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Rural Cosmopolitanism and Peasant Insurgency:
The Pondoland Revolt, South Africa (1958-1963)

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B.A. Reed College 2003

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An Abstract of
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Abstract

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This study examines a revolutionary moment when a group of rural South Africans, calling themselves *iKongo*, sent a petition to the United Nations requesting recognition of their sovereignty and engaged in a insurgency against the apartheid state. *iKongo* members rejected the policies of the South African state and, for a brief moment, between 1950 and 1962 created a new government. In 1960, as part of its counter-insurgency campaign, the South African government placed the region under emergency regulations.

No systematic study of the Pondoland insurgency exists. Through an examination of the insurgency, beginning with the inception of the movement in the late 1940s through its suppression in 1963, this study explores the contributions of rural Africans in contesting colonial rule and defining their vision of independence. Rather than advocating a return to a pre-colonial past or adopting the framework of the modern nation state, *iKongo* insurgents engaged in a *rural cosmopolitanism* that simultaneously engaged with elements of the modern nation state and familiar lexicons of social control and order.

In addition to exploring the society created by *iKongo*, this study examines the suppression of the insurgency by the South African state and argues that South African officials participated in discussions about the suppression of anti-colonial movements across the colonial world. Finally, this study explores why a movement that threatened rule of law in the Transkei and garnered the approval of large-scale resistance organizations of the African National Congress is now largely absent from a historical narrative of anti-apartheid resistance. This study argues that the reason for this is located precisely in the fact that *iKongo* constituted a moment of rural cosmopolitanism. Unable to reconcile the lexicons of the supernatural that *iKongo* insurgents utilized, members of the ANC seized upon elements of *iKongo* commensurate with ANC ideology. The ANC transformed *iKongo* members from independent rural insurgents into members of the ANC's peasant vanguard.

An examination of the Pondoland insurgency as a moment of rural cosmopolitanism contributes both to a history of resistance to apartheid in South Africa and to an understanding of insurgency in the contemporary world.

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Writing a dissertation is a collaborative process. While I have spent much of this process in solitude, an extraordinary number of people have participated in the creation of this document. Throughout the years leading up to this moment, I have received so much support and it is now my great joy to begin to express my deep gratitude for and appreciation of that support. I have looked forward to this moment for a very long time – it means that I am finishing a part of my life that has been challenging and rewarding in so many ways. As I sit down to finally do what I have looked forward to for so long, I find that, in some ways, this is more difficult than writing the dissertation itself.

During my time as a graduate student, I discovered how committed Emory University is to the success of its students. I have worked with incredible professors throughout the University. The conversations I have had with professors and students have greatly enriched my time at Emory. Grants provided by the Graduate School, the Department of History, and the program of African Studies, allowed me to pursue language training and field research in the United States and South Africa. That research, in addition to Emory's commitment to academic excellence, contributed to my successful application for a Fulbright Fellowship in 2007.

The single most important figure in my intellectual life is my advisor, Dr. Clifton Crais. Clifton is a brilliant scholar and I remain in awe of the breadth and depth of his knowledge. To say that his influence on my development as a scholar is significant does not adequately describe the impact that he has had on my life. Only now am I beginning to really understand what he has taught me over the past six

years. Shepherding a graduate student through the process of writing a dissertation is a major commitment, and I deeply appreciate his guidance. I have learned more from Clifton than anyone else. I hope that, as I continue in my career, I will make him proud.

My committee members, Dr. Pamela Scully and Dr. Mark Ravina, have also played an incredibly important role in the formulation and writing of this dissertation. Over the course of many years, both Pamela and Mark have been instrumental in many of the concepts articulated in this work. Pamela's enthusiastic and thoughtful support of this project means so much to me. Her insights have pushed this work further than I anticipated it might go. I first began to work with ideas about cosmopolitanism and insurgency during several classes that I took with Mark years ago when I was still in coursework. I remember those early conversations with great fondness. The entire committee pushed me to think in ways that I did not immediately understand and encouraged me to keep writing especially when I thought that I had hit a wall. For this I am grateful.

A wonderful part of this entire process was the opportunity to research and live in South Africa. My time in Cape Town and the Eastern Cape as a Fulbright scholar in 2007 and 2008 were among the happiest moments in my life. I spent many months working in the Cape Archives. The entire archival staff contributed greatly to the completion of my research and I enjoyed so much of the time spent in the reading room. I look forward to many more research trips. While in Cape Town, I had the opportunity to teach several sections of an introductory southern African history class at the University of the Western Cape. It was my first time in the

classroom and, while there were challenging moments, it was during those classes that I first realized how much I loved teaching.

Research can be a time of great loneliness and solitude. However, in Cape Town, a remarkable group of South Africans welcomed me into their hearts and their homes. I met Andrew Fleming, Ciske Priem, Andrew Bailey, Martin Klopper, and Jean Henning early on in Cape Town and they brought an immense amount of joy and laughter to my life. We enjoyed many days in the Cape vineyards or by the pool and many evenings on the patio of the Mt. Nelson Hotel. Through them, Cape Town became a second home of sorts. I look forward to more adventures with them in the coming months and years.

When I began researching and writing this dissertation, I am sure that my friends and family never anticipated that they would develop such a familiarity with South African historiography, studies of rural resistance and insurgency, and learn so much about *iKongo*'s struggle against the apartheid state. Whether through intense discussion about rural cosmopolitanism and states of exception or through patiently listening to my, sometimes incoherent, ramblings, my friends and family now know so much about this small region in South Africa. I could not have done this without their love and infinite patience.

Dana Irwin is my partner-in-crime. Over the years, we have sat together in classes and seminars and embarked on an equal number of non-Emory adventures. Aprés Diem has been our Atlanta headquarters for many years – a place where, over martinis and White Russians, we have talked about… everything. I adore Dana and

cannot imagine my life without this strong, kind and brilliant man. He is, and always will be, part of my family.

I met Sienna Brown during my first year in a class on the Frankfurt School. Not only has the material covered in that class played a significant role in both of our dissertations, but also, during that class we developed a strong and enduring friendship. Sienna is an amazing person. She tells it like it is and always has faith in me. Sienna's opinion means more to me than she will ever know. I do hope that she knows that I have as much faith in her as she in me. I look forward to seeing what happens to both of us as we move forward from the seemingly endless process of dissertating!

Rebecca Kumar literally emerged out of the darkness on a cold January night in Manhattan. That same night she introduced me to Helena Fitzgerald and two truly beautiful friendships began. As much as I tried to remain solely focused on graduate school, life always seemed to get in the way precisely at the moment that I needed to focus most. Telling me never to stop dreaming and never to settle, Rebecca and Helena helped me through those difficult moments. Rebecca is a fiercely protective friend in addition to being my favorite shopping companion! Helena always reminds me that life is an odyssey and that we are all, in our own ways, Odysseus. For their kindness, support, and infinite love, I thank them.

In the middle of writing this dissertation, I moved to New Orleans – a city that instantly enchanted me. Sara Butler, Mark Fernandez, and Judith Hunt have all helped me navigate through the challenging transition from graduate student to faculty member. My friends in the English and Philosophy departments have shown

such support, ranging from reading sections of this manuscript to coaxing me from my office for Friday evening drinks. Liz McMahon, my colleague at Tulane, welcomed me into her home from the very beginning and kindly guided me through the inevitable anxiety of these final weeks and months. I look forward to many years working with all of them.

While much of this first year in New Orleans has revolved around the dissertation, I have met a group of extraordinary people. Jennifer Sullam assured me repeatedly that I am, despite my fears, more than my dissertation. Justin and Jessica Nystrom opened their home to me. With them, I am reminded that a bit of good New Orleans food and a glass (or two) of champagne makes everything a bit happier.

I cannot express how important a role my parents have played not just throughout graduate school but also throughout my life. In 2005, I told my mother that I was going to Rwanda. Rather than attempting to dissuade me, she extended her complete and enthusiastic support. Her unqualified support has never wavered. Whenever I travel, I know that she turns the beautiful globe, bought before that trip to Rwanda, to the part of the world that I am in. We are, and always will be, a team. I am sure that she is thrilled that we will now be able to talk about something other than my dissertation and am so excited that I will now be able to see her more than the last several years have allowed.

When I was a little girl, my father took me to the St. Louis Art Museum in the evenings. It was in the sculpture and painting galleries that he, as historian as well, first began to teach me about history. Years later, I read his dissertation and

(without quite realizing the extraordinary amount of work that went into it!) decided that I wanted to get a PhD in history. My father has and continues to be a huge influence in my life. I am looking forward to the day when the two Dr. Fidlers' have lunch together in New York.

