *Records of the Cape Colony*, edited by G. M. Theal (36 vols., London, 1897–1910)
- SAAR** Union of South Africa, Archives Commission, *South African Archival Records*
- SAJS** *South African Journal of Science*
- USPG** United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, usually followed by a file number from the archives.
- WMMS** Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. Usually refers to a box in the archives of the WMMS.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## GLOSSARY

*baaskap*: domination

*bywoner*: white sharecropper

*canteen*: grog shop

commando: small military expedition, usually mounted

*dorp*: small town or village

*erf* (plural *erven*): plot of urban ground

*fontein*: spring

*gebied*: area, jurisdiction

*karosse*: skin blankets

*kloof*: ravine

*knegt*: servant

*laager*: fortified camp

*land(d)rost*: district magistrate

*maatschappij*: company/community

*muid*: a measure of volume, about a hectalitre

*Nagmaal*: The Lord's Supper, which in Afrikaaner communities generally served as the main social gathering for the surrounding population

*opgaaf*: annual poll tax

*raad*: council

rix dollar: Cape colonial currency (1 rix dollar = 7½p approx.)

*schafmeester*: shepherd

*smous*: pedlar

*trek*: migrate, travel

*tronk*: prison

*veld*: grazing, pasture

*veldkornet*: elected local leader, who acted both as the lowest rung in the administration and as the military commander of the burghers of his *wyk*

*volksraad*: national council

*voorlaier*: muzzle-loading gun

*voorloper*: forerunner, but also literally as the boy who guided the leading oxen of a wagon team

*wyk*: district

xiii

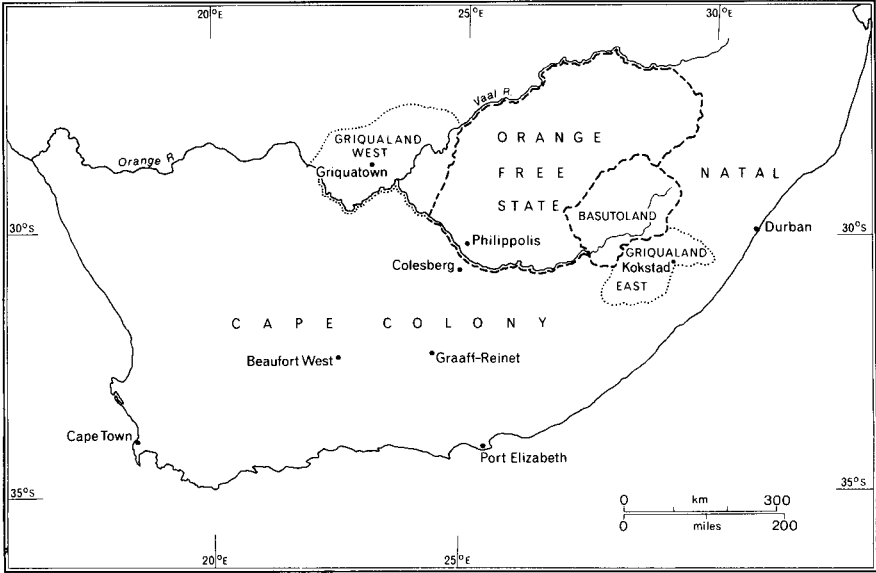
Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-10233-9 - Adam Kok's Griquas: A Study in the Development of Stratification in South Africa

Robert Ross

Frontmatter

[More information](#)



1 Southern Africa c 1850