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PATRIOTISM, PATRIARCHY AND PURITY: NATAL AND THE POLITICS OF ZULU ETHNIC CONSCIOUSNESS

by Shula Marks

No. 193

PATRIOTISM, PATRIARCHY AND PURITY:

NATAL AND THE POLITICS OF ZULU ETHNIC CONSCIOUSNESS[1]

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Introduction

On 5 August 1985, the violence which had already led to a State of Emergency in much of South Africa exploded in Natal, leaving more than seventy people dead and thousands injured and homeless in the course of a week and raising the spectre in some areas of a repetition of the anti-Indian riots of 1949.

In 1985 at least half the dead were shot by the police, and it would be foolish to see the disturbance in simple racial terms. Political differences between the newly formed United Democratic Front and the Zulu cultural movement, Inkatha, and sheer economic deprivation which led to the looting of African as well as Indian traders, warn against any simple equation of the violence with racially motivated anti-Indian sentiment per se. Thus, according to the Weekly Mail:

> an unprecedented wave of terror is sweeping the Durban townships of Umlazi and KwaMashu where hordes of armed warriors are purging the townships of United Democratic Front sympathisers. At least three people have been abducted and brutally killed by the "impis" who roam the streets at night, forcing males to join them on their murder and destruction spree.[2]

Two weeks later there were further reports of people being killed in Lamontville, allegedly by members of Inkatha impis, while its leader, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, denounced the African National Congress [ANC] for wanting "a bloodbath" in South Africa and was hailed in the media as a peacemaker.[3] Three months later the unrest had still not subsided completely, for there was an even

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1.
I am grateful to Richard Rathbone and Heather Hughes for their comments on an earlier draft of this essay, and to Leroy Vail for his exemplary patience and editorial skill.

2. 13-19 Sept. 1985.

3. Broadcast on the B.B.C., 28 Sept. 1985.

more disturbing attack on Mpondo workers in southern Natal, an attack promptly labeled "faction fighting" by a press ever-ready to identify any conflict amongst Africans as "tribalism".

The attacks on the Indians, the members of the UDF, and the Mpondo were widely believed to have been instigated by "a few well-organised, tribal 'impis'", some of them deliberately brought in from rural Natal as vigilante groups, allegedly to put an end to violence in the townships. They were widely associated with Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha, although some of Inkatha's own members have themselves suffered at their hands and its Central Committee appears unable to control them. There is also some evidence of collusion between the vigilante groups and the security forces.[4] As Sutcliffe and Wellings point out,

> the Inkatha leadership is caught in something of a Catch-22. . . . If Chief Buthelezi publicly and specifically condemns the actions of these impis he will clearly lose a substantial section of his support-base. At the same time, if he supports these groups he will be seen as condoning mob-violence. Given these options, Buthelezi has chosen simply to warn the leaders of these impis that they were acting without the support of the Inkatha central committee.[5]

Whether or not Inkatha has been directly implicated, these tragic events reveal starkly the reactionary and conservative repercussions of "cultural" organizations which serve to glorify ethnic identity and heighten ethnic consciousness. While the violence has to be understood in the context of the gross overcrowding, high unemployment and intense poverty of Durban's urban "locations" and shanty-towns, the attacks both on political dissidents and minority groups also raise urgent questions about the apartheid state's manipulation of ethnic politics in South Africa, questions which can in part be addressed through an analysis of the role and nature of earlier cultural ethnicity in Natal in the years prior to the riots of 1949.

Ethnic Ideology in the Inter-war Years

The significance of Zulu ethnic associations and cultural

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4. M.O. Sutcliffe and P.A. Wellings, Attitudes and Living Conditions in Inanda: The Context for Unrest (Built Environment Support Group, University of Natal, Durban), November 1985, 2-4.

5. Ibid., 3-4.

nationalism in diffusing class-based organization and fracturing national movements is no new phenomenon. For much of the 20th century, the tendency of Natal to "take-off" has been a feature of white as well as of black politics.[6] In the inter-war period, a profound factionalism characterized Natal political organization, with the co-existence there of two branches of the African National Congress, one belonging to the national organization, and the other a virtually autonomous Natal variant under the Rev. John Dube, who had initially been the President of the ANC. Similarly, the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union Yase Natal was one of the first of many fragments to break off from the national Industrial and Commercial Workers Union [ICU], and from the outset, its activities were distinguished by the strong infusion of Zulu ethnic consciousness.[7] In the 1920s the creation of the first Inkatha movement was explicitly seen as a counter to more radical tendencies and was envisaged by both the South African state and the black middle class as a counter to the ICU and to "Bolshevik" propaganda in the countryside. It was also hoped that the Natal offshoot of the Natal Bantu Teachers' Organisation, the Zulu Cultural Society, would play a similar conservative role in the 1930s and 1940s. More recently, the second Inkatha movement has been seen by many whites as the answer to more radical forms of politics, whether nationalist or more overtly class-based.

About six million strong, the Zulu are the single largest ethnic group in South Africa today, with relative linguistic and cultural homogeneity and a proud military past centering around the monarchy.[8] It would nonetheless be wrong to relate the pervasive cultural nationalism of Natal simply to the historical existence of the Zulu kingdom, the most powerful and cohesive state in southern Africa in the 19th century. Twentieth century ethnic consciousness is not an unmediated transmission of innate and immutable past values and culture. Indeed, as Barrington Moore has reminded us:

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6. For a brilliant satire on this propensity among whites, see Anthony Delius, The Day Natal Took Off (Cape Town, 1963); Tom Sharpe's equally biting Riotous Assembly and Indecent Exposure (London, 1971 and 1972) are also based on Natal's separatist traditions.

7. Helen Bradford, "The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union in the South African Countryside" (Unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1985), 285-6.

8. Under four million Zulu live in Natal-Zululand and are thus more directly available for ethnic mobilization.

> Culture or tradition . . . is not something that exists outside of or independently of individual human beings living together in society . . . The assumption of inertia, that cultural and social continuity do not require explanation, obliterates the fact that both have to be recreated anew in each generation, often with great pain and suffering. . . . To speak of cultural inertia is to overlook the concrete interests and privileges that are served by indoctrination, education and the entire complicated process of transmitting culture from one generation to the next.[9]

Using the building blocks of past history, language and "custom", 20th century ethnic consciousness has been the product of intense ideological labor by the black intelligentsia of Natal and the white ideologues of South Africa, designed to confront new and dangerous social conditions. The paradoxes in this situation are apparent when it is appreciated that it was the Christian African community -- the amakholwa -- many of whose forebears had fled the Zulu kingdom in the 19th century, who forged the cultural ethnic organizations in the 20th. Thus, the first Inkatha movement was founded by Solomon kaDinizulu, the son and heir of the last Zulu king, in alliance with the Natal intelligentsia, so as to gain state recognition for the Zulu monarchy and to pay off its not inconsiderable debts. Despite the undisputed popular support which the Zulu royal house enjoyed in the 1920s, the origin of Inkatha in 1922-4 owed as much to the deliberate reconstruction by the Zulu royal family and the Natal intelligentsia of "traditional" institutions as to any spontaneous reaction of the Zulu people.[10]

With the sharpening of class conflict and political militancy in Natal and Zululand in the 1920s, the Zulu royal family and the traditionalism that it represented constituted a

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9. B. Moore, Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World (Harmondsworth, 1967), 485-6.

10. S. Marks, "Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation", Journal of Southern African Studies, 4 (1978), 190-3; see also N.L.G. Cope's important thesis, "The Zulu Royal Family under the South African Government, 1910-1933", (Unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Natal, Durban, 1986), which covers much of the same ground in far greater detail. Unfortunately this was only presented after this paper was written.

bulwark against radical change -- a bulwark as much for the African intelligentsia as for the white ideologues of segregation.[11] The heightened political militancy of Africans in the later 1920s, particularly in Durban and in rural Natal, led architects of segregation such as G.N. Heaton Nicholls to perceive clearly the utility of ethnic-based organizations in defusing class-based organizations and class consciousness.[12] As Nicholls put it, "If we do not get back to communalism we will most certainly arrive very soon at communism."[13] For Nicholls,

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11. See Marks, "Natal, the Zulu Royal family and the ideology of segregation".

12. For the wider pattern of heightened militancy and the reasons for it, see S. Marks and S. Trapido, "The politics of race, class and nationalism in twentieth century South Africa", in the book of that title edited by Marks and Trapido (London, 1986).

13. Killie Campbell Library [KCL], Durban, South Africa. Ms. Nic.2.08.1 KCM 3348, Heaton Nicholls to J.H. van Zutphen, 28 May 1929. Cf. also UG 48, Native Affairs Commission, 1936, 6, where it is argued that

> the alternative of turning the Native into a lower class of the population must result, not only in the engulfing of the ethnos of the Bantu race in a black proletariat with loss of every vestige of independence and communal brotherhood, which is the greatest birthright of the Native people, but also, and inevitably, it will result in class war -- a war waged between sections of the community of unequal strength and power in which the proletariat and the bourgeoisie can be easily distinguished from each other by the colour of their skin.

Quoted in M. Legassick, "Race, Industrialization and Social Change in South Africa: the case of R.F.A. Hoernlé", African Affairs, no. 299 (1976), 236.