Of all the amazing people who have played such important roles in my life and have contributed to this moment, one of the most inspiring is Dr. Virginia Shadron in the Graduate School at Emory. VA, as she is affectionately known by many graduate students, is, quite simply, amazing. She is an advocate for the students and holds us all to a high standard. In return, many students, including myself, have developed a fierce loyalty to this incredible woman. Emory is fortunate to have her.

I first met VA in my second year and, over last seven years, she has become a trusted mentor. VA always encourages me to be true to myself and tells me when I am doing just the opposite. In those moments when everything seems to be going wrong, she tells me not to panic and to remember to feed Darab (my beautiful tuxedo cat). Her faith in me has helped me clear what seemed like insurmountable hurdles. As I finish this dissertation, I know that I could not have done it without her. The person I am today is due in large part to her. While I am not sure that I can adequately express my gratitude for her support over the years, I do dedicate this dissertation to VA.

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Introduction

The Anatomy of an Insurgency

In the two decades following the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 and the first free elections four years later in which all South Africans held the power of the vote, South Africa's transformation is, in many respects, nothing short of miraculous. Once the object of international embargo and condemnation, South Africa now positions itself as the peaceful arbiter of disputes across the African continent and welcomes tourists with the promise of beautiful vistas and vibrant multiculturalism.

South Africa has undergone a stunning transformation from the institutionalized segregation, impoverishment, disenfranchisement and repressive violence that characterized much of its history from the first years of European colonialism through the end of apartheid. However, the transition from apartheid rule to a democratic state has not been without considerable conflict or controversy.

The Eastern Cape, comprised of the former homelands of the Transkei and the Ciskei, remains one of the most disadvantaged regions in South Africa. While the wealthy of Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Durban enjoy relative ease of access to basic services as electricity, sewage, and medical clinics, etc, many inhabitants of the Eastern Cape, an overwhelmingly rural province, continue to live in conditions of grinding poverty. In many respects, the conditions of isolation and deprivation resulting from various apartheid policies, particularly the Bantu Authorities system, continue to influence daily life nearly twenty years after the end of apartheid.

In December 2007, sitting outside a small house in Bizana district of the Eastern Cape, a woman born in the early 1940s remembered the day she cast her

first ballot in the hope that she had that, with the election of Nelson Mandela, her life and that of her family would begin to change for the better.[1] Thirteen years after she cast this ballot, the optimism with which this woman viewed the world had faded. Medical clinics are overcrowded and understaffed, many households do not have electricity or sewage, and many people struggle to pay their monthly bills.

Her disillusionment is particularly notable. Nearly fifty years earlier, this woman had participated in what was one of the largest uprisings against the imposition of apartheid policy in the South African reserves. She remembers a group, calling itself *iKongo*, holding meetings on the rolling hillsides of Bizana district. During these meetings, members of her family and her neighbors talked about throwing off the oppressive policies of the "white government." They debated what freedom might look like. She recalls the nights where the homes of alleged collaborators burned as *iKongo* fought Bantu Authorities. She remembers the day that local police arrested her brother on charges of being a member of *iKongo*.

This study examines this revolutionary moment when, in late September 1960, a group of rural South Africans, calling themselves *iKongo*, sent a petition to the United Nations and engaged in a violent struggle against the apartheid state.[2] In this petition, they rejected the rule of the apartheid state and requested recognition of their sovereignty as an independent nation. They recalled the brutal suppression of a peaceful protest several months earlier when South African forces had shot

[1] Interview by author, December 12, 2007 – Bizana (All persons interviewed for this study have chosen to remain anonymous.).

[2] "Pondoland Goes to the United Nations," *Fighting Talk* 14, no. 5 (October 1960).

eleven of their comrades on Ngquza Hill and left their bodies exposed to the elements.[3]

iKongo waged an insurgency against the South African government, both white officials and African collaborators. Between 1959 and 1963, a remote region of the Eastern Cape was the site of extraordinary violence. Rejecting the implementation of the various economic, political, and social policies associated with the Bantu Authorities Act (1951), members of *iKongo* sought to create a new political and social order.

The group was, for a brief moment, successful. During the insurgency, *iKongo* had almost complete control of many districts in a region of the Eastern Cape known as Pondoland. The movement issued a constitution, established a political hierarchy, and convened its own courts. However, beginning in the summer of 1960, the South African government embarked on a campaign of total suppression. Enacting a series of emergency regulations that granted military and police forces extraordinary powers of detention and coercion, the government brutally and swiftly suppressed the movement. Within two years, the government had detained and interrogated countless numbers, arrested at least three thousand, and executed twenty-four on charges directly related to the insurgency. For the next eighteen years, until 1977 when the Transkei achieved "independence," the entire region remained under emergency regulations.

During the years of the insurgency, known at the time as the "Pondoland disturbances," the movement received considerable attention from the South

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[3] Ibid.

African press. In the years following the suppression of the insurgency, as Pondoland and the entire region of the Transkei languished under the weight of the emergency regulations, memory of *iKongo* faded. In contemporary South Africa, few people outside of Pondoland know of the group that, in its day, waged one of the largest and most sustained battles against the apartheid government. What was *iKongo*, who joined the movement, and why did this separatist anti-apartheid movement form amongst the rolling hills of the Eastern Cape?

The Transkei region in the Eastern Cape was the first area where the apartheid government attempted to introduce the Bantu Authorities system in the early 1950s.[4] Designed as a means by which to categorize, control, and separate the black African population from whites, Bantu Authorities effectively re-tribalized peoples in the Transkei.[5] While the Act technically required that Bantu Affairs Commissioners "consult with every tribe and community," the system ultimately allowed state officials to empower Africans amenable to the policies of the South African state.[6] *iKongo* members expressly rejected the Bantu Authorities system and between 1959 and 1962 sought to create a new political and social order that negotiated between cosmopolitan languages of citizenship and democracy while simultaneously employing familiar tropes of magic and the ancestors. For much of 1960, officials had virtually no control over the region. Beginning in June 1960, the

[4] See Appendix A for a district-level map of the Transkei.

[5] The Bantu Authorities Act, 1951 (Act No. 68 of 1951). A copy of the Bantu Authorities Act can be found in CA 1/BIZ 47.

[6] Section Two of The Bantu Authorities Act, 1951 (Act No. 68 of 1951).

South African state tried to repress *iKongo* and ultimately placed the entire region under emergency regulations.

During the years of insurgency and counter-insurgency in Pondoland, the activities of *iKongo* garnered considerable attention in newspapers throughout South Africa. Between 1959 and 1964, no fewer than nine feature-length articles about the movement appeared in newspapers and periodicals including *The Cape Times*, *New Age*, *Fighting Talk*, and *Contact*. *New Age* maintained a close relationship with ANC leadership while *Contact* served as the official publication of the Liberal Party and *Fighting Talk* took special interest in liberation movements across the African continent. The South African government condemned these publications and, by the late 1960s, all had ceased publication.

Govan Mbeki, a leading member of the ANC and political organizer in the Eastern Cape, heralded the actions of *iKongo* and condemned the violence by South African police and military personnel in a monograph entitled *South Africa: The Peasants Revolt*.[7] With the definitive suppression of the insurgency in 1963, interest in and knowledge of *iKongo* diminished considerably. In contemporary South African memory, the events in Eastern Pondoland and the surrounding districts between 1959 and 1963, popularly known as the Pondoland Revolt, receive little attention.

No systematic study of the Pondoland insurgency exists. A movement that resulted in the executions of over twenty people, the arrest and torture of thousands and the condemnation of an entire population to emergency regulations, is virtually

[7] Govan Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt* (Baltimore: Penguin Africa Library, 1964).

absent from the history of anti-apartheid resistance. Through an examination of the course of the insurgency, beginning with the inception of the movement in the late 1940s through its suppression in 1963, I explore the contributions of rural Africans in contesting colonial rule and defining their vision of independence. Rather than advocating a return to a pre-colonial past or adopting wholesale the framework of the modern nation state, *iKongo* insurgents engaged in a rural cosmopolitanism that simultaneously incorporated elements of the modern nation-state and familiar local lexicons of social control and order.

