

# The Life, Work and Legacy of Monica Hunter Wilson (1908–1982)

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The idea of holding a conference to commemorate the life and work of Monica Hunter Wilson was hatched in March 2007 in the rolling hills of Pondoland, where my brother, Andrew Bank, and I had embarked on an exploratory field trip to find Monica Hunter's original Pondoland field sites. Armed with a rough map and some descriptive text from her personal letters and a few cryptic notes from *Reaction to Conquest*, we headed south from Mthatha, where she had arrived at the train station in 1931 to embark on a journey by car and then cart to the village of Ntibane, where she stayed for seven months at an isolated trading store on the fringes of old Cape Colony, shown in the background of the photograph reproduced above. As we forged ahead beyond Ngqeleni, the tar turned into dust, dropped down towards the coast before eventually reaching the small village of Ntibane, where we immediately noticed the old trading store with an adjoining the house and rondawel where Monica had stayed.

One could just imagine the enthusiastic twenty-three year old Monica Hunter sitting on bags of maize piled up at the door, eavesdropping on village chatter and interacting freely with the locals, or heading out on horseback to one of the dozens of rituals and beer drinks she attended between May and December 1931. As we gazed across the valley, now more densely settled than before, it was clear that, while much had changed over the past seventy-five years, there were still striking social and cultural continuities. Indeed, fourteen years after democracy, it seemed appropriate that we might once again reflect on the processes of social change that had so fascinated Monica Hunter Wilson in Pondoland, and then later in Keiskammahoek, South-western Tanzania, and Langa.

The idea hosting a Monica Hunter Wilson Conference at Fort Hare University, in the heart of the Eastern Cape, was confirmed by other developments. On my return to East London, I heard that the Wilson family had reached an advanced stage in negotiating the sale of part of the Hunterstoun property in the Hogsback, including Monica's house and library, to the University of Fort Hare for use as a creativity and conference centre, and that the process of transfer would be completed in the centenary

year of her birth. I also learnt more about Monica's influential role in setting up Social Anthropology as a two year major at Fort Hare in the mid-1940s and her close relationship with Z.K. Matthews, the doyen of African Studies at Fort Hare in the 1940s and 1950s and key architect of the Freedom Charter.

The final sign came with the unveiling of a new monument on the East London beach front by the ANC government acknowledging heroes of the Eastern Cape. The centre-piece of the monument is a plaque which lists the names of the Eastern Cape's 100 foremost heroes. Here Monica Hunter Wilson's name was inscribed amongst only a handful of female intellectuals and featured alongside legendary figures such as Nelson Mandela, Steve Biko, Oliver Tambo, and Govan Mbeki. There could be no doubt that 2008 was an appropriate time to reflect on the life, work and legacy of Monica Hunter Wilson.

From the point of view of the Fort Hare Institute of Social and Economic Research (FHISER), a research institute which seeks to encourage and deepen research into the social and economic dynamics of the Eastern Cape, this conference is obviously an important event. The Eastern Cape of today is a product of its complex and changing history, and there is still much to be written about social change in the region, especially at this time. By revisiting the life and work of Monica Hunter Wilson, we hope to refresh and challenge our ethnographic and historical imaginations.

From the point of view of Fort Hare University, the opening of the Confronting Social Change Conference is significant because it will be the very first event to be hosted at the new conference and creativity centre at Hunterstoun. The handover of a portion of the Hunterstoun estate from the Wilson family to the University is a landmark development because it not only offers the university a beautiful new facility in a uniquely tranquil setting, but will obviously also act as a stimulus for new writing, research and publication at the University, something of which Monica Hunter Wilson would have thoroughly approved.

The exhibition, reproduced in part in this booklet, has been assembled by Andrew Bank and Jenny Sandler for the opening of the conference. It offers participants and visitors visual and textual glimpses into the life and work of Monica Hunter Wilson. I would like to thank Andrew and Jenny for this work, which will hopefully become a permanent collection at the new Hunterstoun facility. Thanks to the Manuscripts and Archives Department, University of Cape Town Libraries and the Wilson Family for permission to reproduce the photographs and to Russell Martin for editing the text. I would also like to acknowledge the financial support of FHISER and the University in funding the exhibition and the brochure.

Leslie Bank  
Director, FHISER

Before launching into the photo-narrative, I feel it is necessary to say something briefly about my attitude towards these photographs and the texts that I have written to accompany them, about Monica's attitude towards photography, and about how one can access the rich array of photographic materials of which the images in this booklet are but a tiny (but hopefully judicious) selection.

It is something of a truism that photographs have an immediacy that transcends the written word – in which 'the there-then becomes the here-now' in Roland Barthes's pithy and much-quoted formulation. Nonetheless, working with photographs towards the production of photo-narrative has again reinforced my sense of the unique ability of visual images to bring the past alive, and transcend space and time in a direct and singular way. In each section of the photo-narrative that follows, the visual images (usually presented in pairs) have been associated with a quotation, usually the voice of Monica Hunter Wilson. Here again I have sought to invoke a presence and thus reflection on the relationship between the photographic image and the oral testimony.