Cf. also Ms. 2.08.1 KCM 3362c, R.F.A. Hoernlé to Heaton Nicholls, 26 July 1937:

> A few weeks ago I read an article of yours contributed to the South African supplement of the "Daily Telegraph". I was very much interested in your presentation there of the case for trusteeship and especially in two of your phrases, viz. "Bantu Nation vrs Bantu Proletariat" and "Paramountcy of Native interests in Native area". Speaking for myself I am willing to back any policy which aims at the

as for many others, there was a direct connection between politics and "racial purity". Through "Bantu communalism" and the bolstering of the position of the Zulu monarchy, Nicholls also hoped to foster "Bantu race pride" and thus prevent that bogey of the white racist imagination, miscegenation.[14]

In 1937 the Zulu Cultural Society was founded by Albert Luthuli, later to become President of the ANC and a winner of the Nobel Prize.[15] In its origins, it shared Inkatha's objective of fighting for state recognition of the scion of the Zulu royal house as Paramount, and added to it a concern for the preservation of Zulu tradition and custom at a time when these seemed to be disintegrating in the face of the pressures of proletarianization and urbanization. With the Zulu Regent, Mshiyeni kaDinizulu, and the South African Minister of Native Affairs as patrons, the society was, par excellence, an

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> realisation of these objectives, and if that is the direction in which you and your colleagues on the [Native Affairs] Commissions are working, more power to your elbow."

14. Cf. KCL. Ms. Nic.2.08.1 KCM 3362d, carbon copy fragments of a letter, addressee and date unknown, but probably 1930-31:

> The policy of a Bantu nation as distinct from that of a black proletariat -- and that stripped of all verbiage, that is the real issue in Africa -- obviously brings in its train a pride of race. The most race proud man I know is Solomon [(kaDinizulu), son and heir of the last Zulu king]. He glories in his race and its past prowess; and there is no native in the Union who is so ernestly desirous of maintaining Bantu purity.

The use of the term :"race purity" is somewhat ironic in view of Solomon's known promiscuity and the fact that at this very time many of his wives were suffering from venereal disease, having been infected by Solomon himself. See R. Reyner, Zulu Woman (New York, 1948).

15. See A. Luthuli, Let My People Go (London, 1962), 37-8. Luthuli's involvement with the Zulu Society and the paramountcy was quite intense until 1945, and he depended on its support for his election to the Native Representative Council. By the end of 1945, however, he had become disillusioned with the conservative character of the Society. See note 45 below.

instrument of the Zulu Christian intelligentsia. It is not accidental that it was Heaton Nicholls who persuaded the Native Affairs Department in Pretoria to finance the Zulu Society to the tune of £ 250 per annum. The funding was to last ten years. For his efforts, Charles Mpanza, the indefatigable first secretary of the Society, whose salary was paid by the grant, enthusiastically -- and shrewdly -- described Nicholls as

> a staunch friend of the Zulu Society -- and why not keep him so! -- between you and me, Sir, the gentleman is going up the ladder and may find his way to State Ministry konamanje -- so it is not without reward to play "good" with him. . . .[16]

From the first, the Zulu Society also had strong links with the Native Affairs Department in Natal, and it received the warm support of H.C. Lugg, Natal's Commissioner for Native Affairs, a man who was also keenly aware of the glories of the Zulu past.

The Zulu ethnic movement, like segregation itself, can be seen as a response to the immense social dislocations which resulted from capitalist development in South Africa. As increasing numbers of people were pushed into the towns in search of work, social relations in the countryside were transformed and whole communities disrupted.[17] The cheap labor system and the racist ideology which accompanied South Africa's industrialization exacerbated the tensions. In the 1920s these forces produced a turbulent and at time radical response from Natal's migrant workers and peasants. Although the province had witnessed little of the immediate post-World War I upheavals manifested on the Rand, by the second half of the 1920s there had been a marked change, as the ICU, first organized in Durban by that fiery populist, Allison Wessels George Champion, spread

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16. Natal Archives, Pietermaritzburg. Papers of the Zulu Society (ZS). ZS III/7, Mpanza to the President, 28 March 1937. Nicholls was widely regarded as the United Party's next Minister for Native Affairs, but his pro-imperial stance and anti-Afrikaner sentiments foreclosed this possibility.

17. The literature on the connections between industrialization and segregation is now considerable, and it owes much to three unpublished papers by Martin Legassick in the early 1970s. It has been developed most recently in a comparative context by John W. Cell, Segregation. The Highest Stage of White Supremacy (Cambridge, 1982). See also M. Lacey, Working for Boroko (Johannesburg, 1982). Some of the connections may be glimpsed in the explicit statements by Heaton Nicholls in notes 13 and 14 above.

dramatically through the Natal countryside. The expansion of wattle plantations and sheep farming in the Natal midlands in the 1920s led to the eviction of tens of thousands of labor tenants and the increased exploitation of many more. At the same time, the Christian African petty bourgeoisie were experiencing intensified economic hardships and racial discrimination particularly in the wake of the Labour-National Party victory of 1924 and the introduction of its "civilised labour policy". These pressures cut across classes, radicalized the African petty bourgeoisie, and brought about the coalescence of a middle-level Christian and educated leadership and the recently dispossessed around the symbols of Zulu ethnic consciousness.

In the countryside, mass militancy expressed in work stoppages, a demand for increased wages, and general "insolence and insubordination", led to a backlash in which angry white farmers burnt down ICU offices and clamored for state intervention against a movement which threatened rural stability. In Durban, the ICU organized beer boycotts which resulted in a white mob attack on ICU headquarters in 1929, while a demonstration organized by the Communist Party on "Dingane's Day" the following year was fired on by the police who shot the leader, Johannes Nkosi.[18] Five years of militant action by Africans had gained little in an immediate sense and saw instead the passage of ever more draconian security measures, such as the 1927 Native Administration Act and the 1930 Riotous Assemblies (Amendment) Act.[19] The death of Nkosi and the banishment of Champion led to a lull in urban politics in the 1930s and 1940s, which was only broken by the violence of the 1949 Indian riots.

There were a variety of reasons for this apparent

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18. For events in the Natal countryside, see H. Bradford, "The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union", passim; "Mass movements and the petty bourgeoisie: the social origins of ICU leadership, 1924-1929", Journal of African History, 25, 3 (1984); and "Lynch Law and labourers: the ICU in Umvoti, 1927-8", Journal of Southern African Studies, 11 (1984). For the beer boycotts, see P. la Hausse, "The Struggle for the city, alcohol, the ematsheni and popular culture in Durban, 1902-1936" (Unpub. MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 1984), passim. For Champion's role and his banishment, see S. Marks, The ambiguities of dependence in South Africa. Class, Race and Nationalism in twentieth century Natal (Baltimore and Johannesburg, 1986), chapter 3.

19. For the 1927 Native Administration Act, see Saul Dubow, "Holding 'a just balance between white and black': the Native Affairs Department in South Africa, c. 1920-1933" Journal of Southern African Studies, 12, 2 (1986).

quiescence. The world Depression, drought between 1931 and 1936, and a malaria epidemic which raged in the early 1930s imposed their own constraints on political action. Many of the unemployed who had fuelled the working class militancy of the late 1920s in Durban were removed from the city as the Depression began to bite. In the rural areas, in 1933 sporadic violent protest against tax collectors and dipping schemes failed to lead to a revival of the rural political activism of the late 1920s. In part because of the urgency of the agrarian issue, and in part because of the role of the Zulu Regent, Mshiyeni, in dampening down local opposition, Natal's conservative black leadership remained largely outside the bitter protest over Hertzog's bill to remove the African franchise in the Cape.[20] Instead, the Rev. John Dube, Natal's leading political figure, was closely involved in advocating Heaton Nicholl's land settlement and development schemes in these years. Promises that the reserves would be extended and developed locally seemed more important than African political rights in the Cape Province.[21] At the same time, the rivalry between Champion, who had returned to Durban in 1932, and Dube, and the divisions between the Natal Native Congress, the Natal African Congress and the ANC (Natal Branch), and similar divisions between independent fragments of the ICU all claiming the mantle of the parent organization, speak of a factionalism born of frustration.[22] None of these splinter groups seem to

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20. See Luthuli, Let My People Go, 95. Mshiyeni's role comes out clearly in the account given by Carl Faye, a clerk in the Native Affairs Department, "Resumee of proceedings", Annexure 5 to "Bantu Conference held in the Umgeni Court, Pietermaritzburg, 22-25th October, 1935", in Natal Archives, Chief Native Commissioner's Papers, Box 110 (Provisional numbering) CNC 94/19 N1/15/5.

21. S. Marks, "The Ambiguities of dependence: John L. Dube of Natal", Journal of Southern African Studies, 1 (1975), 176-9.

22. The rivalry between Champion and Dube was legendary; it continued until the latter's death in 1946. It almost led to legal action between Champion and the Natal Native Congress leaders in 1939 -- only prevented through the action of ANC national leaders. (See, e. g., Calata to Champion, 27 Dec. 1939 and 10 Jan. 1940 [microfilm of the Carter-Karis Collection, CKM 15a XxC3:41/9, 10; J.S. Malinga, Sec, NNC to Champion, 17 Nov. 1939; 41/41, J.T. Gumede to Champion, 24 Nov. 1939). (The President of the NNC at this time was John Dube, the Vice President, A. Mtimkulu; by this time Champion was the Secretary for Lands and Locations in the national ANC; letters between Champion and Dube, ibid. 41/28-30, 1939). For the various ICU factions, see D. 4683 (Hoover Library microfilm of Champion papers) I 32, passim. For splits in the Durban ICU, D.4683 I

have had much of a constituency to speak of. Fighting each other, the elite had little energy and less inclination to mobilize the wider constituency of the oppressed and underprivileged.

The co-optive strategies of both the local state and the central state as embodied both in the Durban municipality and the Chief Native Commissioner also had some success in diverting African energies into different channels. Thus the establishment first of the Urban Native Advisory Board in Durban and then of forms of electoral politics through the establishment of the "Native senators" and elections for the Native Representative Council under the Hertzog legislation seems to have absorbed a great deal of the political energies of the leading political figures.[23] In addition, a more sophisticated native administration attempted to set up its own collaborative machinery through meetings of chiefs and "prominent natives" in a bid to oust more radical leaders.[24] It is in this context and in the relative vacuum left by the disintegration of formal political activities that the formation of the Zulu Society as a cultural organization by the Natal Bantu Teachers' Association should be understood. It also opened up a new opportunity for the state and diverted energies away from more radical answers to the very real problems posed by increasing proletarianization and urbanization.