In addition to exploring the society created by *iKongo* in the 1950s and early 1960s, I analyze the suppression of the insurgency by the South African state. No detailed narrative exists of how the state sought to destroy the movement. The absence of writing on this subject is partly due to the continued classified status of military documents. However, archival records from local magistrate offices and the Supreme Court in the Transkei enable one to analyze elements of the suppression of *iKongo*. I argue that the South African state modeled the suppression of the insurgency on those techniques employed by the British in the counter-insurgency waged against the Mau Mau in Kenya in the early 1950s. Further, I argue that the state of emergency declared in the Transkei in 1960 constituted a state of exception in which the extraordinary regulations of the emergency became routine as the state extended emergency regulations year after year.

Finally, I explore why a movement that threatened rule of law in the Transkei and garnered the approval of large-scale resistance organizations of the African National Congress is now largely absent from a historical narrative of anti-apartheid

resistance or, when it does appear, is located within an ANC narrative of resistance and liberation. The narrative of iKongo, rather than being allowed autonomy as its own movement independent from the ANC, has been altered to fit the ANC's particular narrative of resistance to apartheid. I suggest that the reason for this is to be found precisely in the fact that *iKongo* escapes easy categorization: as a movement it was neither identifiably "modern" in the sense that the ANC aspired to be, nor was it completely "traditional" or "tribal." The society envisioned by the insurgents reflected an attempt to gain recognition by authorities such as the United Nations Security Council while at the same time articulating values specific to the needs of that particular community. Unable to reconcile the lexicons of the supernatural that *iKongo* insurgents utilized when confronting those government appointed chiefs and headmen viewed by the movement as traitors to the people, members of the ANC, including Govan Mbeki, seized upon those elements of *iKongo* that were commensurate with ANC ideology. Before the suppression of the insurgency was complete, the ANC reframed the public perception and memory of *iKongo* from an independent rural insurgency into part of the ANC's peasant vanguard.

iKongo insurgents engaged in a rural cosmopolitanism during which participants created a new political order that drew upon idioms of everyday life and cosmology as well as languages of nationalism, human rights, and popular protest. How did this group of insurgents develop a sophisticated political rhetoric that reached all the way to the United Nations? An examination of the Pondoland insurgency as a moment of rural cosmopolitanism not only contributes to a history

of resistance to apartheid in South Africa but also to an understanding of insurgency in the contemporary world.

Rural Cosmopolitanism

As an ever-increasing number of people participate in political, economic, and social activity that both crosses and defies national borders, scholars seek to develop theoretical and methodological frameworks that push beyond those of nation and empire.[8] In perhaps the most influential work of this burgeoning field, Appiah proposes that cosmopolitanism serve as a foundation for a new ethical imperative.[9] Rejecting the relativist stance commonly advanced by anthropologists as actually preventing genuine understanding and engagement with people from (seemingly) radically different societies, Appiah argues: "cosmopolitanism is about intelligence and curiosity as well as engagement."[10] A distinctive feature of his approach is a focus on the elite nature of the "cosmopolitan." The majority of people identified by Appiah as examples of cosmopolitans who learn about each other in

[8] For recent approaches to this issues, see Richard Vernon, *Cosmopolitan Regard: Political Membership and Global Justice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Susanne Lachenicht, Kirsten Heinsohn, eds. *Diaspora Identities: Exile, Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism in the Past and Present* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2009); Gerard Delanty, *The Cosmopolitan Imagination: the Renewal of Critical Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Peter Geschiere, *The Perils of Belonging: Autochthony, Citizenship, and Exclusion in Africa and Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Seyla Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[9] Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006).

[10] Ibid., 168.

order to "get used to one another" are members of an extraordinarily elite strata.[11] Appiah's examples of cosmopolitans include the Asantehene (the king of the Asante) and the Ghanaian president – both men have a British university education and participate extensively in domestic and international politics.[12] By identifying education, world travel, and access to considerable pools of economic and political capital as markers of the cosmopolitan, Appiah adheres to, rather than departs from, the dominant vision of the cosmopolitan person as a member of a primarily urban elite.

How then are we to understand persons who do not fit Appiah's criteria of the cosmopolitan while simultaneously demonstrating a remarkable awareness of and engagement with societies that remain completely outside his or her direct experience? Moving beyond the ethical edge of Appiah's argument, I suggest that we widen our definition of who is "cosmopolitan" to include the peasantry. Within both the popular perception and in much of academic writing, peasants, defined as "those whose ultimate security and subsistence lies in their having certain rights in land and in the labour of family members on the land" emerge as largely ignorant of worldly affairs.[13] Much of the literature on peasants identifies peasants as

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[11] Ibid., 79.

[12] Ibid., 88-90.

[13] J.S. Saul and R. Woods, "African Peasantries," in *Peasants and Peasant Societies*, ed. T. Shanin (London, 1971), 105-106.

conservative actors concerned primarily with the rejection of "modernity" and the retention of tradition.[14] Rural persons are the anti-cosmopolitans.

The actions taken by *iKongo* during the insurgency waged against the South African state in the 1950s and 1960s is an example of the various ways in which the two seemingly incommensurate terms and concepts of "rural" and "cosmopolitan" may be commensurate with one another. Members of *iKongo* do not initially appear as cosmopolitans. Many, if they had received any education at all, did not attend university and, with the (notable exception) of migrant labor networks, many had not traveled outside of the Eastern Cape let alone South Africa. However, when faced with state regulations that they viewed as corrupt and illegitimate, these rural actors did not invoke the need to return to a "traditional" past. Rather, these insurgents, lacking an elite education and struggling to meet the needs of basic subsistence, demonstrated a nuanced understanding of Western democratic institutions as evidenced through the creation of a constitution and a petition sent to the United Nations. At the same time, these insurgents did not submit exclusively to such a model but instead mediated the creation of their own society through

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[14] General studies advancing this view include Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Eric Wolf, *Peasants*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996); Teodor Shanin, *Peasants and Peasant Societies: Selected Readings*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971); James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976). Africanist studies advancing this view include William Beinart and Colin Bundy, "State Intervention and Rural Resistance: The Transkei, 1900-1965," in *Peasants in Africa: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, Martin A. Klein, ed. (London: Sage, 1980); John Lonsdale and E.S. Atieno Odhiambo, eds. *Mau and Nationhood: Arms, Authority, and Narration*, (Oxford: James Currey, 2003).

recourse to familiar lexicons of the supernatural.[15] Appiah's basic concept of cosmopolitanism, the desire to engage with the unfamiliar in order to both understand and to be understood, remains useful. *iKongo* insurgents, through incorporating such Western political techniques as a constitution and recognizing the trans-national authority wielded by the United Nations, sought to both understand and to be understood by peoples as far away as New York.

Rural Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in South Africa and Beyond

Despite the explosive violence that consumed parts of the Transkei during the insurgency and its subsequent repression, few full-length studies of the movement exist. There is, however, a considerable literature concerned with moments of rural resistance in South Africa throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[16] Part of the new-Marxist/revisionist school of historiography,

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[15] Future work beyond the dissertation will grapple with the ways in which the theory of rural cosmopolitanism is similar to and departs from theories of hybridity and bricolage. However, what occurred in the Transkei during the insurgency did go beyond the creation of a sub-culture, as bricolage (within Cultural Studies) frequently implies.

[16] Notable works on rural resistance in South Africa during the twentieth century include Jeff Guy, *The Maphumulo Uprising, War, Law and Ritual in the Zulu Rebellion* (Scottsville, South Africa: University of Kwan-Zulu-Natal Press, 2006); Tim Lane, "Jele Tshelete': Witchcraft, Chiefs, and the State in the Northern Transvaal, 1900-1930," *The Culture of Power in Southern Africa: Essays on State Formation and the Political Imagination*, ed. Clifton Crais (Portsmouth: Heinemann Press, 2002); Clifton Crais, "Of Men, Magic, and the Law: Popular Justice and the Political Imagination in South Africa," *Journal of Social History* 32, no 1 (autumn, 1998): 49-72; Michael Mahoney, "Between the Zulu King and the Great White Chief: Political Culture in a Natal Chiefdom, 1879-1906," Ph.D. Dissertation for the University of California, Los Angeles (1998); Clifton Crais, "*White Supremacy and Black Resistance: The Making of the Colonial Order in the Eastern Cape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Peter Delius, "Sebatakgomo: Migrant Organization, the ANC and the Sekukhuneland Revolt," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 15, no. 4

these studies of agrarian life and rural resistance aimed to place the experience of the rural actor squarely within a narrative that, through the 1960s, remained primarily concerned with the experiences of South Africans in the urban and industrial sectors.[17] Additionally, these studies sought to move away from state-centered approaches in which rural life, when examined at all, was the subject of a top-down analysis. Instead, historical writing on rural areas, beginning in the 1970s, began to implement a bottom-up analysis.[18]

Scholars have typically understood the disturbances in Pondoland as driven by local and rural concerns.[19] In the case of the Pondoland insurgency, most scholars agree that the attempted imposition of Bantu Authorities was a major contributing factor to the outbreak of violence in 1959. However, relatively few

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(October, 1989): 581-615; William Beinart and Colin Bundy, *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa: Politics and Popular Movements in the Transkei and Eastern Cape, 1890-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Helen Bradford, Mass Movement and the Petty Bourgeoisie: the Social Origins of ICU Leadership, 1924-1929," *The Journal of African History* 25, no. 3 (1984): 295-310; Shula Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion: the 1906-1908 Disturbances in Natal* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

[17] William Beinart, Peter Delius, and Stanley Trapido, *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South Africa, 1850-1930* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986), 15.