Monica's concern with photographs goes back to her earliest days. In fact, her father David's own keen interest in photography and desire to document the life of his family have meant that we have an unusually full visual record of Monica's childhood years in the family albums. Monica seems to have taken up her father's passion, initially for the purpose of presenting her experiences in distant Cambridge to potentially anxious parents in far-away Lovedale, and then in a more studied way in her attempts to capture and represent tribal life through photographs. Here monographs on the Pondo and the Nyakyusa contain dozens of plates though no explicit reflections on her photographic technique and methodology. Even her explicit reflections on fieldwork method in one of her first published articles (1933) make no reference at all to her use of photography in the field. Nor are there any detailed fieldwork diaries of the Malinowskian kind which might be of assistance in piecing

together her ideas about photography in the field. From her letters to her father we know that she had used a 'bulky' ¼ plate Kodak reflex camera in 1935, and was seriously considering investing in a 'small & handy' Roliflex camera with reflex focusing: 'The mirror gives the whole picture and one simply winds a screw until it is sharp.'<sup>1</sup>

Finally, a few words on how one accesses the photographic materials in the Monica and Godfrey Wilson Papers. This archival collection was donated by Monica's sons, Francis and Tim, to the Manuscripts and Archives Department of the University of Cape Town Library in 1995. The materials within the collection have been arranged by Lesley Hart, the chief archivist, in the following sections: private papers, correspondence, published writings, unpublished writings, and then, as a subsection in the last part of the collection, photographs. These consist of portrait photographs, family photographs, and group photographs (N1–N7). As I have already noted, the David and Jessie Hunter Papers also contain an extensive collection of photographs of Monica, mainly of her childhood years, but also of photographs (like those from Cambridge) which she sent to her parents and which they kept as treasured objects. The fieldwork photographs are contained in a large brown cardboard box which is still uncatalogued. While she selected 65 of them for reproduction in her monographs of 1936, 1951, 1956 and 1959, there are hundreds of other photographic prints and negatives that were not chosen for publication. A very small number of these –exclusively from her Nyakyusa fieldwork – feature inscriptions in her handwriting on the back of the prints. They are still contained in the little photographic folders that date from the time the prints were developed. One or two have inscriptions on the outside of the folder, like 'Duds and Duplicates'. In addition, there is a little yellow box with her inscription 'Photographs taken by F.A.H.W.' (Francis Wilson), showing scenes from her final fieldwork expedition to south-western Tanganyika in 1955 on which he accompanied her.

Monica was the younger of two children of David Alexander (b. 1864) and Jessie Hunter (née McGregor) (b. 1869). David was a Glaswegian businessman whose dramatic conversion to Christianity at Keswick in 1893 drove him to become a missionary and spend his working life at Lovedale Mission Station in the Eastern Cape from 1895 onwards. Within three years of his arrival here he had raised funds for the construction of the Victoria Hospital in Alice in 1898.

He was joined in 1901 by his wife Jessie, whom he had married in Scotland, and their first child, William Harvey Aylmer (b. 1906); their second child, Mary Monica Hunter, was born on 3 January 1908. Shortly after Monica's birth, David Hunter purchased a property in the Hogsback which they named Hunterstoun. Family picnics and camping trips, as shown in the photograph above, were a feature of their early years here. In later life Monica still vividly recalled the joys of these summer holidays.





We left [Alice] in the morning, I suppose about eight o'clock or seven o'clock, and came up with a cart and horses. And it took about four and a half hours. And the horses were only outspanned once, and given their forage. And from the time I was about seven or eight I used to drive the last bit up the steep hill, because I was the lightest member of the family. And my father used to walk alongside sort of clucking encouragingly to me, and my mother who was slightly nervous at *my* having the horses in case they bolted at the top.

And then there was the wonderful smell when you came over the top. You got the sudden smell of *helicrasum* just at King's Neck. And then the view down. And the wonderful run down to the Tyhumie and to the house.<sup>2</sup>

The children's education began at home. Their mother taught them to read and instilled in them a deep knowledge of the Bible. This photograph of lessons in literacy on the laps of their father is one of the last images of her brother Aylmer in the family album. He died of a bronchial illness at the age of six.





Monica's formal education began at Lovedale Missionary College at the age of ten. Her contacts with Xhosa schoolmates at Lovedale made her sensitive to an interpretation of South African history that differed from the version given in the settler textbooks imposed there at school.

I remember a wretched woman history teacher saying 'Look. This is the history book and I have to follow it according to the syllabus. And it talks about "Kaffir Wars". And I am not insulting anyone when I talk about "Kaffir Wars". I have to because it is in the syllabus.'

And there was a sort of uproar in the class. And I became aware that there were two versions of frontier history. From that moment – I was then I think twelve – and I was extremely skeptical of the book that talked about 'Kaffir Wars', and already realizing that Janet [a classmate] was a descendant of Maqoma who was one of the 'Kaffir chiefs'. And I realised that this was, as it were, the seed of later ideas.<sup>3</sup>

At the age of fourteen Monica was sent to boarding school at Collegiate Girls' High in Port Elizabeth and developed ambitions to become a History teacher. It is no surprise, then, that she started off reading History when she enrolled at Cambridge, in October of 1927. The photograph above shows her reading in the Stanley Library at Girton College, where she soon became part of a closely knit but highly politicised and socially committed circle of friends.

Her decision to specialise in Anthropology in her final year of undergraduate study was based on a growing awareness that subjects like English Constitutional History had little connection with her own background. She had also been influenced by her active involvement in a Labour Study Circle, run by the South African Communist Party activist Eddie Roux, who was studying Botany at Cambridge at the time.

Monica's lecturer in African anthropology, Jack Herbert Driberg, introduced her to the revolutionary new theories of functionalism and participant observation of his mentor Malinowski, as well as to the early anthropological literature on southern Africa.

Driberg's senior colleague, Thomas Calland Hodson, proved to be a more lasting source of support. He took a great personal interest in Monica, prompting her to apply for the Anthony Wilkin Scholarship, which funded her fieldwork in Pondoland.

## Scenes from the Cambridge years, 1927–9

These photographs show a selection of scenes from Monica's years as an undergraduate at Cambridge: the interior of her Girton College room, punting with Uncle Ian on the Cam near Sth John's College, and holidaying with her college mates at Le Chambon-sur-Lignon in France during one of her mid-term vacations.





### A Passion for Fieldwork: Pondoland and the Eastern Cape, 1931–32

Monica Hunter was just twenty-three years and one month when she began her fieldwork in Auckland Village (e-Hala) below the Hogsback in the Tyhumie Valley. She later recalled how she had been influenced by Hodson's 'open' approach towards fieldwork.