Social Disintegration and Changing Zulu Mores

That these problems had attained a degree of urgency in the 1930s and that the social dislocation was considerable there can be little doubt. In Natal, from the beginning of the 20th century, white missionaries and administrators had deplored the disintegration of "tribal discipline" as Africans were

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1933 37. "Report on Internal Differences. ICU Yase Natal, 1932-3"; and ibid. 1934-44, Champion to Kadalie, 8 Oct. 1937.

23. See, for example, the letters between Champion and ? Xaba in 1939 and Champion and W.J. Gobhozi from 1937 in CKM 15a, passim.

24. See, for example, CNC16/19 N/1/9/3 (H.C. Lugg) to SNA Pretoria, 2 March 1935. Cf. also Champion to Editor, Natal Mercury, 13 April 1939: "The Government eventually got certain school teachers to organise the Zulu Society which is carrying on a sort of propaganda whose aims and objects are not known to many native leaders."

increasingly proletarianized and in contact with whites in town. As early as 1904, James Stuart, then Assistant Magistrate in Durban, and to become one of the foremost recorders of African oral tradition, outlined what he saw as a "crisis" resulting from the "multifarious commercial tendencies" which were acting to transform African "ancient habits and customs, their beliefs and modes of being".[25] As David Hemson puts it, "Stuart projected the most radical pessimism." He saw a direct relationship between insubordination in the towns and disruption in traditional social life and the rapid spread of venereal disease.[26] His response to the growth of individualism and lawlessness was simple: "moderate corporal punishment" for the youth and a return to traditional mores in relation to women, whose "universal immorality" was regarded as largely responsible for the current wave of lawlessness.[27]

In their concern with the loss of control, the views of patriarchal administrators echoed the complaints of African chiefs, headmen and homestead heads who maintained bitterly before the Natal Native Affairs Commission of 1906-7 that

> our young people are getting out of hand, instead of recognizing and obeying their fathers and guardians they disobey and sometimes disown them. Sons, who should be working for the house [homestead], appropriate all their earnings to themselves, daughters flaunt their elders to their face, and, duty disowned, claim a right to go to towns or mission stations.[28]

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25. See Colony of Natal, Blue Book on Native Affairs, 1904 (Pietermaritzburg, 1904), 72-8, passim.

26. D. Hemson, "Migrant Labour and Class Consciousness: dockworkers in Durban" (Unpub. Ph.D. disseration, University of Warwick, 1980), 112-3. According to Cope, "Zulu Royal Family", "syphilis in Zululand and Northern Natal had reached 'epidemic proportions' in 1910. Curiously, he maintains that the high incidence of venereal disease amongst migrant workers decreased from about 1914 and that "after the post-war influenza pandemic the Zulu were relatively disease-free until the malaria epidemic of the 1930s." (pp. 50, 155). That syphilis died away seems unlikely, but there was undoubtedly a fresh "moral panic" about venereal disease in the 1930s after a lull after World War I.

27. Blue Book on Native Affairs, 1904, 72-4.

28. M.S. Evans, White and Black in South East Africa (London, 1916), 82. Evans was one of the Commissioners.

Probably even more distressing for African men was the extent to which black women were a prey to the lusts of white men. Behind the racist terminology of the Commissioners lurks the intense pain of a people whose ruthless exploitation was not only economic, but also sexual.[29]

Drawing on their perceptions of the English industrial revolution and British problems of urban poverty, white observers sought to fend off the rapid transformation of Africans into a proletariat and its concomitant, class conflict, through an attempt to restore "traditional values" and institutions. Stuart was obsessed with this necessity, and he devoted much of his life to shoring up what he saw as Zulu "tradition." His dedication to the recording of African oral history and to writing vernacular histories for use in African schools was part of this endeavor. M.S. Evans, a man who could fairly be described as "a friend of the natives" with all the ambiguity that that phrase implies, put the issues with much force in 1916:

> They [the Africans] are utterly unprepared for such a violent change as is implied in the transference of large numbers from their present environment to the industrial life of cities. Galling as it may be to the captain of industry to see thousands of more or less intelligent, exceptionally strong men and women all around and yet unavailable to him, the position would be made infinitely more difficult and embarrassing by any relief which could be given by breaking up their present life, and with it all standards of conduct and the all-wholesome restraints to which they are accustomed. Torn from the present controls and sanctions and plunged into the whirlpool of city and industrial life, without even the occasional return to sweeter and healthier conditions, makes one who knows them shudder for their future. And if our own race life is to remain pure and our ideals uncontaminated, equally for us would such a course be disastrous. At whatever sacrifice of possible economic developments, the remedy of the present difficulty is not by rapid, and what may been easy adjustment, but by more gradual means, at least as much of conservation as of

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29. Colony of Natal, Report of the Native Affairs Commissioner, 1906-7 (Pietermaritzburg, 1907), 17, 25, which stresses in particular the extent to which the "debauchment of their girls" was "one of their principal grievances." As the Commission expressed it, "nothing is more calculated . . . to stretch the endurance of even the most submissive people to the breaking point."

transformation.[30]

By the mid-1930s, the increase in the African urban population was an even greater cause for alarm, especially as the rate of increase for African women was even faster than that for men, particularly in Durban. Between 1931 and 1936 the ferocious drought which ravaged Zululand and Natal pushed an increasing number of people from the land, while the recovery of South Africa's economy from the Depression and the rapid expansion of manufacturing industry in the second half of the 1930s brought an open-ended demand for additional labor. Thus, whereas in 1921 there were 46,000 men and just over 8400 African women in urban areas in Natal, by 1936 this had risen to 90,400 men and 37,600 women.[31] While the size of the increase was affected by the redrawing of Durban's municipal boundaries to take in the peri-urban areas in 1930, this was itself a reflection of the rapid growth in the population around the town and the social problems which were arising. The increase over the next decade was also as sharp: in 1946 there were 139,000 African men and 69,700 women in Natal's towns.[32] In addition, many Natal Africans had by this time settled permanently or temporarily on the Witwatersrand.

In the face of the rapid social change and manifest violence, poverty, and social dislocation in the towns which resulted, patriarchal fears amongst African men also intensified and it is not surprising that there were renewed demands for a return to the "Zulu" way of life and for increased controls over women and youth.

The Selection and Assembling of an Ethnic Ideology

The complexities of the traditionalism which imbued the

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30. Evans, Black and White in South East Africa. 150-1.

31. Union of South Africa, UG 51-1949, Population Census, 7th May, 1946, Vol. 1. Geographical Distribution of the Population of the Union of South Africa (Pretoria, 1949), table 7, pp. 28-9. I have changed the numbers to the nearest hundred. The rise for Durban was from 27,000 African men and 1500 African women in Durban proper and 12,700 and 5100 in the "rural areas" around Durban in 1921 to 53,700 men and 30,700 women (with 1500 men and 18 women in "rural Durban") in 1936, to 81,500 men and 30,000 women (856 and 12 in "rural" Durban) in 1946. Ibid., 24.

32. Ibid., 28.

ethnic ideologues should not be underestimated, however. While proclaiming the virtues of their past and the wholesomeness of traditions, the "new African" was too much a product of the mission station and western culture to give unreserved approval to an unconditional return to "tribal" life. Moreover, precisely because restructured ethnicity was designed to forge an alliance between members of the Christian intelligentsia and landowners and the precolonial ruling class, it was never free of tension. The ideology was composed of disparate elements drawn from very different traditions: on the one hand, precolonial ideology focused around the Zulu king, as the symbol of the unity of the nation; on the other, the aspirations of Christian converts imbued with 19th century notions not only of progress and improvement but also of universalism, the possibilities of individual assimilation to western norms and a constitutional monarchy. Born of the contradiction between the promise of progress and the reality of conquest and exploitation, as Tom Nairn has suggested, the mobilization of nationalism or ethnic consciousness is everywhere both backward and forward looking. In the Third World, as "newly awakened elites" have "discovered that tranquil incorporation into the cosmopolitan technocracy was possible for only a few of them at a time", they were thrown onto their own resources and sought to mobilize their societies for advance. This could, however, be done in terms of

> what was there; and the point of the dilemma was that there was nothing -- none of the economic and political institutions of modernity now so needed.
>
> All that there was was the people and peculiarities of the region: its inherited ethnos, speech, folklore, skin-colour and so on. . . . People are what [nationalism] has to go on: in the archetypal situation of the really poor or "underdeveloped" territory, it may be more or less all that nationalists have going for them. For kindred reasons it has to function through highly rhetorical forms, through a sentimental culture sufficiently accessible to the lower strata now being called into battle. This is why a romantic culture quite remote from Enlightenment rationalism always went hand in hand with the spread of nationalism. The new middle-class intelligentsia of nationalism had to invite the masses into history; and the invitation card had to be written in a language they understood.[33]

This dilemma was well expressed by the Rev. John Dube before the Native Economic Commission in 1930. On being pressed by one of

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33. T. Nairn, The Break up of Britain (London, 1977), 340.

the Commissioners on whether he could "reconcile the tribal system with progress", he replied:

> Well, it is the only thing we have and I think that if it were properly regulated, it would be the best. The tribal system has many advantages and I cannot get away from it. It is under the tribal system that the land is help [sic] by our Natives and, if I want land, I cannot get away from it. If I want land, I must associate the occupation of the land with the tribal system. . .[34]

Yet his was no unconditional support for "tradition" either, despite Dube's adherence to the Zulu monarchy and his key role in the Zulu Society. As late as 1925 he categorically denounced the practice of lobola [bridewealth], which was by this time gaining acceptance by white missionaries and administrators as a protection for women:

> The women who respond more quickly to the preaching of the Gospel are confronted with the difficulties of lobola. This custom is a great hindrance to the spread of the Gospel. So long as our women are looked upon as an asset of commercial value, so long will the progress of the Native be retarded. An unprejudiced diagnosis of the custom will show it is at the root of many things that hamper the progress of the Native people . . . Why is it that Natives who have worked on the farms of Europeans since boyhood . . . so soon as they return to home revert to their old sluggish habits, saying I bought my wife to do all my work. Those who have learnt to cook for the best white families, when back in their homes do not even make an attempt to improve old time methods. All this can be traced to the evil of lobola.[35]

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34. 1930-32 Native Economic Commission, Evidence, 6268. (Although the Report of the 1930-32 NEC was published at the Government Printer's, Pretoria, as UG 22-'32, the evidence was not, and it only exists in a variety of TSS in South African libraries, of which the most complete is at University of South Africa, Pretoria. The School of Oriental and African Studies, London, has an almost complete microfilm.)