[18] Ibid., 15.

[19] William Beinart and Colin Bundy, "State Intervention and Rural Resistance: The Transkei, 1900-1965," in *Peasants in Africa: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Martin A. Klein (London: Sage, 1980); Colin Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry* (London: James Currey, 1988); Tom Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa from 1945* (New York: Longman, 1993).

works move beyond this explanation to analyze *iKongo*.[20] For example, Lungisile Ntsebeza and Sukude Matoti argue that most rural resistance immediately following the implementation of apartheid occurred in response to "the introduction of the government's conservation measures… and the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act."[21] Ntsebeza and Matoti provide a brief account of *iKongo*, ultimately concluding that while there is little evidence of direct ANC participation in the movement the platform of the movement explicitly followed that of the ANC.[22] Both authors suggest the need for more research into the motivations for the revolt and how the participants conceptualized themselves.[23]

William Beinart echoes this assertion in stating that a full analysis of *iKongo* "require(s) more extensive discussion of the social and economic change in this African reserve in the era of apartheid, of the role of migrant workers, and wider nationalist ideas, of generational and gender conflict, the new Bantu Authorities, and

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[20] J.A. Copelyn, "The Mpondo Revolt 1960" (unpublished honors thesis, University of the Witswatersrand, 1974). Copelyn's thesis was among the first studies to engage explicitly with the Pondoland Revolt. In this thesis, Copelyn used Eric Wolf's structuralist theories regarding peasant resistance as his primary analytic lens through which to study the events in Pondoland in 1960. Consequently, Copelyn's conclusions underscore the conservative nature of the insurgents.

[21] Sukude Matoti and Lungisile Ntsebeza, "Rural Resistance in Mpondoland and Thembuland, 1960-1963," in *Road to Democracy in South Africa*, South African Democracy Education Trust (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004), 177.

[22] Ibid., 208.

[23] Ibid., 208.

political tensions between educated modernizers and traditionalists."[24] Beinart situates the insurgency in Pondoland within a longer history of environmental policies that sought to govern African land-use.[25] These land-use policies, which formed part of the policies outlined in Bantu Authorities, ultimately destabilized political and social relations between collaborationist chiefs and the vast majority of people residing in the reserves. Beinart's argument regarding the importance of environmental history and its connection to the outbreak of resistance makes a valuable contribution. What is clear from both the work of Beinart and Lungisile and Matoti is the need for a further exploration into the innovative aspects of the political platform articulated by *iKongo* insurgents beginning in 1959.

Recent contributions of Clifton Crais and Sean Redding advance a new series of analyses regarding rural resistance during the colonial period in sub-Saharan Africa broadly and in Pondoland specifically. While an analysis of *iKongo* forms a small part of Crais' and Redding's works, these authors add a cultural dimension to a narrative concerned primarily with political economy.[26] Crais takes on the question of the subalterity of the rural insurgent directly in his analysis of *iKongo*. Arguing

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[24] William Beinart, "Environmental Origins of the Pondoland Revolt," in *South Africa's Environmental History: Cases and Comparisons*, ed. Steve Dovers, Ruth Edgecombe, Bill Guest (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2003), 88. See also, William Beinart, *The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

[25] William Beinart, "Environmental Origins of the Pondoland Revolt," 77-78.

[26] Clifton Crais, *The Politics of Evil: Magic, State Power, and the Political Imagination in South Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Sean Reading, *Sorcery and Sovereignty: Taxation, Power and Rebellion in South Africa, 1880-1963* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2006).

for the existence of a "subaltern nationalism," he suggests that peoples in the Eastern Cape throughout the twentieth century posited a nationalism that stood in opposition to the secular bourgeois nationalism envisioned by such movements as the ANC.[27] For Crais, an integral component to this subaltern nationalism was an engagement with evil through languages of religion. This engagement allowed different movements in the Eastern Cape to engage with "social health, with evil… and the intricacies of modern state formation."[28] Centered on the creation of a 'just world,' this particular form of nationalism lent itself, and indeed gave rise to, a fundamentalism that allowed for and encouraged extreme acts of violence.

While Crais examines the alternative forms of nationalism envisioned by the subaltern insurgent, Redding is primarily concerned with the over-arching question of why rural Africans continued to pay taxes throughout the twentieth century despite experiencing increasingly oppressive policies by the South African state. She asserts that even though Africans did continue to pay taxes, they remained critical of the new order to which they were subject. This component of her argument bears a striking resemblance to James Scott's concept of "hidden transcripts."[29] Redding argues that violent conflict between Africans and representatives of the white government throughout the twentieth century, including the conflict involving *iKongo*, emerged from a fundamental

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[27] Crais, *The Politics of Evil,* 122.

[28] Ibid, 122.

[29] James Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 4-5.

miscommunication between two different groups: modern secular society (white South Africa) and "traditional" society.[30] This argument opens interesting avenues of research regarding not only the motivations behind the articulation of an *iKongo* political platform, but also the reasons why the ANC, over a period of fifty years, has gradually subsumed the movement into its own historical narrative.

An exploration of the Pondoland insurgency as a form of rural cosmopolitanism illuminates the production and dissemination of knowledge and recasts the literature on peasants and peasant resistance to colonial rule in Africa.[31] Much of the literature on peasant revolts frames peasants as inward-looking actors concerned primarily with the retention of tradition in the face of transition to a capitalist economy. Studies of peasants and rural resistance were an important part of African historical studies in the 1960s through the 1980s.[32] Drawing on earlier

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[30] Redding, *Sorcery and Sovereignty,* 202.

[31] For one of the most recent contributions to the literature on the insurgency in Pondoland, see Jimmy Pieterse, "Traditionalists, Traitors, and Sell-Outs: the Roles of the 'Amaqaba,' 'Abangcatshi' and 'Abathengisi' in the Pondoland Revolt of 1960-1961" (unpublished masters thesis, University of Pretoria, 2007). Pieterse aims to establish an event history of the movement and does draw from the recent contributions of Crais and Redding. However, he is clear in his assertion that he does not seek to contribute to theories of insurgence or rural resistance in South Africa or Africa more generally (10). Additionally, while he does attempt to distance himself from Eric Wolf, Pieterse ends the study by agreeing with Wolf's assessment of peasant resistance generally and states that *iKongo*, like other peasant rebellions in the twentieth century, "were parochial reactions to major social dislocations." (126).

[32] Studies include Colin Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979); L.A. Fallers, "Are African Cultivators to be Called 'Peasants'?" *Current Anthropology* 2, no. 2 (April, 1961): 108-110; I.R. Phimister, "Peasant Production and Underdevelopment in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1914" *African Affairs* 73, no. 291 (April, 1974): 217-228; Terence

works on peasants, these works primarily address the process of peasantization and the forms of anti-colonial resistance undertaken by African peasants.[33]

A key issue in the field of African peasant studies, particularly with respect to South Africa, during in the 1970s and 1980s, concerned why rural Africans suffered staggering rates of poverty. Earlier in the twentieth century, economic historians argued that Africans had failed to adapt their economy to the more modern techniques of white farmers.[34] Influenced heavily by modernization theory, and, in the case of South Africa, reflecting contemporary attitudes regarding race, these interpretations sparked considerable debate in the 1970s.

Contrary to those earlier works citing African failure to adapt, Wilson and Thompson argued that farmers in the reserve areas of South Africa, as well as in Lesotho and Swaziland, experienced a period of prosperity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[35] Bundy expanded upon this, arguing that "there was a substantially more positive response by African agriculturists to market opportunities" and "that an adapted form of the traditional subsistence methods provided for hundreds of thousands of Africans a preferable alternative to wage

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Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerilla war in Zimbabwe: a Comparative Study* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

[33] For general discussions of peasants, see Teodor Shanin, *Peasants and Peasant Societies: Selected Readings* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971) and Eric Wolf, *Peasants* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1966).