When I left Cambridge, [Thomas] Hodson had said to me, 'Go with an open mind. No preconceived ideas.' ... The Cambridge idea was that I should observe and see what I saw, and I could do the reading later ... And observe events I did! I thought nothing of working nine or ten hours a day. I would be out all day watching, or sitting in the store listening and scribbling, and redoing my notes at night.

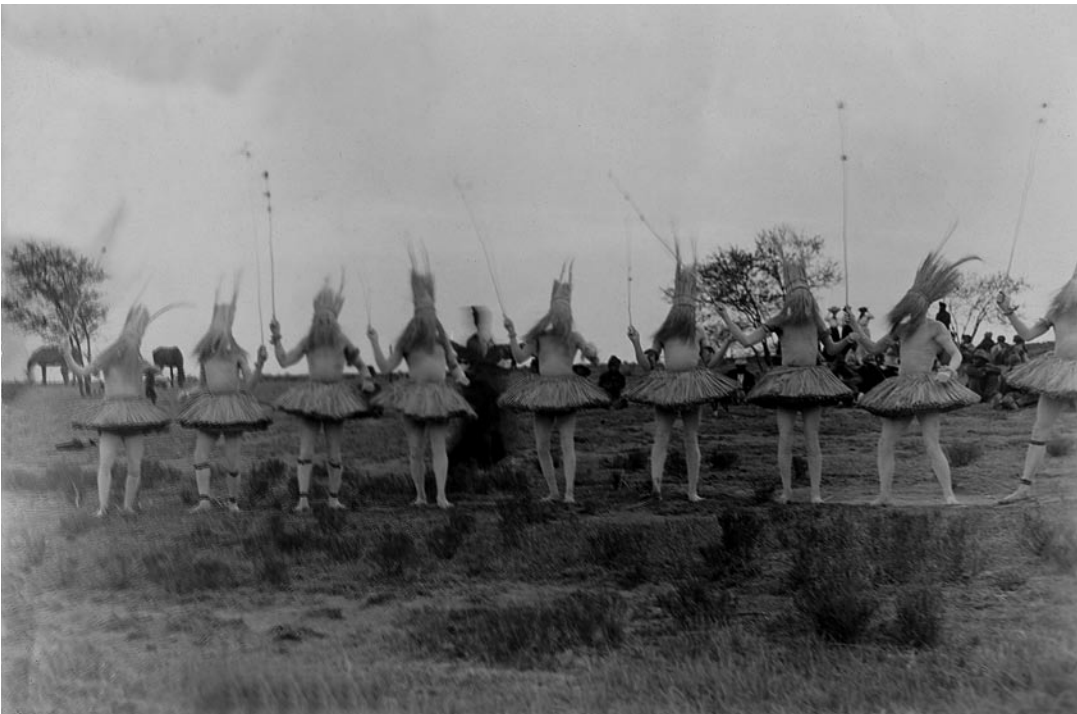
Immense energy I had then, and I was *fascinated* by this process. You see, I'd looked at the outside of communities for years. I had travelled around Auckland [Eastern Cape] and the countryside, and so often wondered what went on. And here was a chance to hear exactly what went on and all the scan-



dal of the area, and people's hopes and fears and all the rest of it, which they discussed at *enormous* length and with passion and excitement. It was a real passion for understanding that pushed me through ... And I was *completely swallowed* by the excitement of doing this research. [Monica's emphasis]<sup>4</sup>

After three months at Auckland, she moved across the Umtata River into Western Pondoland. There was little sign in her of flagging energy. During a single winter at Ntibane, that of 1931, Monica 'observed' no fewer than 73 beer drinks, 8 girls' initiation dances, 3 weddings, 2 feasts for diviners' initiation and half a dozen ritual killings. The following year (1932) she spent four months in Eastern Pondoland, visited 217 households in East London and Grahamstown, and 29 farms in the districts of Albany, Adelaide and Bedford.

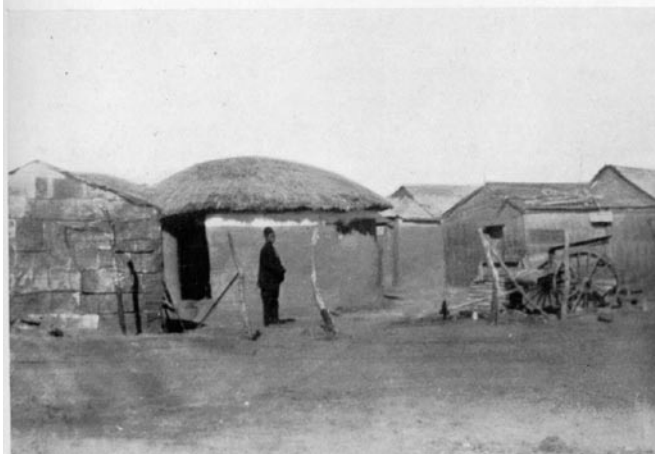
During this time she also took hundreds of fieldwork photographs, which are kept in the Monica and Godfrey Wilson Papers at the University of Cape Town. This dramatic photograph of a male initiation ritual (with her customary transport, her horse, shown on the fringes) is one of dozens of photographs of ritual events, while that of Monica taken against the backdrop of Pondo huts is entirely unique in the archive.



In 1933 Monica returned to Cambridge to write up her doctoral thesis on the Pondo, which she submitted in January 1934, and later revised extensively for publication under the title *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with European on the Pondo of South Africa* (1936). In his foreword, the South African Prime Minister, Jan Smuts, praised the book as a 'detailed and exact' scientific contribution to the understanding of African society, one worthy to stand alongside the classic ethnography of the Swiss missionary anthropologist Henri-Alexandre Junod's *Life of a*



a. A Native minister's house, East London location



b. Labourers' shacks, Grahamstown location



*South African Tribe* (1913), which Monica had carried with her in the field. Monica was pleased with his comments though not convinced that he had read the full manuscript.