35. Rev. J.L. Dube, "The arrest of progress of Christianity among the heathen tribes of South Africa", The Evangelisation of S. Afr. Report of the Sixth General Missionary Conference of South Africa, held at Johannesburg, June 30th - July 3rd 1925 (Cape Town, 1925), 64.

In a letter to J.S. Marwick, the key representative of Natal commercial farming interests in the Union parliament and, like Heaton Nicholls, an ardent opponent of the ICU, Dube put his position even more explicitly. After denouncing ICU leaders with their "misleading and dangerous propaganda, their absurd promises, their international socialistic inclinations and communism", Dube argued that the victory of "socialistic" doctrines

> would mean the breaking down of parental control and restraint, tribal responsibility and our whole traditions, -- the whole structure upon which our Bantu nation rests . . . We have got to maintain . . . the sense of paternal and tribal responsibility by Bantu traditions with all its obligations of courage, honour, truth, loyalty and obedience for all we are worth . . . Don't think for one moment that I am not progressive. I am anxious as any man could be for the development of my people, but on the right lines.[36]

The same ambiguities can be seen in the position of almost all the Zulu-speaking intelligentsia of this period. Thus, for all their preoccupation with the "traditional", a call to the past was intended to bolster more mundane preoccupations. As small landowners and petty entrepreneurs, leading members of both Inkatha and the Zulu Society had a concern with rural "development." According to Nicholas Cope, the initial impulse behind the formation of Inkatha by the Northern Natal petty bourgeoisie was able to enable them to cooperate with rural chiefs in the purchase and development of land: "Inkatha was seen as a means through which commercial agriculture could be set underway on land purchased ostensibly by a 'tribe' -- non tribal land-buying syndicates had been practically outlawed following the 1913 [Natives Land] Act."[37] Albert Luthuli himself revived the Groutville Cane Growers' Association and founded the Natal and Zululand Bantu Cane Growers' Association, which were designed to foster the interests of the small-scale African sugar growers and negotiate on their behalf with millers. In 1942, when he stood for election to the Native Representative Council with Zulu Society support, his platform included a request to the government for "more help . . . to the rural community in their

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36. MS MAR 2.08.5 File 74, KCM 8337, 24 Feb. 1928, cited in Cope, "The Zulu Royal Family", 301.

37. Cope, "The Zulu Royal Family", 156.

farming operations"; the establishment of "a Land Bank for Bantus"; improvements in the general status of chiefs and chiefs' courts; the acquisition of land by the government for Africans; local government or councils in "advanced communities" such as Edendale; the extension of education in rural areas; and "more civilized salaries for black teachers."[38]

The Chairman of the Zulu Society, A.H. Ngidi, had far more ambitious economic schemes which he hoped the Zulu Society would promote. Perhaps influenced by the successes of the 1939 Afrikaner Volkskongress in mobilizing Afrikaner resources for the promotion of Afrikaner capital, by 1945 Ngidi was writing to the Secretary of the Society about vast commercial ventures and the rehabilitation of the reserves "agriculturally, industrially, commercially, educationally and socially." He argued that the Zulu should be persuaded to sell their cattle in order to accumulate capital to start stores "and displace Indians and Europeans as exploiters of the people" -- the irony was doubtless unintended![39]

The language of economic ethnic mobilization is very explicit:

> The feeling that we should extricate and help ourselves out of the present predicament of exclusive exploitation by cosmopolitan non-African South Africans and overseas white markets ought by now to instil us with a very strong sense of racial solidarity, loyalty and mutual confidence. . . Our organisations must be principally NATIONAL. Basic Nationalism or Africanism. This is the dominant note in the National Orchestra of National Life. Other issues, religious, political, professional, vocational, agricultural, industrial, commercial, educational, economic and social must be dealt with under clear cut AFRICAN NATIONALISM.[40]

This self-conscious Africanism did not lead to any disengagement from the state, however. Ngidi had grandiose schemes for the reserves, premissed on the reduction of African livestock, which should be preceded by the regulation and

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38. ZS II/5, Luthuli to Mapanza, 22 May 1942.

39. ZS IV/1/3, Ngidi to Mpanza, encl. Tss not signed, but initialled "AHN".

40. Ibid. Capitals in original.

definition of all occupied land, and on the closer settlement of all reserves in Natal and Zululand, which he thought should include special zones for townships and be divided into a third for cultivation and two-thirds for commonage and houses.[41] As Mpanza remarked, apparently without sarcasm, Ngidi's ideas about cattle-culling were "a wonderful means of our indirect co-operation with the present aims of the NAD".[42] Mpanza himself saw no contradiction in his collaboration with the Native Affairs Department: as he saw it, it was important to co-operate with the "Department of our Affairs (i.e. building up necessarily the relations with a department that stands between the Nation and the present-day recognised Government). . . It is necessary to 'Ride on a tamed elephant to hunt elephants.'"[43]

The preparedness of Mpanza and the President to play along with the Native Affairs Department, especially during the war years, when Mpanza broadcast government propaganda in Zulu on the South African Broadcasting Corporation and, together with the Regent, Mshiyeni, encouraged African recruitment, led many of the more prominent African political figures in Natal to dissociate themselves from the organization.[44] There were differences, too, over the Society's readiness to accept the education of African children in the vernacular, although it was its support for the "betterment of the reserves" which was the most sensitive issue for those with a finger on the popular political pulse. By 1946, Selby Msimang, Selby Ngcobo, A.W.G. Champion, and ultimately even Dube and Luthuli had all left the organization.[45] In that year

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41. ZS II/13, Ngidi to Mpanza, 1 Nov. 1945.

42. ZS III/13, Mpanza to Ngidi, 29 Nov. 1945.

43. ZS III/1/7, Mpanza to H.I.E. Dhlomo, 28 Dec. 1943.

44. So unpopular were the Regent's war efforts that in 1942 it was reported that he was "nearly stabbed by one of his own men at Mome, [and] someone else threw a big stone . . . at him in his tent . . . at Eshowe." ZS II/7, A.W. Dhlamini to Mpanza, 17 March 1942.

45. Selby Ngcobo was the first to express his disaffection, when he resigned from the Zulu Society and the Natal Bantu Teachers' Association in 1939, although the grounds are not clear. (See ZS VI/1, Ngcobo to Mpanza, 30 June 1939.) Although in 1944 Luthuli called the members of the Zulu Society his "great friends", by the end of 1945 Ngidi was warning Mpanza that Luthuli "has industriously and consistently of late absented himself from all our Z.S. Executive meetings." (ZS II/17, Luthuli to Mpanza, 4

Mpanza himself left to take up a position organizing railway workers on behalf of the Department of Harbours and Railways.[46]

At the same time, the 1940s saw the development of a far more powerful pan-South African nationalist feeling which was channeled into the revitalized ANC. Once the conservative Dube had been ousted from the presidency of the Natal branch, this became the natural focus for African political aspirations. The inter-war flirtation by the Natal elite with ethnic nationalism nonetheless left its legacy, and it remained a powerful force at different levels in society, mediating perceptions of and responses to at times traumatic social change.

That this should have been the case was deeply rooted in the history, culture and ideology of Natal's intelligentsia. It was a history, culture and ideology full of contradictions as the African petty bourgeoisie tussled with the attractions of assimilation to the hegemonic European life-style and the impossibility of its achievement in South Africa's racially-defined society. There were tensions between what was seen as valuable in African culture, recently discovered by the new science of anthropology, and their self-definition as a respectable, Christian bourgeoisie. Nor was this a new phenomenon amongst the African Christian intelligentsia in the 1920s and 1930s.[47]

Jan. 1944 and ZS II/13, Ngidi to Mpanza, 1 Nov. 1945.) Cf. ZS II/15, Luthuli to President, 19 Jan. 1946, where Luthuli excused himself from the Zulu Society Conference, allegedly because he had been called home on urgent business, and asked that his name as seconder of Ngidi's "subject on African townships" be omitted "because as I pointed out even as a society we had not come to a common policy on the matter even apart from the matter being linked with high African politics. Towns are not artificially sponsored, but grow around industries or fairly mass occupation with labour legislation. . . What chance have Africans under the present economic state?" A.W.G. Champion was never a vigorous supporter of the Zulu Society, and Ngidi accused him also of "working very hard [with Luthuli] to undermine the very life of the Zulu Society, or at least its present office-bearers". (ZS II/13, Ngidi to Mpanza, 1 Nov. 1945.)

