

https://dspace.org/

So who was Elias Kuzwayo? Nationalism, identity and the picaresque in Natal, c.1920 - 1948

La Hausse, P.

1990-02-06T09:03:37Z
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/7892

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG
HISTORY WORKSHOP



STRUCTURE AND EXPERIENCE IN THE MAKING OF APARTHEID

6 - 10 February 1990

AUTHOR: Paul la Hausse

TITLE: So who was Elias Kuzwayo ? Nationalism, Identity and the Picaresque in Natal, c. 1920 - 1948

(Working Paper)

AFRICANA LIBRARY

So who was Elias Kuzwayo? Nationalism, Identity and the Picaresque in Natal, c.1920-1948.

"Fighting is no longer carried on with assegai, but with money" (John Dube speaking at a rural meeting in Natal, 1912).

"These people didn't have capital they had brains to catch the poor ones."(C. Khumalo speaking of Zulu political activists in post-1930 Durban).

"The clerk embezzled our money. Do you know this clerk? He embezzled our money". (Lyrics of an *ndhlamu* song recorded in Durban during the 1940s).[1]

I: The Pilgrim's Progress.

If nothing else Elias R.G. Kuzwayo possessed a febrile, desperate imagination and a shrewd grasp of historical process. Although the details of his early life remain, somehow appropriately, obscure, it is likely that he was born in the late nineteenth century in one of the *amakholwa* communities around Pietermaritzburg, possibly in New Scotland or Georgedale.[2] Certainly, by 1918 he was based in the Natal midlands town, and more particularly in the Burger Street Gaol where between 1918 and 1926 he spent at least five years of his life. During these years he was thrice convicted of house breaking and theft. In 1926, having completed a sentence for assaulting policemen he emerged from gaol into a rapidly changing world. The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union had begun to capture the imagination of urban and rural blacks in Natal. By 1927 Elias Kuzwayo was receiving qualitatively different attention from the local police, this time from the Criminal Investigation Department. They opened a file on him and labelled it 'Native Agitator No. 221', for Kuzwayo had become General Secretary of the Pietermaritzburg Branch of the ICU. We can only speculate which of Kuzwayo's qualities recommended him for the office of General Secretary, although he did possess a reputation as a fiery public speaker.

Compared to ICU Branches in Durban and Pietermaritzburg's rural hinterland, the Union Branch in Natal's second largest town seems to have been a rather ramshackle affair. Rent by internal conflict from the start and subject to periodic invasions from uniformed ICU militias sent from

---

[1] [*Note*: Due to various constraints the archival sources for this working paper have been unevenly referenced]
These quotations derive respectively from the following sources: Natal Archives (NA), Chief Native Commissioner (CNC), 62, 338/1912; Interview with C. Khumalo and A. Tshabalala, by P. la Hausse, Durban, 28 Aug., 1986; and H. Tracey, *"Lalela Zulu"* (Johannesburg, 1948), p.36.

[2] The following account of Kuzwayo's life has been gleaned from NA, CNC/PMB, 92, 64/9, N1/14/3(3); Central Archives Depot (CAD), Native Affairs Department (NTS), 7215, 58/326; CAD, NTS, 9031, 1/376, Part III; and NTS, 9032, 2/376, Part I.

Durban to wrest control from local union activists, the Pietermaritzburg Branch struggled to register any real gains. Where the ICU Branch and Kuzwayo in particular, did make some progress, however, was in the establishment of a dancehall, which attracted workers to performances ranging from ragtime to dances set to the percussive rhythms beaten on the seats of Globe chairs.[3] Yet Kuzwayo's rise to local prominence proved short-lived. Sometime in 1927 he was dismissed from office for alleged peculation. His immediate response was to establish the South African Economic Union, a local variant of the ICU which proved similarly shortlived. Thrown onto his own resources Kuzwayo left Pietermaritzburg. In rapid succession he gained and lost a job as a school teacher in Muden ('as his character was not considered above reproach') and then briefly acted as an agent for the Lazarus Native Labour Agency.

By the end of 1928 he had returned to Pietermaritzburg and the possibilities opened up by self-employment. At the end of that year, together with a number of other ex-ICU activists reportedly "of the quiet type", he established the Vuk Africa Union. Kuzwayo claimed that the Union was "purely a Social Club, mainly for Dancing" which had "no connection with any political affairs" or "seditious speeches". Its elaborate Constitution and Rules (published and sold for 1s), however, outlined a somewhat more ambitious project. The Vuk Africa Union sought the "betterment of conditions pertaining to the following African Workers: Teachers, Clerks, Domestic and Factory Workers and Industrial and General Workers", "irrespective of sex". Besides its aim to promote and protect the interests and wages of all its paid up members, Kuzwayo hoped to provide sick, unemployment, old age and death benefits and publish literature that might "be deemed necessary for the spiritual and material welfare of members". But the Constitution devoted most attention to the proposed finances and management of the VAU. It empowered an Executive Committee "to carry on such trades as may be deemed necessary to advance the interests of the Union" and elaborated upon the establishment of a scheme to allow shareholding in the Union.

It comes as little surprise to discover that beyond its Constitution that the Vuk Afrika Union enjoyed an extremely brief existence. Kuzwayo, by contrast, turned his mind to other projects. Sometime during 1930 he re-invented himself as Dr E.R.G. Kuzwayo (D.Th.). Struggling to find a language appropriate to his new found position as Superintendent of the Universal National Christian Union, he wrote to the Chief Native Commissioner of Natal:

> I have the honour to request that I may be granted a permission of holding meetings in the Locations as I have been appointed an organiser and the Lecturer in Agricultural subjects among our people who are residing at the Isolated areas. I would also beg to inform you that the Universal National Christian Union have nothing to do with the Industrial and the politically disputes ... we are trying our best to uplift our people. I have also been instructed by the Executive Council to get in touch with prominent teachers so as to propagate the policy of our Society ... I will try my best to educate the natives how to plough their fields in modern methods

---

[3] Interview with Q. Gumede by P. la Hausse and M. Maponya, Umlazi, 24 June 1989.

as I am holding the first class Diploma in Agriculture. I will call the meetings of Chiefs and their men to give them proper training.

The refusal of officialdom to countenance this request elicited a less than diplomatic response from Kuzwayo: "you will remember", he wrote,

> that Rev'd B. Huss of St Francis T. College[4] had been allowed to enter various Native Locations for the same purpose and I am awfully surprised to find out that because our organisation is composed of Black men is to be prejudiced even by the Department of Justice ... I shall carry on with our policy, for it is not our intention to allow the present Government to interfere with our free liberties.

By 1932 Kuzwayo, now based at Pinetown and ignoring the official prohibition on his activities, claimed to be addressing "mass-meetings" in Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Ladysmith "on spiritual and Religious matters".

Yet, possibly sensing the imminent failure of this scheme, by 1931 Kuzwayo had already begun to lay the groundwork for his next enterprise. As a "qualified Hospital Orderly having successfully passed an examination conducted by the Transvaal Medical Officers' Association and also passed the 'First Aid' of the South African Red Cross Society" he applied for a licence to sell "all Native medicines and herbs". Ever sensitive to the world of the white colonizer, Kuzwayo's stated intention was to also build a "dressing house" in which patients could be housed and if necessary examined by a "European Doctor or any qualified medical practitioner". In the face of official delay in responding to his request Kuzwayo enquired whether it "would mean a crime when doing little job helping my people while waiting for results *re*-application?" In Kuzwayo's case it did. For between 1932 and 1938 he appears to have gathered at least five further criminal convictions including one in 1937 for contravening Section 34(a) of Act No. 13 of 1928, in other words practicing as a unlicenced herbalist.

As always however, Kuzwayo was irrepressible. He cobbled together an alias from his Christian names, rapidly acquired a couple of university degrees and in 1938 as Dr E.R. Gumede B.A., B.Sc, announced the formation of the Bantu Medical Union of South Africa with temporary headquarters in Mooi River. According to Kuzwayo the aim of the Bantu Medical Union was to preserve "the rights of the Native Medicine men in terms of proclamation 168 Section 119 of Natal Native Code as amended in 1932". Quite simply Kuzwayo intended to open branches throughout the Province and enrol members (adults 2/6, children 1/6) and provide subscribers with free medicines upon production of membership cards to the Union's "District Qualified and Registered Nurse". In correspondence to the Native Affairs and Health Departments (in which the CNC was addressed as "the Supreme Ruler" and Health officials as "Right Reverend Doctors") Kuzwayo was again at pains to distance his activities from black

---

[4] For the ideas of Huss and his formative influence on the Natal Co-operative movement see Lydia Brouckaert, '"Better Homes, Better Fields Better Hearts": The Catholic African Union, 1927-1939', BA Hons. diss., University of the Witwatersrand, 1985.

oppositional politics. The Bantu Medical Union, he stated, was "non-political" and, just in case this point was subject to ambiguous interpretation, he denied that it had any "connection with the Communist Party or any other Native organization" which could "create ill-feeling between Black and Whites". It seems likely with official investigations into the new organisation underway and the threat of police action looming, Kuzwayo, as he had done so many times before, simply disappeared.