[34] D. Hobart Houghton, *Some Economic Problems of the Bantu in South Africa* (Johannesburg, 1938).

[35] Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson, eds. *The Oxford History of South Africa*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

labor."[36] Additionally, Bundy argued that, for a short time, a small number of Africans actually expanded beyond subsistence level agriculture to compete with white farmers.[37] The eventual decline and fall of this African peasantry resulted from, in part, the discovery of gold and diamonds and the subsequent industrialization of the South African economy beginning in the 1870s and 1880s. As the industrial sector grew, so did the need for a permanent pool of cheap labor. Wealthy white farmers sought to push out lower working class African farmers by progressively making them dependent on wage-labor on larger farms and plantations.[38] As both Bundy and Beinart have noted, the resulting migrant labor networks, encouraged by the state, that came to dominate much of the economic landscape in rural South Africa in the twentieth century compelled African dependence on wage labor and traded goods while simultaneously discouraging subsistence production.[39]

Africans resisted their incorporation into these migrant labor networks throughout the early decades of the twentieth century. As Bradford argued,

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[36] Colin Bundy, "The Emergence and Decline of a South African Peasantry," *African Affairs* 71, no. 285 (October, 1972): 370.

[37] Ibid., 371.

[38] Helen Bradford, "Mass Movements and the Petty Bourgeoisie: The Social Origins of ICU Leadership, 1924-1929," *The Journal of African History* 25, no. 3 (1984).

[39] Colin Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979); William Beinart, *The Political Economy of Pondoland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); William Beinart, Peter Delius and Stanley Trapido, eds., *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South Africa, 1850-1930* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986).

organizations like the Industrial and Commercial Worker Union (ICU) appealed not only to urban Africans but also to rural Africans working on white farms in the Transvaal and Transkei.[40] She rejects the argument that the leaders of organizations like the ICU were members of the urban elite or even bourgeoisie and instead argues that most organizers were "from sections of the lower middle classes which shared the interests of… and were being precipitated into the under-classes."[41] Bradford argues that these "fringe members of the middle classes," desperate to escape the pull of proletarianization encouraged by state policies, also felt an ideological connection with the rural "underclass."[42] With the ICU, at least, it was not African "peasants" who articulated a proto-nationalist platform, but rather these semi-skilled trade workers who faced being drawn either into the industrial sector as mine workers or as share-croppers in the rural areas.

The majority of the literature on peasant resistance in South Africa, and indeed throughout all of sub-Saharan Africa, suggests that rural resistance occurred when African peasants rejected working class modes of production (i.e. wage labor) that threatened "traditional" modes of subsistence.[43] Over the past several decades,

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[40] Helen Bradford, "'A Taste of Freedom:' Capitalist Development and Response to the ICU in the Transvaal Countryside" in *Town and Countryside in the Transvaal: Capitalist Penetration and Popular Response*, ed. Belinda Bozolli (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1983).

[41] Helen Bradford, "Mass Movements and the Petty Bourgeoisie," 296.

[42] Ibid., 299;308.

[43] William Beinart and Colin Bundy, *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa: Politics and Popular Movements in the Transkei and Eastern Cape, 1890-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Terence Ranger, *Peasant*

relatively few works have engaged with the question of why rural Africans engaged in acts of resistance.[44] The focus has switched to a consideration of how urban Africans resisted oppressive rule and incorporated democratic principles and organizations such as labor unions into their resistance strategies.[45]

In his discussion of decentralized despotism and the role of the bifurcated state in postcolonial Africa, Mahmood Mamdani identifies peasant insurgents, specifically referencing the insurgency in Pondoland, as primarily "organized around what they claimed was an untainted, uncompromised, and genuine custom."[46] He argues that African peasants held up this "untainted" custom against the false or "corrupted version of the customary" offered by the colonial state.

Consciousness and Guerilla war in Zimbabwe: a Comparative Study, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

[44] Notable exceptions to this trend outside of historical writing on South Africa include recent works on the Mau Mau insurgency in Kenya. These works include David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty war in Kenya and the End of Empire* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2005); Caroline Elkins*, Imperial Reckoning: the Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005); John Lonsdale and E.S. Atieno Odhiambo, eds., *Mau Mau and Nationhood: Arms, Authority, and Narration* (Oxford: James Currey, 2003); James H. Smith, "Njama's Supper: The Consumption and Use of Literary Potency by Mau Mau Insurgents in Colonial Kenya," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40, no. 3 (July, 1998): 524-548. Other studies on rural resistance in sub-Saharan Africa include Steven Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals: Anthropology and History in Tanzania* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990).

[45] See: Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: the Labor Question in French and British Africa*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) and Frederick Cooper, *On the African Waterfront: Urban Disorder and the Transformation of Work in Colonial Mombasa*, (New Have: Yale University Press, 1987).

[46] Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 24.

While Mamdani makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of the multiple forms of governance advanced by the colonial state, he continues to perpetuate the belief that peasant resistance is conservative in nature.

The insights of the Subaltern Studies group over the past twenty years has encouraged scholars to move away from the distinction between urban dwellers as cosmopolitan actors and peasants as protective of "traditional" values. This distinction, influenced by Marxist historiography, was prevalent during the 1960s and 1970s and wielded a great influence over African historians, including Beinart and Bundy. Referring to the work of Eric Hobsbawm on peasant revolt in the nineteenth and twentieth century, Dipesh Chakrabarty states that the "standard tendency in global Marxist historiography … was to look on peasant revolts organized along the axes of kinship, religion, cast, etc., as movements exhibiting a 'backward' consciousness."[47] In the 1980s, as part of an effort to counter both imperialist and nationalist historiographies of India, members of the Subaltern Studies group formulated a response to the works of historians such as Hobsbawm.

Subaltern historians, including Ranajit Guha and Shahid Amin, asserted that the rural revolutionary, rather than attempting to protect or re-assert an authentic tradition in the face of a threatening modernity, instead demonstrated an "embryonic" form of political consciousness.[48] While this formulation recognizes

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[47] Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Subaltern Studies and Postcolonial Historiography," *Neplantla: Views from the South* 1, no. 1 (2000), 16.

[48] Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983) 11. See also: Shahid Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922-1992* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

the political agency of rural men and women, it continues to work on an assumption of the existence of a scale of political consciousness. This scale implicitly places Western secular nationalists at the highest stage of political consciousness. Accordingly, rural insurgents, while possessing a form of political consciousness and thus being released from Hobsbawm's cage of the "pre-political," have yet to attain a fully formed political consciousness because they continue to retain religious beliefs and traditional practices that cannot be reconciled with the secularist tenets of Western nationalism.

Studies of peasant revolt tend towards the creation of a binary. They pit rural insurgents as conservative actors against the progressive impulses of the modern state. Chakrabarty's question of how do we investigate "the peasant and subaltern classes… whose life practices constantly challenge our 'modern' distinctions" informs much of this current study.[49] The framework of rural cosmopolitanism aims to address Chakrabarty's question regarding the historians approach to those subalterns who defy easy categorization by providing a different analytical approach to the problem of rural resistance. Rather than seeing a distinct divide between the life practices of peasants and "modernity," I suggest that rural cosmopolitanism allows us to examine the unique and innovative ways in which peasants negotiated between their life practices and the demands of modernity.

In addition to examining the creation of a political state by *iKongo* in the 1950s and 1960s, this study explores the suppression of the movement by the South

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[49] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies*, (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2002), *xx*.

African state. Like cosmopolitanism, the study of counter-insurgency has been the subject of a number of recently published historical and philosophical studies due, in part, to the events occurring after September 11, 2001. In addition to historical studies of counter-insurgency across the world, philosophers have examined the techniques used by government's to permanently decrease the revolutionary or insurgent capacity of their populations. Benjamin's "Critique of Violence" has re-emerged as a particularly important tool with which to construct a theory of counter-insurgency and the authoritarian state. In "Critique of Violence," Benjamin suggests that the law-making capacity of the insurgent is inherent to all resistance.[50] In an attempt to prevent revolution, the government must "divest the individual… of all violence."[51] Therefore, the state, in seeking to defuse and incapacitate the revolutionary potential of the insurgent, curtails the actions of all citizens.