46. ZS II/7, President to Mpanza, 30 Jan. 1946. Mpanza actually left in November 1945.

47. According to Donovan Williams, this was acutely experienced by the Scottish-trained African missionary, Tiyo Soga, in the 19th century. See D. Williams, Umfundisi. A Biography of Tiyo Soga (Lovedale, 1979). Andre Odendaal, Vukani Bantu! The beginnings of black protest politics in South Africa to 1912

For all the tensions, however, it is clear that there were always more ties between the amakholwa in Natal and wider African society than the 19th century missionaries who were anxious to establish totally self-contained Christian communities would have liked. Tim Couzens, for example, shows the shift in the ideas of the Dhlomo brothers, H.I.E and R.R.R., both of them prominent writers and intellectuals who were educated in the traditions of mission Christianity at Edendale, Amanzimtoti and, in the case of Rolfes Dhlomo, at John Dube's Christian Ohlange. Rolfes Dhlomo was initially imbued with "an earnest didactic" Christianity which condemned traditional culture and led to his writing An African Tragedy, the first novel by an African to be published in English. In typically anti-modernist fashion, and following much missionary preaching, it dealt with the evils of city life. His anti-modernism came, however, to be paralleled by an interest in the Zulu past.[48] "Respectability" came to be joined with ethnic consciousness.[49] In 1928 Rolfes Dhlomo was writing in Ilanga lase Natal (28 Dec.): "Our folklore and historical records must be preserved from dying out, anything of racial pride, by means of a literature, otherwise these will be lost forever and our connection with the past forgotten."[50] He went on to write a series of historical novels about the heroes of the Zulu past -- Shaka, Dingane, Mpande, and Cetshwayo.

It is in the Zulu Society that many of the ambiguities of this cultural nationalism were expressed. Albert Luthuli, then a teacher at Adams and President of the Natal Bantu Teachers'

(Cape Town, 1983) shows that in the 19th century Eastern Cape "the educated élite who participated in the new western forms of politics . . . were much more tied to their own communities and much more concerned with traditional matters than has been realised." (p. xii).

48. The material on and quotations from R.R.R. Dhlomo come from T. Couzens, "The New Africa. Herbert Dhlomo and Black South African Literature, 1903-1956" (Unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1981).

49. See G.L. Mosse, "Nationalism and respectability: normal and abnormal sexuality in the nineteenth century", Journal of Contemporary History, 17, 2 (1982).

50. Cited in Couzens, The New African", 308.

Association, who took the initiative in its establishment as an auxiliary of the Teachers' Association, described his motives many years later:

> I believed then, as I do now, that an authentic, comprehensive South African culture will grow in its own way. This will not be determined by cultural societies, but they may influence it. It seemed to me that African teachers ought to play some part in its process.
>
> We were thoroughly aware of the meeting of cultures, African and European, and of the disorganisation of both . . . as a result. We did not have the desire of the Nationalists that we should return to the primitive. But we did have an intense wish to preserve what is valuable in our heritage while discarding the inappropriate and outmoded. Our people were ill-equipped to withstand the impact of a twentieth century industrial society. Our task seemed to consist of relating the past coherently to the present and the future.[51]

An appendix to the Charter of the Society, published in 1939, captures the flavor of what was being sought, asserting that "Not all customs are suitable in modern times, but instead of thoughtless elimination, there should be 'the substitution of something better.'" One of its enumerated principles saw the Divine Hand in the separate existence of the Zulu people:

> 55.) It is plain that responsible opinion is unanimously in favour of the Zulus being established always, retaining what is of good repute in the Heritage that was given them by the other Great Owner of Nations to distinguish the Zulus from other nations in giving them their individuality severally. Thus the Zulus may appear with their own traditional sacred anthem, not an anthem borrowed from other peoples.[52]

These were not, however, the only objectives of the Zulu Society. Perhaps influenced by Rolfes Dhlomo's plea and practice of nearly a decade earlier, a major task of the Society was the collecting of Zulu folklore and traditions for publication, that archetypal activity of the ethnically aware intelligentsia, and

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51. Luthuli, Let My People Go, 37-8.

52. Natal Archives, Acc. no. 302, Charter of the Zulu Society.

in this too, they appear to have received the support of the Chief Native Commissioner for Natal, H.C. Lugg, and his clerk, Carl Faye. Clearly, collecting folklore was far more acceptable an activity than political agitation.

Even more important, as in the case of the Inkatha of the late 1920s, one of the Society's major objectives was to gain state recognition of the Zulu monarchy. As the President of the Zulu Society, A.W. Dhlamini, put it, "The pivot of the Z.S. is the Paramount Chieftainship of the Zulus."[53] By 1939 they had so far succeeded that the government agreed to recognize the Regent as the Acting Paramount Chief of the Zulu, although the law made no provision for such a title and it had not been accorded by law to any chief in the Union, "although it had become the practice in the Transkei for the Chiefs of Eastern and Western Pondoland to assume the title."[54] For all the triumph of this moment, in the end it was probably its close involvement in the Zulu royal family politics, and especially the politics of the succession, which fatally weakened the Zulu Society in 1948, when the royal family began to back Cyprian as heir to Solomon kaDinizulu, and not Thandayipi, whom the Society had been grooming for the office.[55]

The patronage of Mshiyeni and the Zulu Society's support for him were seen as crucial to the Society's activities. By the second half of the 1930s the Regent had established himself as the key political figure in both Zululand and Natal, capable apparently of quelling "faction fights", which the government had been unable to suppress for years, the "kingmaker" both in relation to the elections of the white Senators, like Edgar Brookes, who represented African interests in Parliament, and in relation to elections to the Native Representative Council. No official occasion was complete without his attendance. He and fellow members of the Zulu royal family played a key role in settling the standards of Zulu "custom" and "etiquette" and were crucial to the state's policies of co-optation and social control.[56]

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53. ZS II/7, Dhlamini to Mpanza, 6 Nov. 1945.

54. Natal Archives. Chief Native Commissioner's files: Box 110 (provisional numbering), CNC 94/19, Part II, "Conference of Native Chiefs, Pietermaritzburg, 31st July, 1939."

55. Cf. ZS II/7, Dhlamini to Mpanza, 6 Nov. 1945, where he describes the reversal of the decision of the royal family to appoint Thandayiphi heir to Solomon kaDinizulu as "disastrous to the Society" and a "nullification of all our toil and sweat."

Behind the talk of etiquette and tradition, however, was a very real concern with the disintegration of the fabric of Zulu life under the impact of proletarianization and urbanization during the 1930s. In particular, as the Charter of the Zulu Society makes clear, there was the fear that the "departure from wholesome Zulu traditions" meant a lack of discipline in the home. Particularly "alarming" was the loss of control over women, as "mothers" of "our leading men, chiefs and counselors", and over the young, who "by force of circumstances, leave their homes at an early age to work in towns and to attend schools."[57] Only the monarchy, it was thought, could serve as a protection against these forces.

Neo-Traditionalism and the "Proper "Conduct of Zulu Women

It was in the position of African women that the forces of conservatism found a natural focus. For the Natal state and "traditional authorities" there was a common concern to control the movements of women, a key feature of their "alliance." In the attempt to slow down the processes of African proletarianization, African women played a crucial role. For African men fears over the loss of control over women were deeply rooted in the role which women had played in precapitalist society as the producers of labor power both in their own right and as the bearers of children -- future labor power. Jeff Guy has recently gone so far as to call this the "law of motion" of precapitalist societies in southern Africa and to see the division between men and women as the "class" cleavage in these societies.[58] Whatever the distortions resulting from 19th

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56. For Mshiyeni's role, see, for example, the records of the various meetings between state officials and the Zulu chiefs, reports of the Native Advisory Council, the correspondence between Edgar Brookes and the Zulu Society, and between Luthuli and the Zulu Society. His greatest coup was settling the so-called "faction fight" between different segments of the Embo people in 1934, after six years of intermittent strife and several deaths and injuries. See Natal Archives, Faye Papers, Box 11, "Record of Public Proceedings at Peace making ceremony at Mbumbulu Store, 19 Oct. 1934"; Natal Witness, 16 Oct. 1934. This was the first time that the Native Affairs Department had called on the services of the Zulu royal house to intervene in a dispute amongst Natal Africans.

57. Charter of the Zulu Society, sections 24 and 35.

58. Jeff Guy, "Analysing precapitalist societies in southern Africa", Journal of Southern African Studies, 13, 2 (1986).

century colonial perceptions, it is clear that in precapitalist Zulu society women were firmly subordinated to the homestead head, whether father or husband. Subject to the authority of father or husband, in the home of her in-laws, a woman was expected to remain deferential and to use a special language of respect, the hlonipa language, as a sign of her subordination. According to R. Finlayson, in a sympathetic account of the hlonipa language amongst Xhosa women:

> From the time that a woman enters her in-laws' home she may not pronounce words which have any syllable which is part of the names that occur among her husband's relatives. The hlonipa custom applies to the names of her father-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law's brothers and sisters and their wives and husbands and extending back as far as the great-grandfather. . . The woman is expected to hlonipa throughout her life. She is not allowed to treat this custom lightly and is subjected to severe public shame should she ignore the rules laid down for her.[59]

Severe as these constraints were, they were further tightened by the codification of "native law" in Natal in 1887, and its subsequent amendment. Although the Code "originated in an avowed attempt to free women from the tyranny of patriarchal power", according to H.J. Simons, it imposed "disabilities greater than those they endured in the old society." By the 1930s, unless specifically exempted from the provisions of "native law", they were regarded as perpetual minors, without legal status, and they had no independent right to own property and no access to cattle, the store of accumulated wealth and the symbol of power and prestige in Zulu society, other than that allocated to the "house."[60]

For James Stuart, even the provisions of the Natal Code were inadequate to control the growing "immorality" amongst African

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59. R. Finlayson, "Xhosa women's language of respect: isihlonipa sabafazi", unpublished paper presented at the Africa Studies Seminar, Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, Aug. 1985, 7-8.

