

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910465704403321
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Titolo	The Scots in South Africa [[electronic resource]] : ethnicity, identity, gender and race, 1772-1914 // John M. MacKenzie with Nigel R. Dalziel
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Manchester, : Manchester University Press, 2007
ISBN	1-78170-274-8 1-84779-446-7
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (297 p.)
Collana	Studies in imperialism
Altri autori (Persone)	DalzielNigel R
Disciplina	968.0049163
Soggetti	Scots - South Africa - History Electronic books.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Copyright; CONTENTS; FOREWORD; ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS; LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS; 1. Introduction: imperialism and identities; 2. The Scots presence at the Cape; 3. Radicals, evangelicals, the Scottish Enlightenment and Cape Colonial autocracy; 4. Scots missions and the frontier; 5. Continuing migration to Natal, the Cape and the Transvaal; 6. Professionals: the Church and education; 7. The professionals: the environment,medicine, business and radicals; 8. Maintaining Scots identity; 9. Conclusion; INDEX
Sommario/riassunto	The description of South Africa as a 'rainbow nation' has always been taken to embrace the black, brown and white peoples who constitute its population. But each of these groups can be sub-divided and in the white case, the Scots have made one of the most distinctive contributions to the country's history. The Scots, as in North America and Australasia, constituted an important element in the patterns of White settlement. They were already present in the area of Dutch East India Company rule and, after the first British occupation of the Cape in 1795, their numbers rose dramatically. They were