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I have just been writing a letter of thanks to Smuts for his foreword, which also arrived by the last Air Mail. It's quite unpolitical – I reminded him of his adjurations to us on board ship [when she was en route back to Cambridge in December 1932], to spend less time talking politics & read science & poetry, & he has put that in the preface – so the book is introduced by him as a non-political objective study of facts which was exactly what I wanted. I am much relieved. I was growing nervous lest he wrote something quite unsuitable. I don't think he has looked at the town or the farm studies, but that does not matter. He wrote me a very cordial personal letter beginning 'My dear Monica', & said he thought it was a good job of work.<sup>5</sup>

Monica also felt 'quite chirpy' when the International African Institute agreed to extend the number of photographic plates in the 582 pages of text from 24 to 28. There are only three surviving photographs of urban scenes in the entire archive, all of which were reproduced in the published study: an interior of a 'school' home, and this pair of photographs of houses in the East London and Grahamstown locations respectively (both of which have been cropped for publication). Almost all the remaining plates feature scenes from rural life in Pondoland with a particular focus on economic activities and ritual, as for example in this landscape scene of a beer drink in progress near Ntontela.



*Imizi* scattered on ridges. (A beer drink is in progress)

## Working with Godfrey among the Nyakyusa: South-western Tanganyika, 1935–38

In February 1935 she married the anthropologist Godfrey Wilson, son of the Shakespearian scholar John Dover Wilson, at the Hogsback, and then joined him at his fieldsite in western Tanzania.

We arrived here at Isumba on March 8th having walked with a string of carriers from Tukuyu, 24 miles to the N.W. and 2,000 feet above us. We look down on Lake Nyasa [Malawi] and up to the Livingstones, towering in the east. We are living in the shell of a 3-roomed house very kindly lent to us by the Berlin Mission ... On arriving I had the immense advantage of finding cordial relations with the Banyakyusa already established, and files of language notes, and an outline of the culture, all ready prepared for me.

Monica and Godfrey divided their labour along gender lines, as was common among anthropologists of their generation.

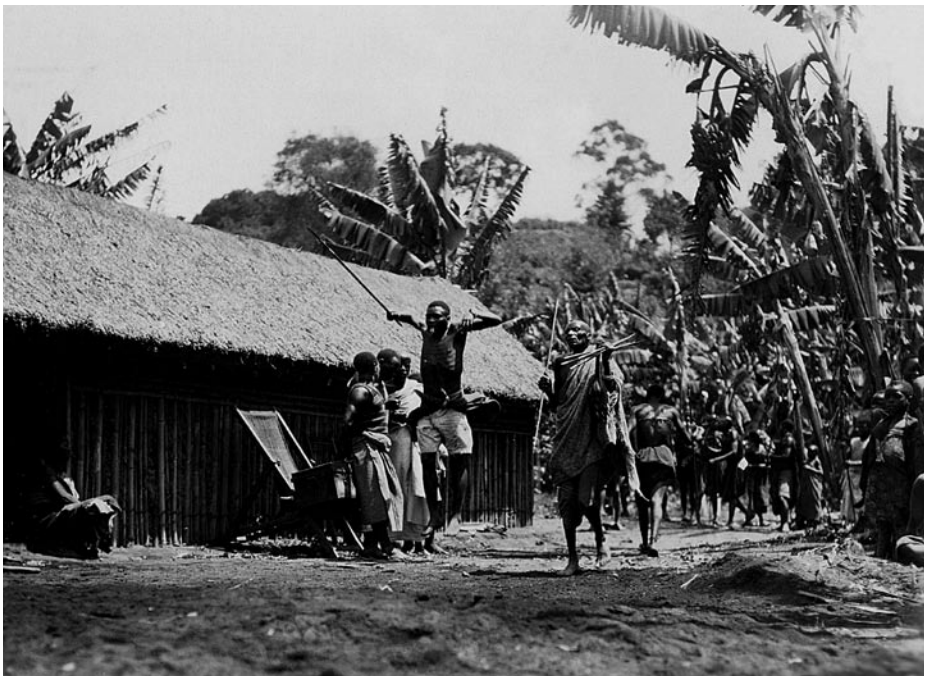
The women here live very much apart from the men, and naturally he spends



most of his time with the men, and I with the women. For example, while he has been studying the political system, the education of boys, views of pagans and Christians on morality etc., I have been working on birth ceremonies, pagan and Christian girl's initiation, women's taboos and avoidance customs.<sup>6</sup>

Because of her very early exposure to photography, her father's keen interest in the art and her own extensive experience of fieldwork photography in Pondoland, Monica had developed into a highly skilled fieldwork photographer by the mid-1930s. Her only surviving photograph of Godfrey in the field shows him sitting with a court. The village chief Mwaihijo is shown on his right, the rainmaker Kasitile on his left, the traditional healer Mwakionde behind to his left, while their language teacher and clerk, Leonard Mwaisomu, is sitting directly behind him wearing a topee.

From Isumba the Wilsons moved to Ilolo near Rungwe and later to Mwaya on the lake-shore plain. By now they had become fascinated by local kinship rituals. The second photograph shows a scene from one of thirty funeral ceremonies attended by the Wilsons. Here Monica captured the moment during the burial rite when young men, holding spears, would leap about stamping down the soft earth of a newly filled grave as they danced.