Agamben utilizes Benjamin's understanding of the violent capacity of the state, in conjunction with the philosophy of Carl Schmitt, in his formulation of the state of exception.[52] Responding not only to the political history of Nazi Germany, but also to the position of the United States in the wake of September 11, 2001, Agamben argues that the "state of exception tends increasingly to appear as the dominant paradigm of government in contemporary politics."[53] Refuting Schmitt's

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[50] Walter Benjamin, "Critique of Violence," in *Reflections*, ed. Peter Demetz (New York: Shocken Book, 1978), 283.

[51] Ibid., 283.

[52] Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception,* trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

[53] Ibid., 2.

claim that the state of exception constitutes a dictatorship, Agamben defines the state of exception as "a space devoid of law, a zone of anomie in which all legal distinctions and above all the very distinctions between public and private – are deactivated."[54] Rather than suggesting that a state of exception is indicative of a *suspension* of law, Agamben argues that it marks the *limit* of the law.[55] The state of exception renders the subject "unnamable and unclassifiable" – the subject(s) exist at the limit of the juridical order.[56]

Agamben's formulation of the state of exception is a useful approach for the study of insurgency and counter-insurgency. Frequently, the study of resistance, rural or urban, does not include an analysis of how the suppression actually occurred. To occlude such an analysis precludes valuable insight into how officials understood insurgents and the threat, both real and imagined, they posed.

Approaching *iKongo* as a moment of rural cosmopolitanism in which insurgents attempted to gain international recognition of their national vision in conjunction with an exploration of the suppression of the movement creates a more nuanced understanding of rural life and resistance in South Africa and moves towards a theory of insurgency across the modern world. However, because the

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[54] Ibid., 50.

[55] Ibid., 3-4. Agamben uses the example of the military order issued by President George W. Bush on November 13, 2001 to argue that the category of "enemy combatant" constitutes a state of exception in the executive branch as the sovereign authorized the suspension of the right of citizenship in cases of national emergency, thereby allowing for indefinite detention and trial by military commission

[56] Ibid., 3.

members of the ANC found the national vision of *iKongo* to be an uneasy fit with its own explicitly Western liberal democratic national vision, the unique contributions of the movement have gradually disappeared while the movement has gradually been incorporated into an ANC narrative of liberation.

Government Intervention and Local Resistance in the Transkei

Beginning in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the British began their attempt to colonize the Western and Eastern Capes. At approximately the same time, in the 1820s, the far reaches of the Eastern Cape experienced considerable upheaval due to the impact of the *Mfecane.*

In Pondoland, Paramount Chief Faku of the Mpondo gradually consolidated his power and influence over the Mpondo and many of the displaced peoples fleeing the Zulu kingdom. Under Faku's rule, the people living in the region reconstituted their cattle herds and maintained a relative peace until his death in 1867.[57] After his death and the ascension of Mqikela to the Paramountcy, the region experienced a period of considerable uncertainty during which its military and economic dominance in the region declined.[58]

During this period, there was considerable disagreement amongst the Mpondo concerning British attempts to annex the territory. The heir apparent to the Paramountcy, Sigcau, maintained a friendly relationship with the British while

[57] Timothy Stapleton, *Faku: Rulership and Colonialism in the Mpondo Kingdom, c. 1760-1867* (Ontario: Wildrid Laurier University Press, 2001).

[58] Ibid., 25. During Faku's reign, due to the sheer strength of the military, the Mpondo had not participated in the gun trade while other societies in the immediate vicinity had.

Mhlangaso, a prominent councilor, advocated independence from British rule. Upon Mqikela's death in 1887, Mhlangaso mounted a challenge to the Paramountcy. This challenge sparked a civil war between the pro-Mhlangaso and pro-Sigcau factions. As Beinart notes, this dispute directly contributed to colonial annexation of Pondoland in 1894.[59]

Upon annexing Pondoland, the Cape Colony instituted the same administrative system in operation in other parts of the Transkei. Overseen by the Native Affairs Department (NAD) in Cape Town, two chief magistrates administered the whole of the Transkei.

The Glen Grey Act (1894) provided for the introduction of individual land tenure and the establishment of local district councils. That same year, Transkeian Proclamation No. 352 introduced the "Bunga" system of district councils in four districts. Colonial officials divided each district into four wards and taxpayers in each ward elected one member to the district council. The district magistrate nominated two additional members to sit on the council.[60] Introduced to the whole of the Transkei in 1926, colonial officials, responding to protest from chiefs and headmen, allowed tax-payers in Pondoland to elect two members themselves with the Paramount Chief nominating two councilors and the magistrates nominating the

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[59] Beinart, *The Political Economy of Pondoland*, 34-35.

[60] Gwendolen M. Carter, Thomas Karis, and Newell M. Stultz, *South Africa's Transkei: The Politics of Domestic Colonialism* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967), 85-89.

remaining two councilors.[61] Chiefs in these districts maintained their position as long as they declared their loyalty to the colonial government and, as government employees, supervised an array of state regulations including the inoculation of stock while the magistrate controlled tax collection. However, the chiefs had lost much of their power.

Upon achieving Union in 1910, the South African state retained the Transkeian Territories General Council (TTGC), alternatively known as the Bunga. A clear feature of the TTGC was the decline in the chiefs' power. The government did not recognize chiefly courts and what power a chief or headmen did retain depended on his ability to control his headmen. If he could not, those headmen "could compete for power with hereditary rulers and expect some support from the state."[62] Under the 1927 Native Administration Act, the government gradually granted chiefs increased power and wealth in exchange for their support of government policy. Government appointed chiefs and headmen who pledged allegiance to the state in exchange for their position, wealth, and power remained controversial figures within their communities throughout the twentieth century. Resistance movements during this period, including *iKongo*, frequently cited their displeasure with these government chiefs and headmen.

During the early years of the twentieth century, as chiefs and headmen increasingly entered a bureaucratic network, the government also extended its

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[61] Ibid., 88. Pondoland was divided into the eastern districts of Lusikisiki, Flagstaff, Bizana, and Tabankulu and the western districts of Libode, Ngqeleni, and Port St. Johns.

[62] Beinart, *The Political Economy of Pondoland*, 39.

powers into the economic sphere of the Transkei. Concerned about highly infectious diseases such as rinderpest and East Coast fever, veterinarians recommended regular and universal dipping of livestock while officials also regulated the movement of cattle herds between the Transkei and Natal in an effort to limit the spread of the disease. This constituted a considerable affront to many Africans living in the region. Like many other societies in sub-Saharan Africa, cattle determined, in large part, a family's wealth and status. The killing of cattle remained a primary means of maintaining good relations with the ancestors (*amathongo)* and men typically paid the bride price in cattle. Many Africans saw dipping not only as an unnecessary expense but also as potentially dangerous to the animals because of the toxic mix of chemicals used. In fact, some Africans believed that whites had introduced dipping as a way to undermine "African society and to drive young men to work in even greater numbers."[63]

The regulations on stock remained a primary motivation behind African resistance throughout the early decades of the twentieth century. During a meeting Matatiele District in 1914, Africans stated that the government had never consulted them and blamed local headmen for colluding with the state.[64] As the drive to dip livestock increased throughout the twentieth century so did African frustration with

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[63] William Beinart and Colin Bundy, "We Don't Want Your Rain, We Won't Dip," in *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa: Politics and Popular Movements in the Transkei and Eastern Cape, 1890-1930*, ed. William Beinart and Colin Bundy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 197.

[64] Minutes of Meeting in Matatiele District, November 25, 1914 (CA CMT 3/89, Folio 33).

government appointed chiefs and headmen. When Africans did engage in explicit acts of resistance, the most frequent targets were these African officials.

In the 1930s, responding to a rapid population increase among Africans and environmental crisis (drought, famine, etc.) in the Transkei, the South African government introduced a series of policies designed to address the degradation of land caused by various farming and grazing practices. The Betterment Proclamation, passed in 1939, proposed an increase in villagization and fencing, the separation of arable land from grazing land, and provided for the implementation of regular stock culling. Constituting perhaps "the most far-reaching intervention into rural life since annexation, the introduction of taxes, and dipping, the betterment schemes also functioned as way to define, regulate and restrict, African movement within the reserves."[65]

At the same as the state introduced the betterment regulations, Africans in the reserves faced increased pressure to enter the migrant labor networks. Beginning in the latter half of the nineteenth century with the discovery of gold and diamonds in Kimberley, South African employers demanded access to permanent pools of cheap African labor. Despite the pull to enter the migrant labor networks in which young men entered into eight to ten month contracts with a company in the industrial or agricultural sector, Africans throughout the Transkei maintained a relative degree of economic independence in the early decades of the twentieth century.