In a relatively short period between 1927 and 1940 Kuzwayo, in his peculiarly energetic and disastrous way, sought to carve a social and economic niche for himself through a range of positions of cultural, political and economic brokerage which even the opportunistic AWG Champion would have been hard-pressed to match.[5] The occupations at which he tried his hand reads like a kind of job prospectus for a member of Natal's fractured African elite in the immediate pre-apartheid period: trade union activist, cultural entrepreneur, co-operative society spokesman, teacher, improving agricultural demonstrator, independent churchman, medical practitioner, labour agent and petty capitalist - occupations which, in different ways represented attempts to stay out of prison - at least - but which, in most cases, led him inexorably back to the confines of South Africa's penal system.

The historical records with which this brief account of a period in the life of Elias Kuzwayo has been constructed also record several indirect contemporary judgements of his curious career and activities. In 1938 the Native Commissioner of Estcourt on investigating the Bantu Medical Union claimed that 'it has no membership and that it is a bogus affair originated by the crook, E.R. Gumede'. It seems apposite that Natal political boss and entrepreneur A.W.G. Champion, who shared more in common with Kuzwayo than he probably would have been prepared to admit, should have offered another judgement of the man. According to Champion, Kuzwayo was "an unreliable Native having spent much time in Gaol". At one level the peripatetic career of E.R.G. Kuzwayo presents us with a remarkable study in failure - a series of mostly fraudulent projects, imaginative in their design and often both laughable and pathetic in their outcome. Yet at another level, Kuzwayo's life holds a remarkable mirror up to his times and the aspirations of members of Natal's fractured African middle-classes.

II: The Problem.

This brief paper represents an attempt to grasp the significance and meaning of Kuzwayo's life and suggest how it might be made to speak to wider historical processes. Recent studies have begun to draw attention to social banditry in Africa and to critically reflect on the utility of largely European derived notions of "heroic criminality". Ralph Austen in largely rejecting the validity of Hobsbawm's ideas on social banditry in the African context constructs an alternative typology of African

---

[5] After 1918, apart from more or less continual involvement in trade union and political organisation, Champion's various occupations and enterprises included: clerk, policeman, butcher, general shopkeeper, co-operative society founder, manager of a shoe-reparing business, land speculator, mail-order herbalist and farmer.

"heroic criminality" based on the evolution of the state. One category of "heroic criminal" which he sees as present throughout colonial Africa is that of the *picaro* - "the confidence man living by his wits rather than by violence".[6] By contrast, Shula Marks in her fascinating discussion of the career of Cakijana, one of the key figures in the Natal Bambatha rebellion of 1906, tantalisingly invokes the trickster of Zulu folklore to explain not only the moral ambiguities of Cakijana himself, but also the extent to which his actions might have resonated with popular consciousness.[7] While the ideas contained in these two studies await fuller development, it seems to me perhaps because of the questions which my own research has been generating, that both writers have touched on something important.[8] A central aspect of the discussion which follows, then, is to elaborate upon these ideas and in particular, attempt to extend Austen's suggestive discussion of the picaro.

---

[6] See 'Social bandits and other heroic criminals: Western models of resistance and their relevance for Africa', in D. Crummey, (ed.), *Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa* (London, 1986), pp.98-101. In keeping with Hobsbawm's original project, however, Austen continues to see positive alternatives to dominant values in criminality.

[7] Shula Marks, 'Class, ideology and the Bambatha rebellion', in Crummey, (ed.), *Banditry, Rebellion and Scial Protest*, p.364.

[8] It seems appropriate to briefly outline how, in my own case, the confluence of relatively discrete research interests has drawn me to the idea of the picaresque. Charles Khumalo, whose words are quoted at the beginning of this paper, first alerted me to some of the moral ambiguities within African urban popular culture. The octegenarian Khumalo, who died two years ago, had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the various forms of trickery employed by African confidence men in Durban after the 1930s. It seemed significant that Khumalo also possessed a keen sense of the situational nature of individual and ethnic identity. In a wonderfully humourous narrative which could be entitled "How I became a Zulu" Khumalo, originally of Southern Rhodesian Ndebele origin, described the elaborate process whereby he gained a Zulu identity in order to insert himself more securely in Natal's regional labour market. Apart from recording folktales which reflected a synthesis of Christian parables and what seemed to be Zulu trickster motifs, (see interview with J. Cele, 5 Jan. 1989) I also began to discover fairly obscure political figures (such as Kuzwayo) the extremes of whose lives in retrospect only seem describable in terms of the picaresque. From a rather different angle my present concerns have also derived from my study of amalaita gangs in pre-1936 Durban (see '"The Cows of Nongoloza": Youth, Crime and Amalaita Gangs in Durban, 1900-1936', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 16, 1, 1990 - *forthcoming*) which drew me to the anthropology of Victor Turner and in particular his discussion of "liminality" within the context of initition rites (See V. Turner *The Forest of Symbols*, Ithaca and London, 1972), and thereafter, to studies of the picaro and trickster many of which reflect Turners' influence.

The tale of the trickster, picaro or rogue "is one of the oldest and most persistent cultural patterns of negation and one of the oldest narrative forms". As a literary genre the picaresque describes episodic open-ended narratives in which lower-class protaganists sustain themselves by means of cleverness, cunning and adaptability during an extended journey through space, time and variously corrupt social milieux. The picaro lives on the boundaries between worlds, which he must constantly cross. In an inhospitable world he is initially the victim of deception. But through time, he becomes the deceiver and thereafter sets out to "live by his wits" in a peripatetic career of dishonesty. The picaro is usually based in a hierarchical urban social order which allows mobility for "those who can practice the proper duplicity". He is also master of the mask - his persona is subject to constant Protean changes and is thus deprived of its intrinsic essence. Although he has relatively obscure social origins, in principle he is upwardly mobile - a *parvenu* in the making. Although he has few redeeming social qualities (indeed, he is largely anti-social) his mock-epic career of cunning and petty crime serves to expose the corruption of the society he struggles against, provoking laughter and not moral outrage.[9]

Austen has suggested that "the picaro is present throught colonial Africa, although not often seen there in his own terms and thus made a hero". Indeed, at least in African literature, the picaro-trickster[10] does not inspire laughter. Rather, he appears "as a betrayer, the 'fountain pen' agent of truly dangerous forces", although in the South African case one can find the picaresque used not only "as a practical weapon to survive in this society, but also as a device for retaining spiritual freedom while holding absolutely no illusions about the grim surrounding reality".[11] This paper tentatively suggests that the idea of the picaresque when provided with sufficient historical content, may help to illuminate some of the central features of the career of Elias Kuzwayo and serve to identify other historical figures like him. It also suggests that the picaresque elaboration of moral ambiguity embodied in the life of Kuzwayo might be able to alert us to the emergence of certain styles of African political and social leadership as well as suggest particular forms of collaboration and resistance available to sections of colonised African society in Natal. In particular, it might be able to throw some light on certain

---

[9] This is a ruthlessly compressed account based chiefly on Austen, 'Social and other heroic criminals'; R. Bjornson, *The Picaresque Hero In European Fiction* (Wisconsin, 1977); and B. Babcock-Abrahams, '"A Tolerated Margin of Mess": The Trickster and His Tales Reconsidered', *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, XI, 1975. For a discussion of the emergence of the genre in sixteenth century Spain see A.A. Parker, *Literature and the Delinquent* (Edinburgh, 1967).

[10] Of course the picaro is related closely to the archetypal myth of the trickster - the at once deeply anti-social and richly creative figure widely celebrated in folklore. Following Babcock-Abrahams I have chosen to use the term picaresque rather than trickster.

[11] Austen refers to Dugmore Boetie's *Familiarity Is the Kingdom of the Lost*. I would suggest that an even more fascinating example of this can be found in the recent autobiography of Godfrey Moloi, *My Life* (Johannesburg, 1987).

kinds of collaboration engaged in by Zulu intellectuals with the apartheid state after 1948.

III: Building the Nation: Economic Nationalism and Zulu Ethnic Identity.

There can be little question that the economic identification of the African "middle classes", at least in the pre-apartheid period, yields a small and fractured social grouping. At the same time however, it seems clear that the complex and contradictory penetration of the mental and cultural categories of the colonizer went deeper than head counts on the basis of Congress leadership or lists of successful African entrepreneurs, professionals and capitalist farmers might suggest. While a number of pioneering historical studies have drawn out in particularly vivid ways the complex forms of ideology and politics which the contradictory class location of the African middle classes generated,[12] we still lack a fuller grasp of the changing cultural world or perhaps more appropriately, the cultural worlds which these individuals inhabited, fashioned and moved between.

Indeed, if Natal ANC Youth Leaguer, Jordan Ngubane called the prominent African *kholwa* landowners in Natal "the custodians of Graeco-Romano-Hebraic morality amongst the Zulus"[13] there were a range of indigeneous social categories which describe in cultural terms processes of social differentiation in the region. *Amarespectables*, "Black Englishmen", *izemtiti* (those who had gained exemption), *izifundiswa* (the educated in general) and even *amabhuka* (traitors), were all terms to describe groups of individuals who embraced the new world of the colonizer in a similar, but not precisely the same, way. Like those interstitial groups of *amagxagxa* and *abaqhafi* (neither Christian nor traditionalist) or *amabhinca* (traditionalists) and *uquqaba olungafundile* (the uneducated masses), these terms define forms of cultural identity which cannot simply be reduced to class.