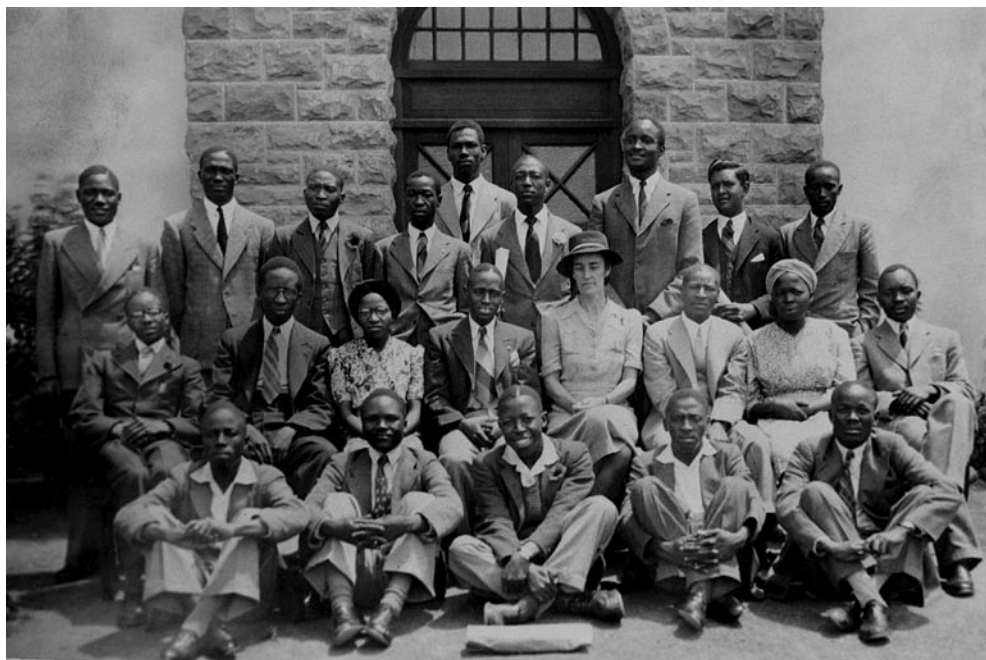


## Returning to One's Roots: Fort Hare, 1944–46

The Wilsons left western Tanganyika for Livingstone in Zambia, where Godfrey took up a prestigious post as the first director of the newly created Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. Their elder son Francis was born a year later, in May 1939, and Monica spent much of her two years in Livingstone keeping house and looking after the baby. When she did get the rare opportunity to return to the field, as on one occasion when she accompanied Godfrey to an African dance at Broken Hill in 1940, she 'felt like snorting like a war horse, it was so nice to be doing "fieldwork" again.'<sup>7</sup>

Monica could then have scarcely predicted the difficulties that lay ahead. In April 1941 Godfrey resigned his post as director under extreme political pressure from the settlers and mine-owners, who resented his pacifism and close friendships with Africans. He enlisted in the South African Army the following year, and died tragically in May 1944. Their second son, Timothy, was then just one year old.

At this time of trial Monica returned to her roots. Her now elderly parents were still living in Alice and she took up a post at Fort Hare College, where she had spent a year as a student in the mid-1920s before 'going up' to Cambridge. In the memoir that she weaved into her published edition of Z.K. Matthews's autobiography, she reflected on the status of the institution during the 1940s.



When I joined Z.K.'s Department as a lecturer [in 1944] I took over all the social anthropology, but in Fort Hare terms that was no full time job (as it was in other universities) and I was also Warden of Women ... To blacks Fort Hare was the symbol of intellectual and social achievement ... Those black Africans who first accepted education formed an elite throughout southern Africa. They knew one another, they intermarried even across language divisions, they served together on public bodies such as the African National Congress ... They were prepared to make great sacrifices to ensure the education of their children and Fort Hare was the focus of ambition.<sup>8</sup>

Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo had graduated from Fort Hare a few years before her arrival. During her final year at Fort Hare, she attended the graduation ceremony of Robert Sobukwe and Seretse Khama, recalling the event as an 'occasion of great gathering and rejoicing when relatives of graduates came from all over southern Africa'.

The images above show Monica in her dual roles at Fort Hare College between 1944 and 1946, as staff member and warden of the Women's Residence, Elukhanyisweni (the Place of Enlightenment). The other women who appear in this photograph of the House Committee of 1946 were Gaositwe Chiepe, Jeanette Sello, Violet Nikani, Beatrice Ntloko and Eunice Kuzwayo.



## Revisiting the Nyakyusa: South-western Tanganyika, 1955

In 1947 Monica took up a position as the Professor of Social Anthropology at Rhodes University in Grahamstown. She was the first woman to be appointed as a full professor at the university. During these years she and her friend and former colleague, Z.K. Matthews, continued their collaboration, now as joint co-ordinators of the anthropological section of the ambitious interdisciplinary Keiskamma Hoek Rural Survey, which was published in three volumes in 1952.

Monica's central preoccupation, though, was to revisit the material that she and Godfrey had collected among the Nyakyusa with a view to preparing it for publication. Her son Francis still vividly recalls this difficult but intensely productive time.

The fieldwork that she and my father collected in BuNyakyusa in Southern Tanganyika in the late thirties hadn't been written up. One little book had been written, which they had written while he was in the army [*Analysis of Social Change* (1945)], and they were sort of corresponding back and forth. But most of that material had not been written up, so when he died, she really took the decision, I think, to make it her life's work to make sure that all that stuff was published. So she was working extremely hard at Rhodes in Grahamstown during

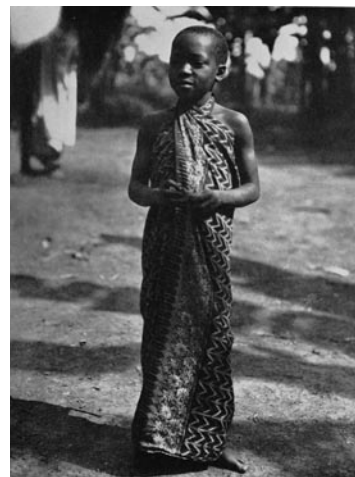


those late forties, early fifties, writing. It was obviously a way of dealing also with the pain of his death. She published three books on the Nyakyusa at that stage and was lecturing in social anthropology, and she knew Africa from the inside.<sup>9</sup>

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*Good Company: A Study of Nyakyusa Age-Villages* was the first in the trilogy, published in 1951 by Oxford University Press. It was on the back of this study that she was awarded the Rivers Medal for Fieldwork in 1952, the same year in which she took up the position as Professor and Head of Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Cape Town, which would remain her intellectual home for the next two decades. This was the first of a string of professional accolades.

