

**The Rolling Grain Basket: Stories of migration, fragmentation and unity amongst the amaHlubi, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa**

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The amaHlubi form part of the Southern Nguni who migrated into the eastern seaboard of South Africa three centuries ago. Apart from being one of the largest clan groups in the region, and subsequently subsumed into the general ethnic grouping of Zulu, they are one of the oldest and largest clan groups in the region, and have specific practises and rituals which cement their identity.

This paper will begin by discussing their arrival in the area, as part of a rolling grain basket or isilulu, which scattered the progenitors far and wide as it travelled along. It will then focus on the event of the Langalibalele migration into the Colony of Natal in the 1840s to seek shelter from Zulu nationalisation, only to be unseated some 25 years later as a result of an uprising against the Colonial Government by Langalibalele: an event which was internationally recognised and which affected Colonial native policy. It will then collect specific traditional practises associated with royalty and commoners which have perpetuated after this fragmentation event, allowing for a recognition of commonality of identity, recognised or not, amongst a large section of the diaspora. This paper will conclude with comments on the current status of the amaHlubi as a group with a common history, which supplemented with common rituals and practises, cements an identity in a post-apartheid South Africa.