In a situation where the literature has described sections of the "middling strata" variously as "petty bourgeois", "aspirant petty bourgeois", "lower middle class" and "upper working class" it is perhaps little wonder that, in the case of Marks, a metaphor ("the mask") and the notion of moral ambiguity should come to bear such heavy explanatory freight in her illuminating discussion of class and nationalism in Natal.[14] In Natal the deep "class instincts" of the *kholwa* were simultaneously attached, but in a different ways at different times, to both "traditionalist" and pro-

---

[12] See, for example, H. Bradford's remarkable *A Taste of Freedom: The ICU in Rural South Africa, 1924-1930* (Johannesburg, 1987); and P. Bonner, 'The Transvaal Native Congress 1917-1920: The radicalisation of the black petty bourgeoisie on the Rand', in S. Marks and R. Rathbone, (eds.), *Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa* (London, 1982).

[13] J. Ngubane, unpublished autobiography, p.144.

[14] S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth Century Natal* (Johannesburg, 1986).

gressive Christian (capitalist) forms of identity. Thus the way in which the intellectuals of the Zulu Society came to join "respectability" and ethnic consciousness during the 1930s[15] represented one particular historical resolution of these cultural ambiguities which were themselves related to changing structural economic contradictions. At the risk of overstating this contention it might be said that the *kholwa* in Natal - the small armies of landowners, clergymen, lawyers, clerks, messengers, interpreters, teachers, traders and artisans - were born into two worlds. As "civilised", "progressive" and, most importantly, "respectable" members of colonial society who had left the "backward" cultural and social organistion of pre-capitalist Zulu society behind them, the *kholwa* faithfully believed in the "promise of Queen Victoria".

Yet what remains to be adequately explored by historians is how, in the face of broken promises and shattered economic expectation, these people not only sought to create an identity for themselves which took account of the viscissitudes of modernity, but also desperately attempted to secure cultural assurance of a resolution of their contradictory position within the colonial political economy. This process came to rely on the elaboration of forms of economic self-organisation which were increasingly closely bound up with Zulu ethnic identity.

In Natal the beginnings of a process which was to produce the "Gospel of Self-Help" and the Co-operative Society movement in the 1930s and 1940s, can be traced back to the 1890s. Schemes such as that of Joseph Booth which sought to create "a semi-benevolent joint stock company for the commercial occupation of Africa", captured the imagination of Natal's African elite.[16] The rapid spread of independent African churches after 1898, together with the proliferation of itinerant preachers roaming Natal before and after the Bambatha rebellion proclaiming the message of "Africa for the Africans", suggested the outlines of subsequent forms of economic nationalism.[17] After 1912 many of the ideas underlying these initiatives were elaborated within the SANNC. In Natal itself the Congress called for "rights equal to those enjoyed by all other free-born men, of free land purchase, of unrestricted trading facilities, of higher education, and, generally speaking, of making themselves prosperous and profitable citizens."[18] Although the Congress movement in Natal was closely linked to members of the more prosperous rural Christian elite for whom the land question was central, it never lost sight of the other parts of its political hinterland: court interpreters, clerks, humble

---

[15] S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness', in L. Vail, (ed.), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (London, 1989), p. 224. (NB profound implications of this, ii rests on notion of elaboration of ethnicity through time NB)

[16] See *The Christian Express*, 1 October 1903.

[17] CAD, NTS, 1433, 49/214, Notes on Statement submitted by leaders, n.d.; and NA, SNA, 453, 4209/09, SNA to Magistrate, Estcourt, 28 Feb. 1910.

[18] NA, CNC 62, 338/1912, Statement of Native Detective Mpohlo, Mpofana, 20 April 1912.

artisans, messengers and petty traders whose experiences of economic marginality in a racially oppressive society were cause for frequent complaint in petitions.

By the late 1910s these fairly inchoate ideas of self-help and co-operation found much clearer defintion in numerous co-operative societies, both in Natal and on the Rand, which comprised networks of the Zulu elite. The Zulu National Association, for example, predates the first Inkatha of 1921 by several years and was probably the first elite ethnic association of its kind to be formed. While the aim of the Association was to "promote a sentiment of a co-operative nationality" and "grant assistance to any member in case of any unavoidable adversity, such as taking or defending actions at law, burials, claiming compensation and paying debts" it also sought:

> To establish and conduct clubs, stores for dealing in all classes of commodities, hotels, retaurants and Native eating houses and many other business whatsoever on ordinary business lines for members and their dependents only[19]

Needless to say it comprised a number of prominent Zulu landowners, entrepreneurs and political figures, including AWG Champion. Not unlike the Abantu General Agency and AmaZulu Trading Company, the prime purpose of the United Native National Association of Commerce and Industry was "to teach our brothers the value of business, to encourage our people to support their own enterprises". The appeal to prospective shareholders ran: "How long have we placed ourselves under slavery, working for other nations, which come from across the seas".[20]

In Natal during the course of the 1920s this idea of "Building the Nation", having already found elaboration in some of the earliest vernacular texts by Zulu writers,[21] manifested itself in a number of institutional forms through which a wider popular Zulu constituency began to be mobilised and an elite Zulu identity constructed. On the one hand there were those such as The African Economical Organisation. Established by Inkatha leaders and businessmen W.F. Bhulose and S.I.J. Bhengu in 1927,[22] this enterprise, based on members' subscriptions, started a store at the Point in Durban on the basis of bulk buying from white merchants. On the other were hand there were the co-operative schemes started under the auspices of the ICU, the most notable of which was AWG Champion's All African Co-Operative Society Limited and the Workers Co-operative Society described by one ICU activist as the "greatest step to economic emancipation of African Workers."[23] Such ventures were an integral part

---

[19] CAD, Government Native Labour Bureau (GNLB), 313, 134/19/110.

[20] CAD, GNLB, 314, 175/19/110.

[21] The most important of which were Petros Lamula's *Ukuzaka KwaBantu* (Durban, n.d.1921) and and John Dube's *Isita Esikulu Somuntu Omnyama Nguye Uqobo Lwake* (Mariannhill, 1922).

[22] *Ilanga lase Natal*, 28 January 1927.

[23] See P. la Hausse, 'The Message of the Warriors: The ICU, the

of the Zulu populism which the ICU succeeded in moulding, and unlike the more self-consciously elitist co-operative societies they certainly captured, if only for a brief moment, the imagination, and sometimes the wages, of workers. For the most part, however, the history of an embryonic self-help movement until 1930 was largely one of failure. Most enjoyed a brief life and many disappeared almost as rapidly as they were founded. Undercapitalisation, lax book-keeping, legal snares, state repression, a tendency towards peculation by co-operative officials and, most significantly, a failure to deliver the promised wealth to their members all took their toll. It is clear, though, that by 1930 the groundwork had been laid for the remarkable spread of the co-operative movement in the subsequent decades.

The co-operative societies of the 1930s, variously called trading, business, thrift, self-help, co-operative or farmers' associations, shared similar principles. One of the most notable of these was the Bantu Welfare Society established by William Mseleku - the architect of the 1940s Nabatukop co-operative movement - in 1934. Before it collapsed in financial chaos it had 10 branches on mission stations in Natal and aimed "to establish and foster co-operative agricultural effort, to solve social and economic problems peculiar to Natives, and to encourage thrift."[24] The Bantu Welfare Society was emblematic of numerous other self-help societies at this time. The African Vuka U Zake Society of Ndwedwe, for example, called itself a "farmers' association" but its objects were to "encourage the social welfare and advancement and self reliance amongst the Zulu Race".[25] According to one observer the main unstated aim of the African Co-operative Trading Society Ltd. was "to provide a career for educated natives". Although couched in a much more opaque language of philanthropy and co-operation, The Bantu Co-operative (Business) Society founded in Estcourt in 1938 probably had much the same objects. It was also not surprising that the African Central Welfare and Industrial Society should have come to see the policing of sexual relationships between Indians and Africans as one of its main tasks during the late thirties, for this was also the time during which the Zulu Society was busy constructing an elite Zulu identity which brought Christian respectability together Zulu traditionalism on the basis of a particular reworking of the Zulu past. Significantly, however, these ideas began to percolate into the ranks of ordinary people, for by the later thirties thrift societies began to flourish amongst workers in Durban. The massive proliferation of co-operative societies during the 1940s - by 1946 over 100 co-operatives (mostly buying clubs) were affiliated to Nabantukop - was thus based on a longer historical tradition of self-help. It was a tradition of which someone like Elias Kuzwayo was acutely aware.

A crucial legacy of the pre-1940 co-operative movement was the way in which it had laid one basis for the interpretation of the African "nation"

Labouring Poor and the Making of a Popular Political Culture in Durban, 1925-1930', in P. Bonner, *et al* (eds.), *Holding their Ground: Class, Locality and Culture in 19th and 20th Century South Africa* (Johannesburg, 1989).

[24] See NA, CNC/PMB, 94, 64/18, N.1/14/3(45), Report on the Bantu Welfare Society, 7 July 1937.