In 1955 Monica spent several months at her former field-sites by way of preparing the second and third books in the series: *Rituals of Kinship among the Nyakyusa* (1957) and *Communal Rituals of the Nyakyusa* (1959). On this occasion she was accompanied by the sixteen-year-old Francis, who took this rare photograph of Monica recording interview notes with the headman of the Nyakyusa chief Mwanyila at Lupando village. Monica's fine photograph shows Mwanyila as a boy in 1936, while Francis's photograph (taken nineteen years later) shows him as a newly installed chief standing next to 'his trees'. The planting of trees was the culmination of an extended 'coming out' ritual, a rite of succession that happened but once a generation in each chiefly lineage.



## African Assistants in the Field: 1931–2, 1935–8, 1955

Monica's researches in her two primary regions of field research were heavily dependent upon the support and assistance of a cast of local Africans. During her seven months based at Ntibane in Eastern Pondoland in 1931, Mary Dreyer (née Soga) acted as her hostess, introducing her to a local network of women at the Dreyers' trading store, keeping her informed about neighbourhood rituals, and even accompanying her as guide and etiquette adviser on her forays into the field. Then, during her four months in Western Pondoland, Michael Geza from Bizana accompanied her as 'bodyguard', and also provided extensive information about the world of men and recorded hundreds of pages of information on Pondo beliefs, magic and witchcraft. Finally, it was in the politically charged context of East London in the wake of ICU strikes that Monica was most in need of assistance, and here Clements Kadalie and Walter Benson Rubusana gave their full support to her researches.

Monica's fieldwork in south-western Tanganyika (now Tanzania) was equally dependent on the contribution of Africans, though here she could rely on networks established by Godfrey before her arrival. In the preface to *Good Company* (1951), there is a fuller and more explicit acknowledgement of the role of African intermediaries than had been the case in her 1936 study on Pondoland.





We got a great deal of help from two Nyakyusa clerks, Leonard Mwaismo (now dead) and John Brown Mwaikumbo. Mwaismo laboured to teach us the language (for there is no published grammar or dictionary in Nyakyusa) as well as the conventions of the country, and he wrote many valuable texts. Mwaikumbo was also invaluable in writing texts, which gave both his own accounts of events and those of people he interviewed ... To mention others by name is perhaps invidious, but we cannot omit these: the great rainmaker, Kasitile, an old man and a conservative, who formally introduced Godfrey Wilson to his ancestors, and opened his heart on matters of ritual; Mwaikonde, famous as a doctor and maker of lions, a regular Silenus in his joviality and consumption of beer; Mwandes, an ancient chief recognized by the Nyakyusa themselves as their foremost authority of history, and Mwaipopo, the chief in whose country we lived in Selya; Mwaibuputa, Kakuju, Nsusa, and Mwaifula, village headman and conservatives; Fibombe, a Christian elder; Porokoto, the pagan (but sceptical) chief of Ilolo, and his sister Martha, a leading women in Rungwe congregation. Our house-boy Angombwike, and his wife Ndimbomi were also admirable informants.<sup>10</sup>

The photographs below were taken during Monica's 1955 field-trip by her son Francis. Her inscriptions on the back of the prints read 'Cook' and 'Teacher' (for left and right portraits respectively). The backdrop shows the old school building in which they lived.



## Leaving a Legacy: UCT and the Hogsback, 1960–82

During the 1960s Monica returned to her first love – South African history. She published journal articles on the early history of the Ciskei and Transkei, and four chapters in the landmark, multi-disciplinary *Oxford History of South Africa* (1969, 1971), which she co-edited with Leonard Thompson. In the preface, they wrote: ‘Our belief [is] that the central theme of South African history is interaction between peoples of diverse origins.’ It was a passion and theme that she would carry through to the end of her life, contributing a memoir to and editing Z.K. Matthews’s autobiography, *Freedom for My People* (1981).

Her primary contribution in her later years, though, was in firmly establishing Social Anthropology as a leading discipline in South African universities. We get a glimpse of this in the photograph of the second-year Social Anthropology class at UCT in 1960, with Monica third from left and Archie Mafeje, who would co-author with her *Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township* (1963), at the back, third from right. By 1962 students in the Department comprised 129 first years, 21 second years, 2 Honours and 2 doctoral students.

Nor was it just a matter of numbers. She was an exacting teacher and supervisor, who trained many anthropologists of the new generation, including Bengt Sundkler, Victor Turner, M.G. Marwick, Peter Rigby, Peter Carstens, Archie Mafeje, Martin West, Jean Comaroff, John Comaroff, and Pamela Reynolds, among others. Her for-



Monica Wilson occupies a place in anthropology that is virtually unique. She has never belonged to a particular school or faction or thrown herself into any of the theoretical battles that have alternately animated and then depressed so many of her colleagues. She had pursued her own way and it has been a very distinguished recognised in countries other than her own ... Her interests have been very wide. Apart from her fine monographs on the Pondo and the Nyakyusa/Ngonde peoples, she has made a contribution to urban studies by a survey of the black township of Langa outside of Cape Town, with the aid of Archie Mafeje (1963) and she played an important part in the rural survey of Keiskammahoek (1952). She is also known as an historian, particularly of southern and central Africa.<sup>11</sup>

Her string of international academic awards included Foreign Fellow of the American Anthropology Association (1961), Honorary Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute (1963), the Simon Biesheuvel Medal for Research (1965), Honorary Fellow of Girton College (1968), honorary doctorate from York University (1971), and Fellow of the British Academy (1980).

Monica Hunter Wilson died peacefully after a long battle with cancer on 26 October 1982.