60. H.J. Simons, African Women: Their legal status in South Africa (London, 1968), 202ff.

women "thanks to the introduction of European principles of civilisation." Like many an African patriarch, he deplored the fact that women now had some choice over their marriage partner and African males could no longer simply chastise their wives as they saw fit. "Raising the lot of the African woman" had led in his view to the general disintegration of African society, the delinquency and insolence of the young", and to "disrespect and lawlessness" in general.[61]

From the point of view of the state and capital in the first three decades of the century, there was an economic interest in keeping African women on the land and subject to the control of the homestead head, at least before manufacturing industry expanded on an unprecedented scale in the second half of the 1930s. In the first decades of the century, a double purpose was to be served by keeping African women on the land and out of the cities and towns: not only would the reproduction costs of the urban workforce be subsidized through the agricultural production in the rural reserves, a matter of much moment to the mining industry with its demand for vast supplies of cheap migrant labor; through their continued control over women, chiefs and headmen would also control the return of the young men to the reserves and white farms which still needed their seasonal labor. Their continued dependence on rural resources was thus ensured.[62] As the 1930-32 Native Economic Commission explained:

> The policy of the Urban Areas Act is to discourage the permanent settlement of Natives in towns. As a Native who has a family with him in town is much more likely to become a permanent town-dweller than a single man, obstacles are placed in the way of women coming to the towns.[63]

Under the 1923 Urban Areas Act, amended in 1930, the Governor General or any local authority had the power to prevent

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61. Colony of Natal, Blue Book on Native Affairs, 1904m 73-4.

62. Amelia Mariotti, "The incoporation of African women into wage employment in South Africa, 1920-1970" (Unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Connecticut, 1980), chapter 1. For the importance of tribal control over youth for the white farmers, see Cope, "The Zulu Royal Family", 315-21.

63. UG 22-'32, Union of South Africa, Native Economic Commission (Pretoria, 1932), 140, cited in Mariotti, "The incorporation of African women", 91-2.

any African woman from entering an urban area unless she had a certificate from an authorized officer. However, no such certificate was to be issued "to any female Native who is a minor in law without the consent of her guardian"; as all African women who were not specifically exempted from African law were regarded as legal minors, this gave considerable leverage to patriarchal authority. Only those women who could produce satisfactory proof that their husbands or fathers had been resident and continuously employed in an urban area for a period of not less than two years were entitled to be in town.[64] The tightening up of the legislation governing the influx of women into town in 1930, in the midst of the Depression, was no coincidence, even though under the impact of the economic revival in the second half of the 1930s the law became far more sporadically enforced, a matter of considerable complaint at all meetings between African chiefs and the administration.

Yet in the face of rural poverty and increasing opportunities in the towns, the patriarchal controls became ever more fragile. In 1937, at a meeting of chiefs and "other representative Natives" held at Eshowe, John Dube expressed the views of the assembled chiefs that the magistrates were "too lenient in dealing with their womenfolk." They asked "that punishments might be more severe, as leniency leads to their demoralisation." They appealed to the government to take even more "drastic steps to prevent the migration of women to the towns."[65] In 1939, on accepting a medal from the newly appointed Minister of Native Affairs, who was visiting Pietermaritzburg for the first time, Mshiyeni complained that the Zulu customs and traditions alluded to by the Minister were now being "ignored in regard to the control of wives and daughters -- fathers and husbands are helpless."[66]

Sibusisiwe Violet Makhanya, the first Zulu woman to train as a social worker in the United States on a scholarship in the 1920s, remarked on the change in the position of women even in

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64. Section 7 (a) and (d) of the Native (Urban Areas) Act, 1923. Amendment Act 1930 (n. 25), cited in Mariotti, "The incorporation of African women", on which this section draws heavily.

65. Natal Archives, CNC Papers, Box 110 (provisional numbering), CNC 94/19 N/1/15/5, Part IV, "Meeting of Chiefs etc at Eshowe, 28 July, 1937."

66. Ibid., Box 41 (provisional numbering), CNC 38/47/ N/1/7/2 (X): "Meeting of Chiefs with Minister of Native Affairs, Pietermaritzburg, 1939."

rural areas while giving evidence to the 1930-32 Native Economic Commission:

> . . . there is a keen desire for independence in the women and a keen desire for ownership. . . I know of cases in our district where, when the parents have died and the brothers have become heirs, the girls are not in any way provided for. I am thinking of one or two cases where the girls have actually left their homes and have gone to urban areas where they are working and providing for themselves, whereas in former times, 10 or 15 years ago, that would not have taken place, where the brother would have gone to the town and fetched the girls back to the kraal.
>
> And today the girls would resist that kind of thing? -- Yes, they would and when thinking of these things, one can say that the men are becoming powerless in that respect.
>
> Now would you say that the change in the attitude of women is becoming general, it is becoming widespread? -- Yes, it is becoming more and more so. . .[67]

By 1936, Sibusisiwe Makhanya, a woman who had deliberately gone in the face of African convention in her decision not to marry and to pursue an independent career, had become an Advisor to the Zulu Society. Her career illuminates many of the themes included in this essay and it is worth dwelling on it at some length. The daughter of converts of the Congregationalist American Board, who nevertheless "saw no incongruity in observing many of the old Zulu traditions", Sibusisiwe was born in 1894. Of prosperous peasant background, she was related to John Dube and was herself educated at the leading African schools of the American Board in Natal. Described as the "outstanding Zulu woman of her generation", a "living answer to the question, 'Why missions?'", she seemed to epitomize the American "adaptionist" model of education in Natal, although the reality was always more complex.[68] Even as a young woman Sibusisiwe -- or as she was

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67. Evidence, 1930-32 Native Economic Commission, 6314.

68. For Sibusisiwe Makhanya, see my introduction to "Not either an experimental doll": the Separate Worlds of Three South African Women (Pietermaritzburg, 1986). There is also an unpublished biography by M. Trowbridge, simply entitled "Sibusisiwe" [which means "We are blessed"] in the Killie Campbell Library, 3 parts. KCM 14343-5. The descriptive phrases are from the American Board Archives, Boston, AB 15.4, vol 41, M. Walbridge to M. Emerson, 20

better known in mission circles of that time, Violet -- had taken an interest in community affairs, and by the early 1920s she had started an organisation called the Bantu Purity League, in order to improve the "moral standards" of African girls. As Bertha Mkize put it subsequently, the League aimed "to keep the girls pure in the right way" -- at a time when the extent of premarital pregnancy, especially amongst Christian girls, was causing considerable alarm in black and white mission circles.[69]

Sibusisiwe's work both in the Bantu Purity League and in running a night school from her home in Umbumbulu led to her being awarded a scholarship to the United States of America, from whence she returned in 1930 as Natal's first black female social worker. In the United States she encountered the "seeds of race consciousness" and was influenced by the sense of "race pride" so much in evidence amongst black Americans in the inter-war period. It is clear from Sibusisiwe's somewhat "turbulent" career in America that she was no mere acceptor of white middle class values. Her concern with "purity" arose out of her own and her class's deeply felt experience. Her race consciousness was equally part of that deep experience, transmuted in the 1930s into a Zulu ethnic cultural consciousness.[70]

Sibusisiwe's concern with the "purity" of the "Zulu race" was shared by many other anxious observers in the 1930s, and there were very material foundations for their fears. By the beginning of the 20th century, changed patterns of child-rearing threw the burden of sex education on mothers rather than on grandmothers and the peer group as in the past: the result of mission abhorrence of female initiation ceremonies and the development of the nuclear family, especially among Christian Africans.[71] The migrant labor system which deprived villages of

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June 1927, and from "Miss Makhanya in Boston", Missionary Herald, Nov. 1927, 411.

69. Killie Campbell Oral History Transcripts: KCAV interview with Bertha Mkize, Durban.

70. This section draws heavily on Marks, "Not either an experimental doll", Introduction. For her stay in the United states, see R.H. Davis, "Producing the 'Good Africa': South Carolina's Penn School as a Guide for African Education in South Africa", in T.A. Mogomba and M. Nyaggah, Independence without Freedom: the political economy of colonial education in southern Africa (Santa Barbara, 1980), 83-112.

71. See D. Gaitskell's pioneering essay, "Wailing for purity: prayer unions, African mothers and adolescent daughters, 1912-

young men and put great pressures on the girls on their return exacerbated these problems at a time when safe forms of external sexual intercourse were either forgotten or frowned on by the church. At the same time, town, mission stations and colonial employment opened up opportunities to women who wished to escape unwelcome marriage partners and the constraints of a gerontocratic and patriarchal order. Both their potential independence and their vulnerability aroused a passionate response. In both town and countryside the rate of premarital pregnancy was high and the concern with adolescent purity intense. White colonial fears of miscegenation further fanned by the eugenicist ideas of the time articulated with the concerns of African men that their women were prey to men of other races and that they were losing control over "their" women and youth.

These fears were heightened in the late 1930s when medical experts began once more to reveal the ravages of venereal disease in both town and countryside. Apparently unknown in African society before the mineral revolution, syphilis was revealingly known amongst the Zulu as isifo sabelungu [the white man's disease] or isifo sedolopi [the town disease].[72] A number of surveys in the late 1930s showed a shocking state of affairs. Thus, in 1938-9, Kark and le Riche found the incidence of definitely positive Wasserman tests in an urban group was 23.6 percent, while in all rural areas it was 23.28 percent. Also in the late 1930s, Dr. George Gale estimated that the rate of infection of Africans in Pietermaritzburg was 2620 per 100,000 as judged by the occurrence of early cases under treatment. As Kark pointed out in an important review article in 1949, the evidence indicated that there was not only "a large mass of latent syphilis in the African populations, but also . . . a very high incidence of new infections each year. The process is taking place in highly urbanized areas, as well as in the more remote rural districts."[73]

1940", in S. Marks and R. Rathbone, eds., Industrialisation and Social Change: African class formation, culture and consciousness, 1870-1930 (London, 1982).