[25] NA, CNC/PMB, 94, 64/26, N.1/143/3(28), Constitution, 1936.

in Natal in ethnic terms. In beginning to mobilise a popular constituency around economic nationalism, the self-help movement had begun to provide a theatre for the institutional elaboration of a popular rhetoric of anti-Indianism expressed in terms of a language of Zulu communalism and mutuality. It was precisely this language which found further elaboration amongst the cohorts of Natal's herbalists and independent church leaders. In many ways the itinerant herbalist in Natal was a uniquely powerful (and remarkably ignored)[26] ideologue of the labouring poor - a popular intellectual in whose figure both secular and other-worldly mediating powers found powerful simultaneous expression. The Congress movement in Natal had long championed the cause of Zulu herbalists in Natal, viewing the control of the trade much in the same light as the proscription of beer brewing - the unjust appropriation of a national, "traditional" right.[27] Of course there were other reasons for what rapidly became a defence of "Zulu customary rights". The herbalist trade, not least because of the space which the Natal Native Code allowed for its practice, developed into one of the key sites of capital accumulation for frustrated African entrepreneurs. Not surprisingly eminent "respectable" figures such as Inkatha ideologue J.R. Msimang, Garveyist intellectual Rev. Q. Cele and businessman brother of John Dube, Charles Dube, were at the forefront of struggles to defend the skills of the *Inyanga zokwelapa* (medicine man) and *Inyanga zemiti* (herbalist) in the 1930s and 1940s.

Little wonder, too, that the vocation of herbalist fell on the ears of a more obscure range of individuals whom members of the African elite and white officials dismissed (both fairly and unfairly) as charlatans "who prey on their own people". Perhaps in this category one could find the peripatetic "Doctors of Medical Electricity" armed with batteries, wires and stethoscopes diagnosing a wide variety of illnesses.[28] Here, too, were the pedlars of bottled fat of white men, fat of *utokoloshe* and medicines for winning at cards and finding buried treasure. The financial rewards of this occupation (particularly when conducted through the mail-order system) could be great. It is unlikely that Kuzwayo would have missed the possibilities for self-improvement which were attached to the office of herbalist. Nor could have he overlooked the transcendent powers accompanying the position of independent church leader. In a situation where there was a great deal of overlap between herbalists and independent churchmen - the eight Zulu ministers in the Christian Church

---

[26] It is not possible to elaborate upon this here, but it is part of a wider study which I am presently engaged in. For some background to Natal's herbalist trade see NA, CNC/PMB, 50, 43/25, N.1/12/8(x).

[27] See P. la Hausse, 'Drink and Cultural Innovation in Durban: The Origins of the Beerhall in South Africa, 1902-1916', mimeo, 1989.

[28] It is interesting that one of the first guises of Wellington Buthelezi, millennarian leader and consumate expression of the "motley" appearance, was as this kind of medical doctor. He was arrested in Natal in 1923 for practicing as an unlicensed herbalist. See B. Edgar, 'Garveyism in Africa: Dr Wellington and the "American Movement" in the Transkei, 1925-40', *ICS Collected Seminar Papers, Vol.6*, 1974-5.

Saturday, for example, were all at one time unlicensed medical men[29] - Kuzwayo's brief move into office of churchman contained a certain logic. As a founder of his own church he became, if rather briefly, part of a small army of modestly educated individuals who appropriated notions of chiefly authority and developed styles of prophetic leadership in order to secure followers in town and countryside of Natal.

IV: Pardoners of the New Africa: Capital Accumulation and the Millennium.

During the course of the 1940s the contours of African life in the towns and countryside of Natal were dramatically transformed. In Durban this period witnesssed the rapid expansion of secondary industry particularly in the engineering, chemical and construction sectors. Industrial change precipitated by the outbreak of war brought with it a massive new demand for unskilled labour. In response to this Durban's African population in the ten year period after 1936 soared from 70 531 to 113 612 . Although the period until 1946/47 witnessed the rise in real wages paid to African workers, this was accompanied by high job-turnover which was itself a function of fluctuating demands for unskilled labour, wage discrepancies between different sectors of the unskilled labour market and the position of unskilled Africans at the most exploitable end of the labour market. By the later forties Durban was home to thousands of first generation urban dwellers who had abandoned the hope of subsisting in the countryside in the wake of evictions and large-scale cattle losses in parts of rural Natal after 1945. In a growing "black belt" of informal settlements around the city the struggle to secure adequate incomes to support families became a constant feature of people's lives. Then, after 1946/7, African real wages began to drop sharply in the face of local economic crisis.[30]

In his study of African social and political movements in Durban during this period Iain Edwards has provided us with fascinating insights into African popular struggles.[31] While the ANC atrophied, Edwards argues, "new proletarian populist movements" which "the proletariat saw as being able to provide them with greater control over their own lives", flourished. At the heart of these movements was a proletarian interpretation of the "New African" which sought to "celebrate the dignity of the ordinary African" and which gave expression to "forms of messianic populism", "internationalism" and a "militant concept of revenge". A transformed co-operative movement with militant and idealist objectives

---

[29] CAD, NTS, 645/214, Add. N.C., Estcourt to CNC, 30 April 1940.

[30] J.R. Burrows, *The Population and Labour Resources of Natal* (Pietermaritzburg, 1959); P. Maylam, 'The "Black Belt": African Squatters In Durban 1935-1950', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 17,3, 1983; T. Nuttall, 'African Worker Organisation and Militancy in Durban, 1937-1949', Natal History Workshop paper, 1988.

[31] I. Edwards, 'Swing the Assegai Peacefully? "New Africa", Mkhumbane, the Co-operative Movement and attempts to Transform Durban Society in the Late 1940s', in Bonner *et al* (eds.), *Holding Their Ground*.

became the vehicle for the elaboration of a grassroots critique of the power structures of local society. The thrust behind this movement was essentially proletarian and its operations were governed by particular codes of morality. Where such codes were transgressed - and in passing Edwards cites examples of fraudulent sweepstakes, the selling of passes and letters of exemption and the hijacking of co-operatives by self-interested entrepreneurs - these ran counter to the principles of the "New Africa".

If one important and growing response of workers to the narrow economic opportunities provided in Durban during the 1940s was strike action, another more pervasive one was continually shifting employment patterns and job mobility in order to secure higher wages. Yet for some this was also a world in which cultural skills could be used to occupy and prise open the smallest of economic spaces in a racially repressive environment, as the case of herbalists vividly suggests. Under these conditions "living by one's wits", frequently at the expense of both local institutions of oppression and ordinary people, could be honed into a fine art - a weapon of survival.

During 1948 reports began to come to the attention of government officials in Natal of what had become known as *umholiswano* (or People's Banks).[32] Under other circumstances this might not have been of great import, for the 1940s had witnessed the spectacular extension of the earlier co-operative society movement, the formation of a The Natal Bantu Co-operative Advisory Council (Nabantukop) by William Mseleku and the creation by the movement of a "National Cultural" magazine called *Ukubambisana*. Yet, where the more formalised Co-operative Societies of Nabantukop' promised its members that "we make profits for you - Others make profits from you" under the slogan *Mazibuye Emasisweni* ("Let our cattle and wealth return") the promises of the *umholiswano* were even more captivating. The idea of these banks or clubs, also known as *ilink*, was to get rich very fast. Members would pay a contribution of, say, 12/6 to the organiser (who would in turn take a cut for purposes of running the "Bank") which was pooled together with other contributions. The subscriber was then given a number, a receipt and his name entered in a book in numerical order. Usually the first individual to join would be paid out £10, for example, as soon as 20 others had joined. The next on the list would receive his £10 when a further 20 members had joined.[33] Each member would be encouraged to re-invest as soon as he had received payment. Member number 500, of course, could look forward to riches when the Club had enrolled 10 000 members.

The fatal flaw in this scheme was immediately obvious to more worldy-wise observers, including, no doubt, some of the bankers themselves. Yet for thousands of increasingly impoverished rural and urban workers in the late 1940s, *ilink* was transformed into a vehicle for their millennial dreams. During the first half of 1948 the *umholiswano* spread like wildfire through the townships and sprawling shack settlements of Durban, the

---

[32] Or *maholisana* - originally a savings system whereby a group agreed to pool contributions every week, with the total amount being given to each member in rotation. Also see below.

[33] *Sunday Tribune*, 29 February 1948.

communities in Pietermaritzbug's Edendale area and, then, through Natal as a whole. In the Durban region the freehold township of Clermont became one the first centres to witness the dramatic birth of the "banks". Here "banks" even had formal constitutions such as that of the Rapid Cash Society, one of a number of "banks" which were established in the township. Drained of the philanthropic pretensions of many of the Credit or Trading co-operative societies, the Society simply aimed to "continue and carry on money link" and, somewhat inscrutably, "to create from time to time classes of money tables or formulas to be followed". "First come first served" was the governing principle and no member [would] lose his money".[34]

Numerous less-formalised operations were started by individuals in back rooms or in the corners of the offices of local black notables. In Pietermaritzburg where at least 11 known such banks sprang up, bankers, at least one of whom reportedly employed 12 typists and 15 assistants, could be found in semi-derelict houses offering £27 for investments of £1.2s.6d.[35] In small rural towns bankers were reported to have "banked" hundreds of pounds in several days, while in Cato Manor itself numerous banks were established. Local authority watched these developments with some concern not least due to the fears of popular violence which could stem from the inevitable collapse of these operations. While they had no legal authority to shut down *ilink*, the police did nonetheless intervene. In the early stages of the banks white policemen were met with fierce popular resistance with participants claiming "now we have a chance to make money, you police insist on stopping us." Not surprisingly by the middle of 1948 thousands had lost money. Hostility to constituted authority was rapidly redirected at the bankers themselves. Enraged subscribers who had lost their money besieged courtrooms in search of bankers charged with fraud, thronged lawyers' offices, demonstrated in the streets, sought to lynch "bankers" and burned and looted their homes. Desperate workers in at least one compound in Durban came close to hanging "the promoters of their local benefit fund",[36] while in Pietermaritzburg, where an estimated £60 000 had been invested in the schemes, Chief Mini was called in to placate over 3 000 angry investors. In the face of popular outrage scores of "bankers" fled for their lives.