- 1 Manuscripts and Archives Department, UCT Libraries, Monica and Godfrey Wilson Papers (BC880), Correspondence: B5.1, Monica Hunter to David Hunter, 19.3.1936 and 26.3.1936.
- 2 Monica Wilson interviewed by Francis and Lindy Wilson, Hunterstoun, January 1979.
- 3 Monica Wilson interviewed by Francis and Lindy Wilson, Hunterstoun, January 1979.
- 4 Monica Wilson interviewed by Francis and Lindy Wilson, Hunterstoun, July 1979.
- 5 Monica and Godfrey Wilson Papers, Correspondence: B5.1, Monica Hunter to David Hunter, 28.5.1936.
- 6 Monica and Godfrey Wilson Papers, D11 Correspondence with the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures: Monica Wilson, 'Quarterly Fieldwork Report', 16 June 1935.
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- 8 *Freedom for my People: The Autobiography of Z.K. Matthews: Southern Africa 1901 to 1968* (Cape Town and London: David Philip and Rex Collings. Edited and with a memoir by M.Wilson, 1981), 120.
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- 10 M.Wilson, *Good Company: A Study of Nyakyusa Age Villages* (London: Oxford University Press for the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1951), viii.
- 11 A.I.Richards, 'Monica Wilson: An Appreciation' in M.G.Whisson and M.West, eds., *Religion and Social Change in Southern Africa: Anthropological Essays in Honour of Monica Wilson* (Cape Town and London: David Philip and Rex Collings, 1975), 1.

## Monica Hunter Wilson: Awards and Publications

### SCHOLARSHIPS AND HONOURS

- 1931: Anthony Wilkin Scholarship, Cambridge
- 1933: Cairns Scholarship, Girton College, Cambridge
- 1934: William Wyse Scholarship, Cambridge
- 1935-8: International African Institute Research Fellow
- 1950: Carnegie Travel Grant (for U.S.A.)
- 1952: Rivers Memorial Medal (Royal Anthropological Institute)
- 1954: Fellow of the Royal Society of South Africa
- 1958: Fellow of the University of Cape Town
- 1954-5: Carnegie Grant for Research
- 1959: Frazer Lecture, Cambridge
- 1961: Foreign Fellow of the American Anthropology Association
- 1963: Honorary Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute
- 1963: Visiting Professor, University of California, Los Angeles
- 1965: Simon Biesheuvel Medal for Research
- 1968: Honorary Fellow of Girton College, Cambridge
- 1969: The Scott Holland Lectures, Cambridge
- 1969: Corresponding Member, School of Oriental and African Studies
- 1970: Honorary D.Litt., Rhodes University
- 1971: Honorary Doctorate, York University
- 1971-2: Fellow, Centre for Advanced Studies in the Behavioural Sciences, Palo Alto
- 1975: Helen Cam Research Fellow, Girton College, Cambridge
- 1980: Fellow of the British Royal Academy

### PUBLICATIONS

- 1932: Monica Hunter, 'Results of Culture Contact on the Pondo and Xosa Family', *South African Journal of Science*, vol. 29, 681-6
- 1933a: Monica Hunter, 'The Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Status of Pondo Women', *Africa*, vol. 6(3), 259-276
- 1933b: Monica Hunter, 'Methods of Study of Culture Contact', *Africa*, vol. 7(3), 335-350
- 1936: Monica Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa* (London: Oxford University Press for the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures), 582 pp., 28 plates
- 1937a: Monica Hunter, 'The Bantu on European-owned Farms' in I. Schapera, ed., *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: George Routledge), 389-404
- 1937b: Monica Hunter, 'An African Christian Morality', vol. 10, 265-291
- 1939: Godfrey Wilson and Monica Hunter, *The Study of African Society* (The

- Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, no. 2), 1-21
- 1945: Godfrey Wilson and Monica Hunter, *The Analysis of Social Change based on Observations in Central Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 177 pp.
- 1948: Monica Wilson, *Some Possibilities and Limitations of Anthropological Research* (Inaugural Lecture delivered at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, 1948), 20 pp.
- 1949: Monica Wilson, 'Nyakyusa Age Villages', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 79, 21-25
- 1950: Monica Wilson, 'Nyakyusa Kinship' in A.R.Radcliffe-Brown and D.Forde, eds., *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage* (London: Oxford University Press for the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures), 111-139
- 1951: Monica Wilson, *Good Company: A Study of Nyakyusa Age Villages* (London: Oxford University Press for the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1951), 278 pp., 16 plates
- 1952a: Monica Wilson, Selma Kaplan, Theresa Maki and Edith M.Walton, *Keiskammahoek Rural Survey, vol. 3 Social Structure* (Pietermaritzburg: Schuter and Shooter, 1952), 222 pp.
- 1952b: M.E.Elton Mills and Monica Wilson, *Keiskammahoek Rural Survey, vol. 4 Land Tenure* (Pietermaritzburg: Schuter and Shooter, 1952), 154 pp.
- 1954: Monica Wilson, 'Nyakyusa Ritual and Symbolism', *American Anthropologist*, vol. 56, 228-41
- 1955: Monica Wilson, 'Development in Anthropology', *Race Relations Journal: Special Issue: Homage to Winifred Hoernlé*, vol. 22(4), 6-11
- 1956a: Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship among the Nyakyusa* (London: Oxford University Press for the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures), 278 pp., 8 plates
- 1956b: Monica Wilson, 'An Anthropologist's View of the Tomlinson Report', *Race Relations Journal*, vol. 23 (2&3), 12-14
- 1956c: Monica Wilson, 'An Urban Community (East London)' in *Social Implications of Industrialisation and Urbanisation in Africa South of the Sahara* (Paris: UNESCO), 191-99
- 1957: Monica Wilson, 'Joking Relationships in Central Africa', *Man*, vol. 57, 111-2
- 1958: Monica Wilson, *Peoples of the Nyasa-Tanganyika Corridor* (Cape Town: Communications from the School of African Studies, University of Cape Town No. 29), 75 pp.
- 1959a: Monica Wilson, *Communal Rituals of the Nyakyusa* (London: Oxford University Press for the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures), 228 pp., 13 plates
- 1959b: Monica Wilson, *Divine Kings and the 'Breath of Men'* (The Frazer Lecture. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 27 pp.
- 1959c: Monica Wilson, 'The Early History of the Transkei and Ciskei', *African Studies*, vol. 18, 167-78
- 1960: Monica Wilson, 'Myths of Precedence' in A.Dubb, ed., *Myth in Modern*