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[65] William Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 134.

This economic independence came under pressure as increasing numbers of white farmers and mine-owners sought to "apply extra-economic pressure to the African peasantry; to break down the peasant's "independence, increase his wants, and to induce him to part more abundantly with his labor."[66] At the same time, African peasant production began to show signs of strain due to the combination of disease, government taxation, and rapid population growth. As a result, increasing numbers of young men in the Transkei entered the migrant labor networks beginning in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The cattle advance system facilitated the entrance of rural Africans into these networks through a simple formula: rather than receiving wages upon arriving at the place of employment, local white traders and company recruiters advanced the worker one head of cattle upon the signing of a labor contract in lieu of wages. Employers instead paid wages directly to the trader and recruiter. The families of workers perceived certain advantages to this system because the advance of an animal guaranteed the continuation of the families survival at home and while simultaneously ensuring that the worker would come home because he did not have the means to establish himself, due to lack of wages, outside of the reserve.[67]

By the time that the cattle advance system eventually fell into disuse in the second decade of the twentieth century, many Africans already participated in migrant labor. Between 1904 and 1909, the number of Africans participating in

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[66] Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry*, 113.

[67] William Beinart, "Joyini Inkomo: Cattle Advances and the Origins of Migrancy from Pondoland," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 5, no. 2 (April, 1979): 214.

migrant labor had increased from approximately four thousand to fifty thousand.[68] In the 1950s, officials estimated the number of migrant laborers leaving the Transkei annually at somewhere between 170,000 and 200,000.[69] At the end of their contracts, many migrant laborers did return home, with their wages, for short periods before entering into a new contract.

Despite this flow of cash into the region, Africans throughout the Transkei continued to experience high levels of impoverishment. The various policies associated with the betterment scheme progressively relegated Africans to smaller and less fertile parcels of land. Even in good years, it was difficult to produce a harvest capable of sustaining a family. Additionally, these wages frequently did not cover the financial obligations required by the state (taxes, dipping fees, etc.). Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, as rural Africans struggled to survive in the face of oppressive environmental, political, and economic conditions, resistance to government policies regulating and livestock and the corruption of government appointed chiefs increased and intensified.

Although many Africans in the Transkei, and in Pondoland specifically, had successfully resisted the initial push into the migrant labor network, by the 1930s and 1940s, more Africans found themselves embedded within a system of migrant labor and indebtedness that only seemed to deepen from year to year. African resistance intensified in the 1940s as more Africans, frustrated with government policies regarding land and stock, identified the government appointed chiefs

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[68] Ibid., 209.

[69] Census of the Transkei, 1951 (CA CMT 3/1385).

among the primary culprits in causing the precarious position that so many found themselves in. It was in this environment that *iKongo* formed.

Chapter Summaries

Chapters One through Three trace the insurgency itself: the origins of *iKongo* in the 1940s, the beginnings of the insurgency in 1959, its intensification in 1960, and its suppression by the South African state beginning in 1963. These chapters explore how *iKongo* developed from a local movement based in Mt. Ayliff district in the 1940s, critical of government rehabilitation policies, to a full-scale insurgent organization with cell operations in no fewer than seven districts throughout the Transkei by the end of the 1950s.

Chapter One traces the history of *iKongo* from its origin in Mt. Ayliff District in 1947 through the shootings of *iKongo* insurgents by government police on June 6, 1960. I examine why *iKongo* appears to have disappeared between 1950 and 1959 and argue that the movement re-emerged partly in response to the contentious implementation of Bantu Authorities in 1955. This chapter also explores the basic narrative of the insurgency in 1959 and 1960: in which districts did the insurgency begin and who were its leaders? Whom did *iKongo* target on their nighttime raids that increasingly set the hills aflame night after night? Did the ANC play any significant role in the movement as South African officials believed?

I discuss the ways in which *iKongo* constituted a moment of rural cosmopolitanism in Chapter Two. Focusing on the ways in which the construction of a constitution and a petition both demonstrated a national vision and sought to establish the movement as legitimate in the eyes of organizations like the United

Nation, this chapter also examines how leaders utilized tropes of magic and the ancestors as part of their political rhetoric. Within the framework of rural cosmopolitanism, the implementation of these tropes during the course of the insurgency was not at odds with the desire of *iKongo* for recognition as a nation and its use of nationalist, secular language. The upheaval and rapid change experienced by peoples throughout the Transkei for much of the twentieth century contributed to the widespread belief that there existed a serious imbalance in the world. This chapter explores the different ways in which participants implemented and enacted concepts of malicious magic and images of their ancestors as part of their fight against Bantu Authorities. I argue that *iKongo* insurgents deployed these images and concepts in new and innovative ways to construct a nation that simultaneously drew upon familiar local tropes while seeking to enter the Western arena of governance and civil society.

The revolutionary potential of *iKongo* posed a considerable threat to the stability of the South African state in the region. Chapter Three switches focus from the perspective of the insurgent to that of the state official and examines the suppression of the movement in 1960. Not only did the 1950s and early 1960s witness an increase in anti-apartheid protest in South Africa but also, across the colonial world as colonized subjects began to demand independence. One of the largest anti-colonial insurgencies of this period was the Mau Mau revolt in Kenya.[70]

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[70] For a discussion of Mau Mau, see: Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: the Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005); David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005); Daniel Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau: Creating Kenya: Counterinsurgencies, Civil War, and Decolonization* (Cambridge:

Viewed by British colonial administrators as primitive and atavistic, the suppression of Mau Mau between 1952 and 1958 resulted in the execution of just over one thousand people and the detention without trial of at least one hundred fifty thousand Kikuyu in the Central Highlands of Kenya. Worried that *iKongo* might destabilize portions of South Africa in much the same way as Mau Mau, South African officials borrowed tactics deployed by British colonial forces in the implementation of their own counter-insurgency operation in the Transkei. Additionally, I argue that, confronted with an insurgent group that proposed to create its own laws and form its own government, South African officials implemented a state of emergency. As resistance to apartheid deepened throughout the 1960s and 1970s, this state of emergency gradually turned from an extraordinary suspension of the law to an ordinary state of exception designed to incapacitate the nationalist vision articulated by *iKongo*.

While the South African state officials viewed *iKongo* as a considerable threat to stability within the Transkei and throughout South Africa generally, the relationship between *iKongo* and large nationalist organizations like the ANC is more difficult to discern. While the ANC did have a minimal presence in the Eastern Cape throughout the 1940s and 1950s, there is virtually no evidence demonstrating a significant link between *iKongo* and any major nationalist organization during the insurgency. Chapter Four examines the ways in which, during the fifty years

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Cambridge University Press, 2009); E.S. Atieno Odhiambo and John Lonsdale, eds., *Mau Mau and Nationhood: Arms, Authority, and Narration* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003); Cora Ann Presley, *Kikuyu Women, the Mau Mau Rebellion and Social Change in Kenya* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992); Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1992).

following the end of the insurgency, the ANC has appropriated the memory of *iKongo* in the late 1990s. During the course of the insurgency, ANC operatives, including Govan Mbeki, and correspondents for ANC affiliated newspapers such as *New Age* had expressed solidarity with and encouraged national support of *iKongo* insurgents. Communications from ANC operatives, intercepted by state officials, indicate this support was not absolute.

I argue that the ANC withdrew support and indeed issued condemnations of a movement when it perceived members to be employing indiscriminate violence or going outside the bounds of acceptable nationalist discourse – the primary example of this being Poqo's activities in the Transkei in the early 1960s. However, the ANC never condemned *iKongo*. In subsequent years, as evidenced by Govan Mbeki's work on peasant resistance, the proceedings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the involvement of the ANC in community memorialization of the shootings at Ngquza Hill in Pondoland, the narrative of the movement has been subsumed into an ANC narrative of liberation. While the ANC endorsed the fight against Bantu Authorities, *iKongo*'s vision of itself as a nation separate from that of South Africa and the seamless integration of lexicons of the supernatural with its political stance was not commensurate with the liberal democratic and secular ideals of the ANC. It was the rural cosmopolitanism demonstrated by members of *iKongo* that alarmed the ANC so greatly that, when the ANC began to fold the narrative of *iKongo* into its own history of resistance to apartheid, the invocations of Russians and killing of chiefs as sorcerers disappeared. This chapter also explores the ways in which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has incorporated the

experiences of *iKongo* into a narrative geared towards the promotion of national reconciliation.