In Durban the Zulu press published numerous letters warning people against the banks. Zulu Paramount Mshiyeni appealed:

> "My people, I do not suggest that the Nation should not uplift itself by means of money, seeing that money is the source of life, but not in the manner adopted here - people flooding the whole town ... it destroys many things due to us to help us develop ourselves"[37]

---

[34] CAD, NTS, 7947, 89/400, Constitution of the Rapid Cash Society, 14 Feb. 1948.

[35] *Sunday Times*, 29 February 1948.

[36] *Sunday Times*, 7 March 1948.

[37] *Ilanga lase Natal*, 3 April 1948.

Others pointed to the origins of some bankers: "Zulus! Satan has entered and this thing [*Umhollswan0*] is now everywhere! ... What makes it more regrettable is that Ministers of religion are involved". Most correspondents like S.J. Kunene appealed for people to stay with more well-established co-operative societies and "Native Banks" in "the hands of men of good standing". On a more disturbing and apocalyptic note one local trader, who sought to defend the principles of "proper" banks, claimed:

> "Thou, 1948 hast come! Thou slayer of orphans and the wealthy, has come! Thou crucifier of the distinguished and clever. You have made them suffer for others' sins. What will you be like in 1949?"

It might be, of course, that *illnk* represented little more more than a brief abberation of the more idealist, grassroots co-operative movement. Certainly, prospective operators of the *umhollswano* found it difficult to operate after the collapse of the schemes. In a variety of ways, however, these "people's banks" represented an extension of the co-operative ideals of the Nabantukop movement particularly in one of its popular manifestations: the Co-operative Credit society or loan bank the members of which were able to secure loans on the basis of an initial membership and thereafter monthly subsciption fee.[38] Yet most obviously it represented a dramatic elaboration of that well-established institutlon of black working class life: the *isistokofela*, rotating credit systems or mutual benefit societies which had deep historical roots amongst Africans in Durban and other towns in South Africa. While many of the "people's bankers" clearly did genuinely believe that economic salvation lay through the "doors" of the "Rich Quick Native Banks", and failed to see the impending disaster, others were more ruthlessly parasitic in their designs.

Either way the distance between *illnk* and the co-operative movement on the ground was often blurred. Attempts by "respectable" co-operative society spokesmen to distance their movement from the discredited operators of the *umhollswana* ("persons ... [who] no one knows where they come from and who they are"), were not free from ambiguity. Evidence suggests that, for example, a member of the prominent Kuzwayo family of Clermont was involved in the Banks. Alfred Kuzwayo, the leading figure in this family had been head of the Zulu Society's Economic Desk, was a prominent entrepreneur and one of Durban's first African bus owners. Similarly both M.A. Bhengu and J.S. Mkwanazi, local ANC leaders and operators of Credit Co-operatives were in touch with the *illnk* bankers of Cato Manor. Congress Youth League leader M.B. Yengwa was the (less than proficient, it seems) Durban-based bookkeeper of the the Pumosizini Bus Company - also known as the Zabazomuzi Buying Club.[39] Run by Christian Zulu of Nseleni in Zululand the Company succeeded in attracting contributions for the purchase of busses but by 1948 could only account for just over half of its capital. At a time when the

---

[38] For the widespread presence of Credit Co-operative Societies in Natal at this time see, for example, *Ukubambisana*, Vol. 1, No.1, June 1946.

[39] See CAD, NTS, 7264, 384/326, Examination of the Books of the Pumosizini Buying Club, 27 January 1948.

"proliferation of bogus collecting agencies" was being reported, Native Affairs Department officials pushed for the prosecution of individuals such as Zulu. Yet the foundering of such schemes on the reefs of undercapitalisation, uneven entrepreneurial experience and repressive state laws had been a persistent feature of elite economic initiatives for decades. William Mseleku himself had come close to being charged in 1934 after the collapse of his Bantu Welfare Society. While the state tended to see fraud lurking in the litany of financial irregularities which these enterprises often left in their wake, as has been suggested, was usually rather more complex. What is significant, however, is that such economic enterprises and the forms of cultural identity to which they gave expression provided the basis for the elaboration of schemes which were more imaginative in their design and more self-consciously fraudulent in their operation.

Indeed the self-conscious trickery of individuals such as Enoch Sithole was of a rather different order. Sometime in 1948 or 1949 Sithole was responsible for establishing the International Bantu Progress Society - also known as The Bantu Association for Economic Advancement - in Durban. The objects of the Society were, amongst numerous other things: "to glorify and worship God", "to work for fairplay and justice for all people", to use only constitutional methods", to advance Bantu cultural development", "to encourage all Bantu people to make a special study each of his own Native tongue and "to assist Bantu housing".[40] In the 1949 Durban the meaning of this Constitution, betraying as it did a certain sensitivity to the ideology of mission-educated Africans as well as an awareness of an emerging language of apartheid, came to mean something rather different. By 1949 the Bantu Association for Economic Advancement had merged imperceptibly with the International Ethiopian Council for Study and Report of South Africa (Lion of Judah - King of Kings Constitution) whose coterie of "Egyptian" priests set about providing, at an appropriate fee, newly-arrived African workseekers with fake passes and registration certificates. This involved enrolling vulnerable migrants as members of the Church "Under the Protection of Almighty God, Ham and Kushes Princess [who] shall come out of Egypt".[41] The extent of these predatory activities within popular culture in Natal during this period remains to be fully explored, although present evidence does suggest that they might have been fairly widespread.

It is certainly revealing that the narrative of a C.L.S. Nyembezi's popular Zulu novel *Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu* ("The important gentleman from Pietermaritzburg")[42] concerns the exploits of C.C. Ndebenkulu Esq. a picaresque figure clearly moulded on the form of the trickster of Zulu folklore. It is possible to summarise the story as follows: Ndebenkulu (literally "big lips") writes from Pietermaritzburg to a respected member

---

[40] NA, 2/DBN, 3/1/2/1/2, 2/56/2/15, Constitution of the International Bantu Society.

[41] CAD, NTS, 7273, 512/326, Rex versus Enoch Sithole and others, Case J 6249/1949.

[42] C.L.S. Nyembezi, *Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu* (Pietermaritzburg, 1961) - Subtitled: "A novel of the exploits of a criminal in a country district

of the Nyanyadu community in Natal's Dundee district, suggesting that he has a scheme to make people rich.[43] This involves the selling of people's cattle for high prices on the basis of a "co-operative" society scheme. The uneducated Mkhwanazi invites him to Nyanyadu to explain his scheme. The overweening Ndebenkulu makes his appearance - a strange front tooth jutting from his mouth, hands kept firmly in his pockets, wearing glasses and displaying a walking stick. Despite, or perhaps even because of his bullying arrogance, - he says Nyanyadu people are backward, they cannot keep time, do not treat strangers well or know how to hold meetings - Ndebenkulu makes a deep impression on the uneducated members of the community. The fake cheques which he produces as evidence of his abilty to make people rich, the mention of his contact's with prominent whites, his veneer of education and his title, do not, however, impress Mkhwanazi's son Themba and his friend Diliza, who between themselves share education and working experience in town. Their scepticism is confirmed when Themba finds an article on confidence tricksters in *Ilanga*. The point at which Ndebenkulu is about to negotiate the "sale" of some of the community's cattle, he is exposed through a police trap. For Diliza has called Detective Mpungose from Ladysmith who has been investigating a case in which a trickster has deprived a widow of her cattle. The widow, who is present at the denouement at Nyanyadu, identifies Ndebenkulu in the following terms: *Na li leliqola!*[44] ("Here is the Trickster!").

The evidence suggests that part of Nyembezi's novel was based on the experience of many Zulu-speakers in the post-1940 period. Certainly the idea of selling off cattle to raise liquid capital for business investment had been mooted by Fr. A.H. Ngidi - one of the Zulu Society's ideologues on economic affairs - in 1943, and found a resonance in state schemes to cull cattle in overstocked areas of Natal during the same period.[45] Yet rural people lost their cattle in other ways, such as selling them off to participate in fraudulent sweeptakes[46] and quite likely, through the confidence trickery of individuals such as the C.C. Ndebenkulu.

---

[43] I am deeply indebted to Mangisi Gule of the African Languages Department, U.W. for discussing Nyembezi's novel with me and providing me with useful insights into the narrative.

[44] *Iqola* is literally a fiscal shrike, the smallest bird of prey. Ndenbenkulu's end might be taken to demonstrate the Zulu proverb *Akukho qili lazikhoth' emhlane* (literally: "There is no cunning person who has ever licked his own back"). See C.L.S. Nyembezi *Zulu Proverbs* (Johannesbrg, 1974), p. 173.

[45] See NA, Zulu Society Papers, A1381, III/1/7, A.H. Ngidi to Sec. Zulu Society, 17 Sept. 1943. Ngidi called for "the uneducated ringed Zulu man" to "change [cattle] into money and teach him how to trade and negotiate this capital instead of keeping the unprofitable and unwieldy cattle-bank". For cattle-culling see H.P. Braadvedt, *Roaming Zululand with a Native Commissioner* (Pietermaritzburg, 1949).

[46] See Edwards, "Swing the Assegai Peacefully?', p. 77.