- Africa* (Grahamstown: Rhodes University Institute of Social and Economic Research), 1-7
- 1961: Monica Wilson, 'South Africa', *UNESCO International Social Science Journal*, vol. 13, 225-44
- 1962: Monica Wilson, 'The Principle of Maintaining the Reserve for the African', *Race Relations Journal*, vol. 29, 3-9
- 1963a: Monica Wilson and Archie Mafeje, *Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1963), 183 pp., 12 plates
- 1963b: Monica Wilson, 'Effects on Xhosa and Nyakyusa of Scarcity of Land' in D.Biebuyck, ed., *African Agrarian Systems* (London: Oxford University Press for the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures), 374-88
- 1964a: Monica Wilson, 'Traditional Art among the Nyakyusa', *South African Archaeological Bulletin*, vol. 19, 57-63
- 1964b: Monica Wilson, 'The Coherence of Groups' in J.F.Holleman et al, *Problems of Transition* (Durban: University of Natal), 1-20
- 1964c: Monica Wilson, *Let No Man Put Asunder* (Cape Town: Brian MacKenzie), 7 pp.
- 1966: Monica Wilson, 'Urban Revolution in South Africa' in E.de Vries, ed., *Man in Community* (New York: Association Press)
- 1967: Monica Wilson, 'Nyakyusa Age-Villages' in R.Cohen and J.Middleton, eds., *Comparative Political Systems* (New York: Natural History Press), 217-27
- 1968a: Monica Wilson, 'Ritual in Local Politics' in M.J.Swartz, ed., *Local-Level Politics: Social and Cultural Perspectives* (Chicago: Aldine), 191-98
- 1968b: Monica Wilson, 'Z.K.Matthews: A Man for Reconciliation', *South African Outlook*, July 1968, 111, 114
- 1969a: Monica Wilson, 'Co-operation and Conflict: The Eastern Frontier'; 'The Hunters and the Herders'; 'The Nguni People'; 'The Sotho, Venda, and Tsonga' [four chapters] in Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson, eds., *The Oxford History of South Africa* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, vol. 1)
- 1969b: Monica Wilson, 'Changes in Social Structure in Southern Africa: The Relevance of Kinship Studies to the Historian' in L.Thompson, ed., *African Societies in Southern Africa* (London: Heineman)
- 1969c: Monica Wilson, 'The Changing Society' in P.Beyerhaus and C.F.Hallencreutz, eds., *The Church Crossing Frontiers: Essays on the Nature of Mission in Honour of Bengt Sundkler*, 83-89
- 1969d: Godfrey Wilson and Monica Wilson, 'Scale' in P.Bohannan, ed., *Beyond the Frontier: Social Process and Cultural Change* (New York: Natural History Press, 1969), 239-54
- 1970a: Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson, eds., *The Oxford History of South Africa* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, vol. 2)
- 1970b: Monica Wilson, *The Thousand Years Before Van Riebeeck* (Raymond Dart Lecture. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand Press)
- 1971a: Monica Wilson, *Religion and the Transformation of Society: A Study of Social Change in Africa* (The Scott Holland Lectures. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 165 pp.

- 32      1971b: Monica Wilson, 'Reflections on the Early History of North Malawi' in B.Pachai, ed., *The Early History of Malawi* (London: Longman Group Limited), 136-47
- 1971c: Monica Wilson, *Mhlakaza* (Paris: Jeune Afrique, 1971)
- 1972a: Monica Wilson, 'The Wedding Cakes: A Study of Ritual Change' in J.S.La Fontaine, ed., *The Interpretation of Ritual: Essays in Honour of A.I.Richards* (London: Tavistock Publications), 187-201
- 1972b: Monica Wilson, *The Interpreters* (Grahamstown: The 1820 Settlers National Monument Foundation), 26 pp.
- 1973: Monica Wilson, 'Lovedale: Instrument of Peace' in F.Wilson and D.Perrot, *Outlook on A Century: South Africa, 1870-1970* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press), 4-11
- 1974: Monica Wilson, *The Changing Status of African Women* (Fifth Bertha Solomon Memorial Lecture. Cape Town: National Council of Women of South Africa), 12 pp.
- 1975a: Monica Wilson, 'The Future of Christian Churches in South Africa', *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, vol. 12, 7-15
- 1975b: '... So Truth be in the Field ...' (The Alfred and Winifred Hoernlé Memorial Lecture. Pietermaritzburg: The Natal Witness Pty Ltd, 1975), 26 pp.
- 1977a: Monica Wilson, *For Men and Elders: Changes in the Relations of Generations and between Men and Women among the Nyakyusa-Ngonde People, 1875-1971* (London: International African Institute), 209 pp.
- 1977b: Monica Wilson, 'The First Three Years, 1938-1941', *African Social Research*, vol. 24, 279-83
- 1979: Monica Wilson, 'Strangers in Africa: Reflections on Nyakyusa, Nguni and Sotho Evidence' in W.A.Shack and E.P.Skinner, eds., *Strangers in African Societies* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press), 51-66
- 1981: *Freedom for my People: The Autobiography of Z.K. Matthews: Southern Africa 1901 to 1968* (Cape Town and London: David Philip and Rex Collings. Edited and with a memoir by M.Wilson)



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## **About the Author:**

Andrew Bank is an Associate Professor of History at the University of the Western Cape. He is currently working on the history of anthropology in southern Africa and is also the current editor-in-chief of *Kronos: Journal of Cape History*. He is the author of three books, the most recent of which is entitled: *Bushmen in a Victorian World: The Remarkable Story of the Bleek-Lloyd Collection of Bushman Folklore*. 2007 (Cape Town: Double Storey).