72. Cope, "The Zulu Royal family", records the use of the term izimpantsholo from the beginning of the century (50); S.L. Kark. "The social pathology of syphillis in Africans", South African Medical Journal, 23 (29 Jan. 1949), maintains that isifo sedolopi and isifo sabelungu were the only terms known. He was writing. however, nearly fifty years later, in 1949.

73. S.L. Kark, "The social pathology", 77-84. He also reviews the other literature cited.

In 1939, concerned by the extent of the disease in his own Nongoma district, the Regent Mshiyeni headed his list of issues to be raised at the meeting of the Native Representative Council to be held in Pretoria in November 1939, with a request to the government for hospitals and compulsory examinations for all families, "for the sole purpose of protecting this country . . . from a dreadful town disease [the Zulu term for syphilis] which . . . is threatening to destroy the whole country."[74] Sidney Kark had no such belief in the utility of hospitals and the control over women as a treatment for the scourge. As he pointed out in 1949, syphilis was socially produced by the nature of South Africa's industrial revolution which had

> profoundly disturbed the family stability and sexual mores of several million African people. Urbanization as a process is bound to disturb patterns of living which have been developed in a rural society, but urbanization in South Africa has taken a particularly disturbing direction as far as the African is concerned as it has developed mainly on the basis of migratory labour.

Not only had migrant labor led to "instability and pathology in family relationships", it had also led to promiscuity in the countryside, which in turn led to an easy reception for the disease in the rural areas from the town." He concluded, "Without an understanding of the economic factors involved and [its] historical development . . . no treatment will save the spread of syphilis in South Africa . . . successful therapy requires the establishment of African and rural communities based on a stable family life. . . ."[75]

For all these concerns, given her independence of spirit (and the glamorous pictures of her, dressed as a "Zulu princess" in New York!), it is nonetheless somewhat surprising to find Sibusisiwe Makhanya acting as the woman adviser to the Zulu Society, which asked three rhetorical question in its founding manifesto or Charter:

> Where is the original Zulu dancing on festive occasions that is in some quarters forbidden and what has been

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74. Box 41 (provisional numbering) CNC 38/47 N/1/7/2 (X).

75. Kark, "The social pathology", passim.

substituted for it? What has been devised to ensure that the Home Discipline of Father and Mother may be permanently engraved in the minds and hearts of youth? And what substitute has been provided for the time-honoured custom of uguhlonipa etiquette which requires that a woman shall not utter the name of her husband or her male relatives?

The Charter continued:

> 39. Concerning such questions as we have asked, our people grieve. With regard to the abandonment of original Zulu dancing, it is to be observed that our youth do not now shrink from engaging in types of dancing that they copy from other races. It is said that these our people take whole nights capering man and woman glued together in pairs, cheek to cheek, jumping and jiggling in a manner that is most foreign and objectionable to us Zulus. On beholding this, our elders and thinking people shed tears of woe -- as they behold what in their judgment of decency is an abomination and a disgrace to the Zulus. One wonders what the Great Shaga [sic] would say were he to arise from his grave and see the degradation of descendants of his people engaging in obscene dancing.
>
> 40. There is a danger of a general collapse of the uguhlonipa etiquette of women and girls, which is leaning away from custom. Owing to a falling away of from custom, women and girls are losing their wholesome respect which was to their credit and which their presence inspired in family life. This causes a slackening of the solidarity and sacredness of the whole Home Life of a man, which is to be found there before, and in this manner, Home Life is being desecrated and disintegrated and good manners abandoned.[76]

Both the language and the lament are familiar. The disruptive experience of modernity has since the beginning of the 19th century elicited similar responses from the intellectuals and ruling classes of Europe. There, too, "nationalism and respectability jointly provided a reference point in an unsettling world, a piece of eternity which could be appropriated by those caught up in the vibrations of modernity."[77] Yet for

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76. The Charter of the Zulu Society.

77. G.L. Mosse, "Nationalism and respectability: normal and abnormal sexuality in the nineteenth century", 242-3. For a

the African intelligentsia born of this very modernity, these processes of class formation and urbanization, the anguished cries against it and the lament for the past implied in the Charter of the Zulu Society and its diatribe against ballroom dancing was never unambiguous.

"Bantu Dancing" as a Focus for Ethnic Ambiguity

The same ambiguities which we have already noted in their reaction more widely to the contact between "western" and African culture can be seen in the response of the African intelligentsia to the introduction by the Natal Department of Education of "Bantu Dancing" into the syllabus for teacher training in 1948. The matter aroused immediate and passionate debate in the pages of the Native Teachers' Journal. Its inclusion in the syllabus reflected the continued tradition in Natal of encouraging "ethnic identification" as a mode of social control, and perhaps also the recognition of the growing popularity of ballroom dancing amongst Africans, an aspect of social life which was frowned on by the more puritanical, black and white alike. As S.T.J. Dladla remarked, "Zulu dancing was loved by the people and should be improved and purified by educated Africans." Echoing the Charter of the Zulu Society, he continued that it was European ballroom dancing that was "really objectionable . . . for reasons well known to all."[78]

His was very much a minority voice in the columns of the Journal however. While the editor clearly supported the departmental initiative, as did the Principal of Nuttal Training School at Indaleni, Mr. Gibben, who actually implemented the new syllabus, the reaction of the majority of those Africans who wrote to the Journal on the matter was hostile.[79] The issue brought together concern over the sexuality of the young, the dangers of miscegenation, and above all fears of loss of

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brilliant evocation of the impact of "modernity" on consciousness on the 19th and 20th centuries, see Marshall Bermann, All That is Solid Melts into Air. The experience of Modernity (London, 1983). It is interesting that European anti-modernist nationalists also inveighed against the evils of ballroom dancing, fearing it loosened sexual control. (Mosse, 228.)

78. Natal Native Teachers' Journal, April 1949, 186.

79. Ibid. For the editor's views, see the issue for October 1948; Gibben expresses his opinion in the issue for July 1949, 186.

respectability. As in 19th century Europe, "respectability, particularly in sexual matters, . . . played a fundamental role in defining the bourgeoisie as a class."[80] It was not for nothing that Christian Africans were referred to by their non-Christian neighbors as "Amarespectables." The majority condemned the idea of teaching Zulu dancing in school outright, even if they were more ambivalent about its role in Zulu society. As one Elliot E. Ntombela put it:

> Indlamu or Primitive Bantu dancing is a mighty intruder in the hands of Educationists. The proper people and place for modernising this primitive art are The Zulu Cultural Society (Ibandla lika Zulu) . . . even to the supporter of Indlamu himself Mr Gibbins, "Indlamu or The Primitive Zulu Dance in its naked form is almost immoral" and as such it is quite contrary to the fast growing Cristian [sic] Education in our schools. . . . In other places where the Government has appointed Educated Chiefs, such Primitive Dancing has been exterminated, owing to the numerous immoral absurdities which cannot be tolerated . . . by the majority of true Christians. . . . Personally I do not see any spectacular aspect in Indlamu . . . that would be an educational, physical, moral or musical incentive sufficient to out-class or equal the present drill taught in our schools of that would warrant the unnecessary task of trying to modernise the unchristian gestures and words of Iudlamu [sic].[81]

Sidney Ngcongo was even more worried about its implications:

> The dancing itself has nothing good in it except muscle development. If you have watched how they dress, and how they dance in that sort of attire you will agree with me that it should be forbidden in schools just as the present English dance is in many institutions. You might have noticed what sort of vulgar language some of the individuals use in praise of their parties in competitive programmes. They use it; and we cannot prevent them from doing it because it is a part of their game.

Another argument is this: parents who send their

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80. I.V. Hull, "The Bourgeoisie and its Discontents: Reflections on 'Nationalism and Respectability'" Journal of Contemporary History, 17, 2 (1982), 249.

81. Natal Native Teachers' Journal, January 1949, 97-8.

children to school, do so merely to change them from primitive to civilised. They want them to Christianised, socialised and educated. They wish to see their children adopting civilised habits. There is no better sign of backwardness than to find the nation still doing what their forefathers did in the case of Africa. A European, passing by car through a proper native country and seeing a mob of Kaffirs with sticks and shields, there and then arrives at the right conclusion about them in his mind.

The joy that a civilised man gets when watching Zulus dance, is the same kind of joy he gets when looking at monkeys playing on the trees. He does not look at them to uplift their standards but to press them further down and merely to amuse himself. Just as he never thinks of improving the monkeys, so it is with the poor African dancing before him.[82]

The fear that they would be regarded as primitive, the desire to appear "respectable", and sensitivity to racist stereotypes of African culture were dominant also in the words of K.G. Msimang:

> . . . the African people must be very careful not to keep on with customs and beliefs of ancestors which will make them a laughing stock. It is no secret that many people of the other nationalities like to see some of the dances because, as they say, they like to see a bunch of baboons performing, or because they want to see something "wild" of "primitive". No matter to which race we belong, we must remember that all things are not necessarily good because they have come down to us from our ancestors. . . Finally let us recognise that there is laxity in the matter of sex. On every hand our people are getting used to the idea that sexual experiences are not to be considered too evil, human nature being what it is. . .[83]

Despite his own social distance and patronizing attitude, Percy Ndhlovu put his finger on an aspect of the psychological colonization involved:

> That there are those among educated and civilized

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82. Ibid., 99-100.