But more than this the presentation of Ndebenkulu is intriguing and invites further attention. He appears in the novel as a man of obscure origins (there is no such Zulu name as "Ndebenkulu"), who to a largely illiterate, rural audience bears the power and impress of the white man's world. His title, dress, style of speech and educated manner all point to a man who moves with the confidence of an individual well-versed in the ways of the colonizer. That most of these attributes have the depth of a mask is lost on a desperate and naive audience. Just as the picaro was a originally rooted in a social type, so too might Nyembezi's trickster. For it seems that figures such as E. Kuzwayo were not simply the jetsam of a period of rapid social transformation but were rooted in social structure, popular culture and historical process in a more fundamental way.

V: "I am the Gate": Some Zulu Collaborators in the Apartheid Era.

A central feature of Elias Kuzwayo's self-presentation to authority after his brief foray into formal African oppositional politics, was to clothe his operations in a "public language of conformity".[47] The Constitutions of most co-operative Societies, similarly inscribed within their charters their independence from any political organisation or movement. G. F. Khumalo, of Pietermaritzburg was no exception. During the course of 1939 he attempted to form The Bantu Co-operative Union "in order to develop [the Bantu] into a self supporting, progressive, well-governed and happy race" - a project to be sustained by "mutual understanding and co-operation between the Government and the Bantu". No matter that this grandiose project would ostensibly be realised through the establishment of a trading store for black farmers at Bulwer.[48] Where Khumalo perhaps parted company with some of his fellow travellers in the co-operative society movement was his more energetic embracing of a public language of conformity. For by the mid-fifties he can be found writing to government officials in Pretoria claiming that it was almost three years since he, as an "Apostle of the Bantu Co-operative Movement", had:

> started to work for the government, by making my people understand and appreciate what the government is trying to do for them through the Bantu Authorities, Group Areas, and other acts making provision for Bantu national self government.[49]

As a self-appointed employee of the state who drew no salary and who had, apparently, suffered for his beliefs, Khumalo was in fact and ex-teacher who refused to accept a transfer for poor conduct, had served briefly on Pietermaritzburg's Sobantu Native Advisory Board, stood accused of libel and of whose *geslepenheld* (cunning) apartheid government officials seemed fully aware. Whether his project for 1955 - the estab-

---

[47] J.C Scott uses these words in relation to peasant resistance in Sedaka, South East Asia. See *Weapons of the Weak* (New Haven and London, 1985), p.289.

[48] NA, CNC/PMB, 94, 64/40, N8/1/3(3), G.F. Khumalo to Native Commissioner, Bulwer, 20 July 1939; and 11 Aug. 1939.

[49] CAD, NTS, 7276, 572/326, G.F. Khumalo to SNA, 20 Oct. 1955.

lishment of the Zulu National Organisation, of which he claimed to be "Sponsor" - was ever realised seems doubtful.

But what does one make of individuals such as Khumalo? The easy answer could be captured in three words: "unambiguous opportunist collaboration". If, as Shula Marks has claimed, "the working of the 'colonial misunderstanding'" involves the wearing of the mask of deference by the colonized in a situation where "words and actions of individuals are both *deliberately and accidentally ambiguous*",[50] *and also if* "*dissumulation is* the characteristic and necessary pose of subordinate classes everywhere most of the time",[51] then in the case of of Khumalo and others like him, the mask seems to have become the whole reality. It does seem though, that Khumalo and other collaborating figures such as him, might provide a foil for understanding Elias Kuzwayo's career.

S.S. Bhengu, H.C. Sibisi and W. Dimba, are all relatively unknown figures, not least perhaps because each was involved (like G. Khumalo) in elaborating conservative ethnic nationalist organisations largely in their own names in the 1950s and 1960s. Unlike some of his prominent contemporary namesakes such as S.I.J. Bhengu, early Inkatha and Congress leader, Simon Sampson Bhengu appears to have had more humble *kholwa* origins possibly in the Waschbank area of Northern Natal. Certainly those in the Congress Youth League described him as "a semi-literate witch-doctor". During the 1920s he appears to have spent much time roaming parts of the Midland and Northern districts of Natal practicising as an itinerant herbalist. During the 1930s he established the Bantu Medical Dispensary in Pietermaritzburg and become a wealthy herbalist.[52] In the 1940s he gained prominence during the course of an acrimonious dispute with Durban's (and South Africa's) wealthiest African herbalists - Israel Alexander. In 1946 Bhengu apparently bought out Alexander's lucrative business for the astounding sum of £100 000 to be paid on the basis of monthly installments of £200.[53] The deal, however, went awry, and by 1948 Bhengu had re-located his business to Ladysmith where he founded the Native Medical Council.

According to one local herbalist Bhengu's Council enrolled members for a fee of £5 but failed to give them an account of what was done with subscriptions and called no meetings.[54] Indeed Bhengu was devoting himself to a greater calling. A petition which he sent to the Governor-General in early 1952 provides some clues as to his new vocation. "The Natal Native Medical Council", Bhengu wrote, "submits to Your Excellency that such African National Congress acceptance of Indian collaboration ... do not represent the actual views and feelings of the Native masses in this province". The petition went on to denounce the proposed Passive

---

[50] Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence*, p.1.

[51] Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, p.284.

[52] CAD, NTS, 9032, 2/376, Part I, S. Bhengu to SNA, 3 July 1931.

[53] Supreme Court of South Africa, Natal Provincial Division, S.S. Bhengu Applicant, I. Alexander, Respondent.

[54] CAD, NTS, 7272, 479/326, N.C., Ladysmith to CNC, 3 April 1952.

Resistance campaign and in particular the activities of "Indians in their coup d'etat to drag the Natives to fight the Government and to treat Government laws with contempt". Bhengu also explained the entry of a herbalists' "organisation" into politics in the following terms:

> The reason of the Native Medical Council's intervening in this matter is that, although it is not a political or governmental body, the medicine-man is, by virtue of his profession, the backbone and pillar of his race. The Native Medical Council is in close contact with the pulse of the whole race ... and the aspirations of the masses of natives in all parts of the country, urban and rural.

Much of this grandiloquence was rooted in more meanly mundane matters, for the petition concluded with an appeal to remove Indians from the Waschbank area of Natal where there were a number of African freehold farms, and to draw attention to the "havoc" which Indian traders and bus owners had caused in the Ladysmith area. It is not unsurprising to discover that it was during this time that Bhengu's estate had been sequestrated and he was involved in continual litigation with local Indian entrepreneurs.

Bhengu seems to have made an uncomplicated transition (and it seems from much circumstantial evidence, with the apartheid state's backing) from the Native Medical Council to something called the Bantu National Congress. The Congress, which was generally viewed as "purely a private creation of Bhengu's", set itself up in direct opposition to the rejuvenated Natal African National Congress and to its leader, Albert Lutuli.[55] In a widely-circulated document the Bantu National Congress made its position clear:

> being the cunning and wily people they are ... the Indians are striving to make the Natives their political cat's-paw, and as in the proverbial story, "to pull the monkeynuts out of the Government fire with the Native's hand for the benefit of cunning Mr. Monkey" ... [they] are evidently attempting to set the Natives into armed clashes with the Government after which the Government would blame the Paramount Chief ... Such an affair has its parallel in the story of Bhambatha, Son of Mancinza, for which Dinizulu, king of the Zulus was deposed ... we warn any Native quisling who conspires with the Indians to betray his own race, that he will earn the everlasting curse of our God ... [during the 1949 riots] which were a spontaneous outburst of the Indian-exploited and oppressed Natives to break free from Indian enslavement and exploitation, it was only the Natives that were shot by the Marines ... Indian landlords suck the Natives dry with high house rentals ... Let us part company residentially with our parasite ... from polluting your daughter ... The truth is that all new laws enacted by the Government have worthy aims and motives for the eventual benefit of the Natives themselves. Let the Indians fight their own battles.

The ANC, and Lutuli in particular, watched Bhengu's activities and the public use which both Dr D.F. Malan and the white press in Natal made

---

[55] For Lutuli's deep concern about Bhengu see *Let My People Go* (London, 1962), pp.133-4.

of them, with growing concern. 'A special Committee spearheaded by Congress Youth Leaguers J. Ngubane and H.I.E. Dhlomo set to work trying to take on the state on its own terms. In Bhengu's case Congress-inspired investigative journalism had an impact. For sometime after 1952 Bhengu was imprisoned for theft and forgery.

The opportunism of Bhengu was probably matched, but not in entirely the same way, by H.C. Sibisi.[56] Born of poor labour tenants in Northern Natal in 1904 Sibisi attended local schools before moving to Adams Mission where he obtained a qualification as an agricultural demonstrator. It was as a demonstrator in Swaziland and then in Natal's Ndwewdwe district, that he acquired his first entrepreneurial appetites for he was instrumental in establishing several trading stores. By the 1940s he had settled in Clermont township where he rapidly came into contact with prominent political figures such Champion, Dr Seme and ANC Youth Leaguers, a period during which he moved between the occupations of lay preacher and herbalist. By 1948 he was elected Chairman of the local Isolomuzi (Vigilance Committee). It was also during the 1940s that he established the Clermont Bantu Bus Co. (which sought to raise shares from local residents for the purchase of buses), The Clermont Bantu Improvement Co. (for the purposes of buying up land in Clermont) and The Vukuzake Clermont Co. (designed for women residents in market gardening and home crafts). None of these schemes flourished. In fact Sibisi abandoned Clermont for Cato Manor when residents began to complain that their money had disappeared.

In Cato Manor Sibisi became involved in various less than legal activities, including fraudulent sweepstakes and selling shares in non-existent companies. Ever aware of economic space Sibisi was also a mediator for the deeply conservative, anti-Indian Zulu Hlanganani Co-operative Buying Club based in Cato Manor. Sibisi, it seems, never really succeeded in accumulating much capital. During the 1950s, in addition to being a "bush lawyer", he became closely involved in passing information about ANC activities in Durban on to the South African Police and local municipal NAD. It was from this base during the 1950s that he attempted to revive the Inkatha organisation of the early twenties, a project which foundered, not least due to the different agendas of the Zulu king and Chief Buthelezi.

Unlike Sibisi, Walther Dimba came from an established *kholwa* family on the Groutville Mission. He was born in 1893 and by 1913 was engaged as a teacher of printing at John Dube's Ohlange Industrial School.[57] When Gardiner Mvuyane (also of Groutville) seceded from the American Board Mission and established the African Congregational Church in 1917, Dimba was rapidly drawn into its orbit. Then, between 1926 and 1931 he went to study at Anderson College, Indiana where he graduated with a B.Th. His return to South Africa was dramatic. He discovered that his Church

---

[56] For an outline of Sibisi's life see I. Edwards, 'I am a nobody, but in another country we would be the George Washingtons: leadership, ethnicity, nationalism and class in the career of Henry Caleb Sibisi, 1945-1980', paper presented to Conference on Regionalism and Restructuring in Natal, University of Natal, Durban, 1988.

[57] NA, CNC, 131, 1253/1913, Exemption of Walter KaMakobosi Dimba.

had floated itself into a limited liability company and was now the African Congregational Church Co. Ltd.. Angry, not so much because the Church had extended its horizons, but rather because he was absent when the decision to do so had been made, Dimba became embroiled in a violent dispute with other Zulu church leaders based in Johannesburg which nearly cost him his life. Against this backdrop Dimba formed his own Gardiner Mvuyane African Congregational Church and issued an appeal: "We let the Zulu know that here is his home now. Gardiner Mvuyana is risen from the dead. Hurrah!"[58] Two years later he was forced to leave his own church and he disappeared either to America or East Africa.[59] Back in South Africa, in 1943 he organised a Federation of Bantu Churches which claimed a, probably exaggerated, membership of sixty churches. During the course of the 1950s he was reputed to run classes for pastors. Lessons comprised chiefly the study of bookkeeeping and the intricacies of banking church collections. Living in the shadow of a much larger business world Dimba also was given to changing his name by inserting a consonant into his *isibongo* (surname).[60]

By the 1950s Dimba had begun to carve for himself and his Federation a self-appointed position as mediator between the state and unrecognised independent African churches in urban locations. Dimba, according to his own account, claimed that he was "in favour of all the Government policies etc.". There was, however, one problem. His Federation, he claimed, "blames the government for not having had first created a body of trustworthy men among the Africans to interpret the Government's laws as they should have been explained to these poor unfortunate creatures". At public meetings Dimba was given to booming out the words "I am the Gate" [... to the Pretoria government]. Yet despite drawing up constitutions for churches and issuing ordination certificates Dimba never really succeeded in capturing the membership of wealthy churches. It was perhaps this fact which led him during the course of the sixties to found the African Foundation of South Africa with L.N. Ndaba - an organisation which "aimed at propagating ideas on territorial seperate development which must lead to ethnic autonomous republics of Southern Africa". As the mouthpiece of the Foundation announced:

> Whenever Africans (Negroes) are living side by side with any other racial group, be it Europeans or Indians or Arabs, racial strife ensues. There must be a biological or generic anthropological reason for this strange phenomenon.[61]

---

[58] For an account of these conflicts see CAD, GNLB, 410, 73/37; and also CAD, NTS, 1444, 54/214, Part I.

[59] For a wonderful account of Dimba's later career see B. Sundkler, *Zulu Zion*, (Uppsala, 1976), pp. 295-300.

[60] Much like the head of another independent church who changed his name in 1944 from Malinga to Mallinger. See CAD, NTS, 1471, 668/214.

[61] *Africa South*, Vol.1, No.1, quoted in Sundkler, *Zulu Zion*, p.299.

With this in mind that Dimba, together with Ndaba, formed the Zulu Bantustan Policy, also known as the Zulu National Party. "I want to make it clear", Dimba claimed, "that we are not stooges."

In a variety of ways, Dimba, Sibisi and Bhengu were stooges. My purpose here is not, however, to locate their forms of collaboration along a continuum running from imaginative opportunism to mean parasitism. What is important for the moment is that their lives each in their own way, represent particular, but related forms of individual resolution of much deeper dilemmas rooted in historical processes. Their attempts to cope with frustrated economic and social ambition found expression in their creation of roles for themselves as mediators between colonizer and colonized - roles in which they invested much cultural energy. For these individuals the era of apartheid brought the promise of their differential accommodation within relations of domination and subordination. In this context their articulation of a specific and characteristically utilitarian form of ethnic nationalism (of which anti-Indianism, at least in their case, was the obverse expression) represented one way of resolving their position.

VI: Kuzwayo and the New African.

This seems all very different from the response of the "New African" to racially oppressive society in the 1940s. According to H.I.E. Dhlomo the "New African" was: "Proud, patriotic sensitive, alive, and sure of himself and his ideas and ideals, the New African is anti-nobody, unless it be anti-muddled politics, antiquated ideologies, false theories of race and vested interests".[62] The idea of the "New African" stood in opposition to what Dhlomo called the 'Neither-Nor' African, those "who pander to, and propitiate their overlords". Members of Natal's old *kholwa* elite were seen to be peculiarly representative of this group - this was the individual who was "not as sure of himself, proud of his racial identities and affiliations, his indigeneous institutions and cultural heritage ... caught in the maelstrom of industrialisation and evangelisation ... he admires the new and tries to be capitalistic and Christian, cultured and progressive". Yet such individuals, when "disillusioned", degenerated into violent extremists. The purest expression of the "New African" was to be found amongst "organised urban workers ... awakening to ... the power of organised intelligently-led mass action and of progressive thinking African intellectuals".

In fact, as Couzens has suggested, Dhlomo's idea represented a reworking of the "progressive individualism" of Natal's older *kholwa* elite. As a representative, *par excellence* of "progressive thinking African intellectuals" Dhlomo found a political home in the ANC Youth League along with men such as M.B. Yengwa, and Jordan Ngubane. For the most part they comprised a well-educated, younger generation familiar with the world of Natal's respectable African Christian families. Their critique focussed on the these older, tightly-constituted networks of Natal's *izemtiti* who by and large still retained a grip on local and regional pol-

---

[62] See Tim Couzen's useful discussion of Dhlomo's ideas in *The New African*, (Johannesburg, 1985), pp.32-7. The following quotations are taken from this source.

itics. But perhaps their greatest criticism was reserved for A.W.G. Champion and his lieutenants, whose conservative hold on the regional Congress movement was a source of deep frustration to this small intellectual elite. At the level of everyday political struggles the contours defining the world of the "New African" were rather more blurred, not least because the Africanist intellectual was still, in many ways, too much part of the world he was criticising. Yet, the ideas elaborated by Dhlomo did find expression in African politics and intellectual life and, as Edwards has suggested, in grassrooots struggles in the forties.[63]

In between the moral ambiguities reflected in the relatively discrete but intersecting worlds of both the conservative *izemtiti* and the militant "New African" on the one hand, and the more opportunistic collaborator on the other, appears to lie a more intractable reality represented by Elias Kuzwayo. In the confines of one life Kuzwayo captures, combines and serves to define elements of each of these intersecting worlds in a way which might well be emblematic of one more widespread, but unrecognised, response of a particular stratum of Africans to their experience of marginality and colonisation during a period of particularly rapid social and economic change. It is my argument that, even in the sparse form that we have it, Kuzwayo's career represents an especially vivid example of a picaresque elaboration of the broad terrain of ambiguity and structural contradiction occupied by members of Natal's fractured African "middle classes". For like the picaro-trickster, Kuzwayo represents a figure of deep moral ambiguities - "a figure of the margins yet somehow of the centre".[64]

The amazing number of occupations at which Kuzwayo tried his hand as has already been suggested, was shared; even if not in precisely the same way, by many other members of Natal's African elite. It was a response to and a result of diminshing economic horizons in an increasingly racially repressive society. As individuals who were frequently intermediaries and brokers between white rulers and the majority of the labouring population they were equipped with some of the skills necessary to secure a differential economic niche for themselves in the interstices of society. In Kuzwayo's case criminality was the outcome of his inability to effect such a transition. Yet his habitual theft was matched by sustained attempts to establish himself as a broker. This seems particularly appropriate given that in South Africa the "vocabulary of deviance" is expressed as "the relatively static communal social order vs the appropriation of powers which allows individuals to transcend the community", - powers which might be called "magico-religious".[65] It is not coincidental that Kuzwayo should have attempted to cast himself in the roles of herbalist, independent churchman, or even for that matter, co-operative society spokesman. His appropriation of such roles, and the powers with which they were associated, represented acts which bore peculiarly deep historical and popular cultural meaning within Zulu society. In a society where the individual experience of disease, social disruption and economic deprivation, was symptomatic of a wider landscape of collective suffering,

---

[63] Edwards, 'Swing the Assegai Peacefully?'