83. Ibid., 101.

> Africans who have such an inferiority complex that they imagine their own fellow-men are looked upon as monkeys or baboons when they indulge in primitive dancing, is lamentable. The civilized and educated African should see no shame or disgrace in trying to uplift his wild fellow-man, by selecting what is good and rejecting what is bad.
>
> When these dances (now regarded as the "worst") were in full swing, morals were far better than they are at present . . .[84]

Amongst the few correspondents actually in support of Zulu dancing, M. Shabane set out the case of the cultural nationalists most succinctly:

> Any civilised nation or race has its culture and art, including music. It has its own composers, expressing thoughts, feelings and traditions of that particular race or nation. In this no two nations or races can be exactly alike. . . . Unlike the European "civilised" dance (jitter-bug etc.), the Ingoma Dance is wholesome and quite fitting to African customs and habits in that the Dancers perform, singly and never this "clutching" of partners, which is quite foreign to the African way of living.[85]

Apart from their sensitivity to European taunts, however, and their need to distance themselves from the popular culture, the opponents of Indhlamu had a deeper and more legitimate objection. They recognized the danger that the encouragement of ethnic identity could have unfortunate and divisive consequences. Sidney Ngcongo maintained that the encouragement of "warrior tunes" led to a "fighting spirit" and the eruption of "faction fights" amongst the youth. This was no figment of the middle-class imagination. "Tribal wars", as he called them, were an ever-present reality in Natal and not dysfunctional to continued white domination. The deliberate manipulation of ethnic boundaries and chiefly authority by Natal administrators since the mid-19th century had meant that from the end of that century onwards, tensions over land shortage in particular had been expressed in recurrent "faction fights" both between different so-called tribes and within them between supporters of rival chiefly

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84. Ibid., April 1949, 187.

85. ibid., July 1949, 255-6.

contenders. The Zulu "warrior tradition", which glorified violence and battle was, moreover, particularly interwoven with ngoma dancing, based on the war dances [izigiyo] performed by the regiments as a prelude to combat. Provisions of the Natal Code limiting attendance at gatherings arose from the frequency of the faction fights which followed ngoma dancing which accompanied them.[86]

In Durban, too, by the late 1920s, as Paul la Hausse has shown, ngoma dancing as a form of popular culture and entertainment was closely linked to warlike criminal gangs and to faction fighting, in this case perhaps sparked by competition over jobs. In 1929, C.F. Layman, the Manager of Durban's Native Affairs department, opposed ngoma dancing because the "congregation of Natives armed with sticks, etc. in towns has almost invariably resulted in serious friction amongst the various towns." The newly appointed Native Welfare Officer inaugurated a more co-optive strategy in 1933 when he allocated an open-air space for official ngoma dance competitions which were held "under the careful scrutiny of the N.W.O., Chief Constable and Borough Police." According to la Hausse, "The control of this popular form of recreation served a number of purposes. It provided cheap popular recreation for workers and supplied an alternative to the patronage of shebeens [illicit drinking dens] over weekends, an activity which always carried with it the threat of labour disruption." Furthermore, the holding of ngoma dance competitions encouraged divisions within Durban's popular classes. Although ngoma dancing in the 1930s continued to be accompanied by sporadic violence, by the late 1940s it had been sufficiently tamed to be contemplated for introduction into schools. At another level, however, the spirit of ethnic hostility which it encouraged was neither controlled nor controllable.[87]

While for much of the 20th century much popular violence in

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86. For the complexities of so-called "faction fighting" in Natal, see J. Clegg, "Ukubuyisa Isidumbu" - "Bringing Back the Body": An examination into the ideology of vengeance in the Msinga and Mpofana rural locations. (1882-1944)", paper presented to the African Studies Seminar, African Studies Centre, University of the Witwatersrand, May, 1979. I am grateful to Heather Hughes for calling my attention to the reasons for the provisions of the Natal Code.

87. P. la Hausse, "The Struggle for the city: alcohol, the ematcheni and popular culture in Durban, 1902-1936" (Unpub. M.A. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1984), 222-30; 272-6. The quotations are from pages 229 and 273.

Zululand/Natal was expressed in inter-Zulu faction fights, as the intelligentsia forged a pan-Zulu identity, the same spirit of "tribalism" with its undercurrents of violence also came to be expressed against the non-Zulu in their midst. Thus, in Down Second Avenue, `Zik Mphahlele records:

> I left Adams [the leading African high school in Natal] with a nagging feeling of a strong memory of tribalism that prevailed in Natal. . . . The province is a Zulu country and the bulk of the students at Adams had always been Zulus. They did not like non-Zulu boys and girls coming to the college. They regarded us as foreigners.[88]

Indeed, in the year after this debate flourished in the Natal Native Teachers' Journal, the Principal of Adams College was to ban a dance to commemorate a "Tshaka Day" ceremony being celebrated by the Zulu Society on campus, for fear that it would inflame "inter-tribal rivalry". In the ensuing upheaval, he was forced to suspend some 175 of the male students -- out of a total student body of less than 500. The principal was sensitive to the issue, for in June of that year he had expelled two Zulu students who had "waylaid" and assaulted a Xhosa student, an incident he attributed to "a little flare-up of intertribal tension."[89]

A form of Zulu ethnic nationalism which was in part the legacy of the Zulu Society continued to plague even the activities of the ANC in Natal in the early 1950s: at the time, for example, of the Passive Resistance Campaign, it was difficult for the Natal leaders to achieve unanimity on the Natal contribution, because of, as Selby Msimang phrased it, "the strong anti-Indian feeling in this province", while well into the 1950s African antagonism to Indian men who "took" their women was intense.[90]

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88. E. Mphahlele, Down Second Avenue (London, 1959), 145.

89. For the history of Adams, see C.C. Grant, Adams College, 1853-1951 (Pietermaritzburg, c. 1951). For the upheavals in August 1950, Grant to Parents and Governors, 18 Sept. 1950, published in "Not Either an Experimental Doll"; Minutes of a Special Meeting of the General Purposes Committee, Adams, 7 Sept. 1949 (KCL MS ADA 1.07, Adams College Minutes.) For the expulsion of the two students in June 1949, see Adams, Minutes of the General Purposes Committee, Report No. 2, 24 June 1949 (KCL, MS ADA 1.07).

90. S.M. Molema Papers (CAMP Microfilm 456/1), Meeting of the

In the poverty-striken townships around Durban, even more crowded and desperate in the post-war years, the tide of ethnic feeling was to overflow in the anti-Indian riots of 1949. I am not, of course, suggesting that the Zulu Society was in any way either wholly or directly responsible: that would be ludicrous. Its own glorification of a Zulu cultural identity was as much shaped by elements of popular consciousness coming from below as it was a shaping force in the making of that popular consciousness. Like Nairn's nationalists, the Natal intelligentsia used "what was there" -- as did the South African state. The perpetrators of "ethnic" violence in 1949, as in the present, were, and are, not innocent bystanders or gullible dupes of the state and the intelligentsia. As la Hausse points out, "in Durban the language of ethnic identity had frequently been interwoven with the language of class solidarity and African nationalism."[91] Nor is this particularly exceptional: class consciousness takes a specifically cultural form. The problem for Africans in Zululand and Natal, however, was the ways in which a precolonial past provided military metaphors for mobilization.

The riots of 1949, like those of more recent date, to which the term "tribal" has also been affixed, were the outcome of complex forces of which intense poverty and social dislocation were intrinsic. Nevertheless, the "respectable" debate over the

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National Executive of the ANC, Bloemfontein, 1 Feb. 1947; Ibid., S. Msimang to S.M. Molema, 13 Feb. 1952. Cf. Anthony Ngubo, "The African University Students - A problem of group adjustment", B. Sc. essay, 1960, Durban, pp. 14-15:

> From the interview material it is clear that African students on the whole do not trust Indians . . . . At student meetings when issues involving African-Indian relations are discussed the student body sharply divides into Indian on the one hand and African on the other. African students accuse Indians of political bargaining for privileges from the white ruling group.

(Cited in the Leo Kuper Papers, Microfilm 3, CAMP collection.)

More recently, much of the antagonism between Inkatha and the United Democratic Front (which has a large Indian membership in Natal) has been translated into African-Indian hostility, a feature which has been exacerbated by Chief Buthelezi's frequent anti-Indian statements and scarcely veiled threats.

91. la Hausse, "Struggle for the city", 274.

validity of traditional mores resonated with somewhat different preoccupations at a popular level and legitimated actions which the petty bourgeoisie would be quick to condemn. The fact that the response to these problems has taken an "ethnic" form is the result not simply of some kind of unchanging and archetypal "tribalism." That the responses to poverty and privilege tend to take a "racial" or "tribal" form has as much to so with the deliberate manipulation of ethnic rather than other forms of identity by the state and the particular road that the African intelligentsia and political leadership has traveled in Natal.

A comparison between the Natal Bantu Teachers' Association and the Zulu Society with the Cape African Teachers' Association (CATA) in the Eastern Cape is instructive: from being an essentially "respectable and moderate body" in the 1930s, by 1949 CATA was the leading element of the by now militant left-wing All Africa Convention. In the Transkei, according to Colin Bundy, teachers played a crucial role as a rural intelligentsia, providing a radical interpretation of the world and integrating peasant struggles against land rehabilitation and cattle-culling with resistance to the state's imposition of chiefs and "Bantu Education." The fusion of the more coherent ideology of the intelligentsia with the groundswell of popular discontent intensified Transkeian resistance to the state during the 1940s and 1950s and gave it a very different form to that experienced in Natal.[92] In Natal, to a very considerable extent -- although there were, of course, exceptions and a certain radicalization there too -- the construction of an ethnic "answer" to the problems of urbanization and modernity -- whether by the Zulu Society or Inkatha -- hampered the growth of the kind of radical vision which could have combated the chauvinism encouraged by the state and the anti-Indian polemic of Natal whites in 1949 -- or indeed contemporary "tribal" violence.

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92. See C. Bundy, "Land and liberation. Popular rural protest and the national liberation movements of South Africa, 1920-1960", in Marks and Trapido, eds., The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism, as well as the introduction to the collection, pp.

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