[64] R.D. Pelton, *The Trickster In West Africa* (Berkeley, 1980), p.3.

[65] Austen, 'Social bandits and other heroic criminals', p. 102.

the suitably endowed mediator, whether in the the form of the minister, herbalist or co-opertive society architect, found himself in a uniquely powerful position. Nor is it surprising that the roles of herbalist, co-operative society spokesman and the independent churchman should have attracted numerous small armies of picaresque figures such as Kuzwayo: curious "anti-societies of rogues" in search of secure cultural and economic locations within wider relations of dependency. Little wonder, too, that one of the first sites of Kuzwayo's engagement with the politics of symbolic communication should have been within the context of ICU where one of his few legacies, apart from peculation, was as the founder and manager of a dancehall.

But for the picaresque figure the energy which is channeled into the construction of particular identities is also devoted to transformation of these identities through time - role playing being the central motif in his Protean career.[66] As a marginal figure Kuzwayo lived on the boundaries between worlds - "betwixt and between all fixed points of classification".[67] In being compelled to move between these worlds his identity became little more than an integuement subject to transformation as the situation demanded - as his change of name and accumulation of mostly fake qualifications suggests. The extremes of Elias Kuzwayo's life seem to lead us into the realm of parody. His activities not only offer a social satire on the antinomies of life in a racially oppressive society, but also provide an ironic commentary on the struggles of Natal's colonised black elite to secure for themselves an economic stake in capitalist society. Kuzwayo's career reflects certain mythic qualities. Unlike the liminality of the ritual subject which was experienced as a temporary period of exile prior to a return to society on a novel and improved basis, Kuzwayo attempted to exploit the possiblities opened up by his more or less permanent state of outsiderhood.[68] For a picaresque-figure like Kuzwayo, as indeed for his mythic counterpart, the trickster, this involved "living by his wits", climbing the social ladder not through the hard work and reward so highly regarded by members of Natal's established *kholwa* elite, but through trickery and deception. In particular it meant manipulating notions of Christian respectability, inverting a work ethic and reworking the "myth of the ladder" in order to make his way in the world.

All of this also transported Kuzwayo into sometimes oblique, sometimes direct, confrontation with the officialdom of the state. But unlike most others members of the African middle classes this disaffection took the

---

[66] H. Sieber, *The Picaresque* (London, 1977). p.73.

[67] "Liminality" is a term borrowed by Turner from Arnold van Gennep's formulation of *rites de passage*, "transition rites" - which accompany every change of state or social position, or certain points in age, particularly at the time of youth initiation. V. Turner, 'Passages, Margins and Poverty: Religious Symbols of Communitas' in V. Turner (ed.), *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors*, Ithaca and London, 1974), p.231 ff.

[68] See B.A. Babcock, '"Libety's a Whore": Inversions, Marginalia and Picaresque Narrative', in B.A. Babcock (ed.), *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society* (Ithaca and London, 1978), esp. pp. 104-05.

"Gentleman from Pietermaritzburg" into gaol. Like the picaro Kuzwayo's career appears to reflect few redeeming social qualities. If crimes against property may be used as examples of pre-political forms of popular opposition to formal authority,[69] then in Kuzwayo's case, from the understanding we have of his career as a whole, his theft and housebreaking was probably less encumbered with positive social meaning. Moreover, while he attempted to embed his schemes such as the Vuk Africa Union, the Universal National Christian Union and the Bantu Medical Union in the popular culture and shared values of a popular constituency, he seems to have done so for largely self-interested reasons. Dissimulation in Kuzwayo's career seems to have become a characteristic pose not only to be presented to the state but also to members of his popular audience. If his diverse activities involved forms of resistance which challenged the dominant definition of the situation, it is more difficult to locate their positive social meaning, for Kuzwayo's career reveals somewhat more of, in Austen's terms, the "meanly parasitical" than the "heroically criminal". Despite all of this the central ambiguities of Kuzwayo's life remain; a life in which deference gives way to angry denunciation housebreaking to philanthropy, political activism to a-political social leadership, and fiery trade union speeches to quiet respectability.

Possibly Kuzwayo's deeper picaresque elaboration of moral ambiguity might be able to provide us with some insights into the forms and styles of certain popular leaders in Natal between the 1920s and the 1950s. Speaking of Sibisi (whose career bears many striking similarities with that of Kuzwayo) as being representative of some other local leaders who provided a focus for widely felt grievances in Durban during the forties, Edwards has suggested that as people with obscure rural origins fighting to avoid full proletarianisation, such men had "no real authority except their own created images".[70] It is a useful observation in that it captures the obscure origins and peculiar populist self-presentation of such individuals. On the basis of the foregoing discussion, however, we might be able to advance this point. It seems that a key to understanding Kuzwayo, Sibisi and similar individuals resides precisely in a recognition of how their appropriation of particular roles and the creation of certain kinds of self-imagery derived in important ways from popular culture itself. As interstitial figures of the most extreme kind they possessed a keen sense of "plebeian culture" and seem to have headed almost unerringly to particular kinds of mediatory roles, such as herbalist/healer, independent churchmen and co-operative society ideologue. These roles which were political in the broadest sense, could provide the basis for their articulation of innovative forms of populist leadership. But significantly too, they also represented ways of shoring up their own shattered economic expectation and coping with their location as unevenly educated individuals on the social and economic peripheries of the small but sturdier reefs of an encumbent African elite and emerging intelligentsia. When they appeared in the public domain it was preeminently as "new men" whose former social invisibility was a positive asset. Having appropriated the powers associated with roles which were frequently of a transcendent, magico-religious nature, their political style was characteristically undemocratic. While some could sustain a populist

---

[69] See E. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels* (Manchester, 1978).

[70] Edwards, 'Swing the Assegai Peacefully?, p.14.

appeal over time, the careers of others were brief and transient. Their undoing lay in their self-conscious opportunism which under particular conditions even a strongly undemocratic popular political culture proved ill-equipped to accommodate. For in an attempt to resolve their contradictory structural location within the economic structures of society such individuals could be drawn, not only to particularly self-interested forms of collaboration with the state, but also to the financial attractions of various forms of "sharp practice".

"Living by ones's wits" in this way, then, had its attendant dangers as both Kuzwayo and the the operators of the *umhollswano* discovered. The case of Rev. T.W.S. Mthembu is also interesting in this regard. Born around 1915 Mthembu became a Lutheran pastor but later fell out with his church. During the course of the 1940s he secured a position, much like Walter Dimba, as an intermediary between the Native Affairs Department and the Zulu independent churches. He had an astounding array of contacts in both town and countryside in Natal which ranged from teachers to important chiefs. Yet he spent most of the 1950s searching for jobs - a time during which he devoted some energy to preaching the benefits of Bantu Authorities Act. Thereafter he became involved in conservative politics surrounding the Zulu royal family. In 1959 he was found hanging from a tree in Cato Manor, allegedly murdered for being a government informer. Needless to say Mthembu had also spent a large part of this period as an itinerant herbalist.[71]

It might well be that further research would yield numerous other such individuals the antinomies of whose careers might have constituted an important, if unrecognised, feature of the terrain of African social movements and popular politics in Natal, at least until the 1950s. Perhaps too, the idea of the picaresque, although characteristic of more obscure marginal figures, might offer insights into the lives of prominent individuals such as AWG Champion. For how does one do justice to a figures such as Champion - the self-made man and populist predator *par excellence* - without a grasp not only of his economic position, but also of the popular cultural roots of his authority?

This paper at present raises more questions than it answers. What it has attempted to do, however, is draw attention to the idea of the picaresque as one, possibly important, way in which members of a fractured African middle class attempted to resolve their structurally dependent position within a repressive political economy. And in doing so it places particular emphasis on the cultural dimensions inscribed within this process. No doubt the idea of the picaresque has distinct explanatory limitations and requires further kinds of refinement. Much like the notion of ambiguity, to be of any analytical utility it would need to be more carefully rooted in historical processes of change and issues of social biography. In one sense perhaps, my use of the picaresque is a form of shorthand acknowlegement that the history of the making of South Africa's African middle classes has yet to be written.

It does seem important, however, that the picaresque as a literary genre emerged at particular moment in the development of European society

---

[71] UW, CPSA, A922, C67, Champion to N.C. Eshowe, 1954; and confidential interview, Durban, 1988.

which witnessed the disintegration of traditional value systems, the rise of capitalist ideology and the increasing difficulty of reconciling aspirations for upward social mobility with psychological needs for economic security and self-respect in a dehumanising society. The picaresque draws attention to "the interaction between self and society at a moment when traditional concepts of self were being questioned, defended and redefined."[72] In the local South African context then, the picaresque seems to have been a largely unrecognised but identifiable historical response of particular groups of individuals during a period characterised by massive social change, economic repression and intense re-negotiation of identity. It might well be that when the "New African" in either its elite intellectual or proletarian populist manifestation appeared on the historical stage, in his wake came the motley herbalist bearing his nostrums, the independent chuchmen peddling apocalyptic visions, the co-operative society spokeman selling shares in the millennium. And perhaps these individuals were not only more deeply embedded in popular culture itself, but in their own way, peculiarly representative figures of the "New Africa" on the eve of apartheid.

Paul la Hausse
African Studies Institute
University of the Witwatersrand

---

[72] Bjornson, *The Picaresque Hero in European Fiction*, p.19.