This study concludes with a discussion of the various implications for using rural cosmopolitanism as an analytical framework. Not only is there a need for a more nuanced understanding of the contributions made by rural Africans in the struggle against the apartheid state but I suggest that rural cosmopolitanism provides a new way for scholars to understand insurgency and resistance in colonial and post-colonial societies. The approach to rural resistance as moments of rural cosmopolitanism suggests the importance of reassessing conventional approaches to the ways in which scholars and activists understand the motivations behind rural resistance.

A Note on Terminology

The movement behind the Pondoland insurgency is known by several different names including *iKongo,* the Congo, "Men of the Mountain," the "Hill Committees" and the "Mountain Committees." For the purpose of clarity and consistency, I use *iKongo* throughout this study unless otherwise identified in a document or an interview.

Chapter One

The Beginnings of an Insurgency: A History of *iKongo* (1947-1960)

This chapter traces the history of *iKongo* from its inception in the late 1940s to the shooting of *iKongo* members by South African forces on June 6, 1960. Throughout the twentieth century, Africans living in the Transkei experienced radical change due to the extension of migrant labor networks and the state implementation of policies designed to "modernize" existing practices of agricultural production in addition to political structures. *iKongo* did not emerge in a vacuum but was very much a part of a long history of resistance to colonial rule throughout the region.

The initial formation of *iKongo* in 1947 reflected the growing tension between rural Africans and government officials focused on maintaining a significant degree of control over African political and economic affairs. For several years, *iKongo* engaged in an active campaign against policies such as cattle dipping and rehabilitation. The movement also contested the right of government officials to appoint chiefs and headmen. Between 1947 and 1950, the actions of *iKongo* did not depart significantly from anti-dipping campaigns or movements against government-appointed chiefs and headmen that occurred sporadically throughout the first part of the twentieth century. Like those movements, *iKongo* cells in Mt. Ayliff District, after a brief period of explosive protest, appear to have disbanded or declined in influence by 1950.

In the late 1950s, as rural Africans faced increasing levels of crime that threatened the social order in addition to state policies that sought an even greater

control over the everyday lives of Africans in the reserves, *iKongo* re-emerged. However, rather than merely protesting the policies of the state and the corruption of government collaborators as had previous resistance movements, including the earlier cells of *iKongo*, members of this re-configured *iKongo* mounted a sustained insurgency against representatives and symbols of the South African state. This insurgency gained in strength throughout 1960 and functioned as part of an effort to create an entirely new government that defied both the society imagined by Bantu Authorities as well as that envisioned by the leadership of such nationalist organizations as the ANC.

The Formation of iKongo: The First Meetings on the Hills

iKongo first emerged in an environment of instability and frustration. Responding to a government that increasingly sought to control the everyday lives of rural Africans, the first meetings of *iKongo* occurred in Mt. Ayliff District in 1947. Officials declared the district a betterment area in 1946 and resistance to the decision had been growing for several months particularly after the government appointment of Chief Gaulibiso Jojo. Large numbers of people, incensed about the impact of the betterment schemes on their livelihood, frustrated with the lack of communication about the scheme from the government, and enraged by the corruption of government appointed chiefs, engaged in a campaign against government appointed chiefs throughout 1947 and 1948.[1]

[1] "How the Amaxesibe Fought," *The Torch*, May 10, 1948 (CA CMT 3/1480).

Opposition to government appointed chiefs and policies of dipping, stock culling, and rehabilitation was not new. Throughout the twentieth century, rural Africans throughout the Transkei resisted the policies of the South African state by refusing to pay taxes, committing acts of sabotage (i.e. destroying dipping tanks or cutting fences), and failing to recognize the authority of collaborationist chiefs and headmen. I argue that the 1947 formation of *iKongo* was very much a part of this tradition of resistance.

Already suspicious of the dipping process designed to inoculate cattle against contagious diseases rural Africans contended that the government had not consulted with them during the formulation of the schemes. They further argued that particular elements of these policies actually contributed to the degradation of local economic and social structures.[2] Outrage over stock culling emerged as one cornerstone of *iKongo*'s platform. The other major cornerstone of this platform concerned Chief Gaulibiso Jojo's misuse of power.

The first record of *iKongo* as a specifically named organization occurs in a statement made by Joseph Mangqoba of Mt. Ayliff district to South African police in 1948.[3] At no point in the archival record is there any mention of why members of the movement called themselves *iKongo*. When the movement re-emerged in the 1950s, some officials and members of the ANC speculated that it was a version of the

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[2] Confidential Letter from the Office of the District Commandant, Kokstad to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Umtata, July 15, 1948 (CA CMT 3/1480).

[3] Statement by Joseph Mangqoba to the South Africa Police, June 15, 1948 (CA CMT 3/1480).

word "Congress" and subsequently indicated an affiliation with the ANC. However, Matoti and Lungisile argue that if members did intend to evoke the ANC they would have used the word *iKongolo* as opposed to *iKongo*.[4] They support the suggestion made by Kayser that *iKongo* explicitly referenced the liberation struggle occurring in the Belgian Congo in the late 1940s and 1950s. In an interview conducted with a former insurgent, Kayser reports that *iKongo* insurgents in 1960 demonstrated a familiarity with the actions of Patrice Lumumba.[5]

That members of *iKongo* knew of liberation movements outside of South Africa and named their movement accordingly is certainly plausible, particularly in the late 1950s when the Belgians transferred power to the Congolese and the subsequent election of Lumumba as prime minister. However, there remains little evidence to support this claim. In interviews with former insurgents and their families, people either professed no knowledge of the meaning of *iKongo* or suggested that it did mean "Congress."[6]

During the first meetings of *iKongo* in Mt. Ayliff District in 1947 and 1948, members expressed opposition to the betterment pursued by the South African government since the 1930s.[7] Mangqoba described the first time he attended a

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[4] Matoti and Lungisile, "Rural Resistance in Mpondoland and Thembuland," 181.

[5] R. Kayser, "Land and Liberty: The Non European Unit Movement and the Land Question, 1933-1976," unpublished MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 2002. See also, Redding, *Sorcery and Sovereignty*, 190.

[6] Interview with Author, December 14 and 16, 2007 – Bizana District.

[7] Ibid.

"Kongo" meeting in March 1947.[8] This testimony describes the organizational structure of *iKongo*, in addition to their goals and motivations. The organization instituted a hierarchy with a president, secretary and treasurer. Members contributed dues of 2 pounds 50 so that the organization could hire an attorney so that they "could fight the scheme by law."[9]

A primary point of contention during these first meetings concerned the use of force. Mangqoba stated this in his testimony given on June 15, 1948. He also stated that, at least in the early months of the movement, many *iKongo* members opposed use of force as part of a protest strategy.[10] Consequently, members decided to use the collected dues to retain an attorney who would fight the betterment schemes in court.

While *iKongo* did retain an attorney to help them fight betterment planning, they did not completely abandon the use of forceful protest. In the first three months of 1947, magistrate and police reports record an upsurge in the directed sabotage of telephone lines and dipping tanks.[11] A newspaper article written at the time indicates that approximately fifteen thousand people had risen in protest of the

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[8] Statement by Joseph Mangqoba to the South African Police, June 15, 1948 (CA CMT 3/1480).

[9] Ibid.

[10] Statement by Joseph Mangqoba to the South African Police, June 15, 1948 (CA CMT 3/1480).

[11] "End of Trouble in Mt. Ayliff," Clipping of Article with No Attribution to a Newspaper or Date (CA CMT 3/1480).

betterment schemes and that "Pondos were coming from Pondoland to join them."[12] During this period of armed struggle, several Chiefs and headmen throughout the district believed that *iKongo* members would attack them because of their support of the betterment schemes.[13] Met with a considerable police presence in 1947, armed protest began to subside.

Manqoba's description of these initial *iKongo* meetings in 1946 demonstrates the different ways in which rural Africans sought to resist government policies they saw as restrictive and illegitimate. Far from being isolated from the world outside of the reserves, it is clear that members of *iKongo* brought their experiences, many of which occurred within the context of migrant labor, to bear when formulating a platform of opposition to state policy. Mangqoba states that he kept written records and that others in the movement participated in the writing of letters soliciting the help of attorneys from as far away as Cape Town.

iKongo quickly spread to other districts surrounding Mt. Ayliff in 1948. In his statement, Mangqoba indicated that a similar movement had started up in Shawbury in neighboring Qumbu District. The members of the *iKongo* movement in Qumbu District agreed with the concerns expressed by the Mt. Ayliff branch – particularly those concerns focused on the culling of stock, fencing, removals, and the government appointment of Gaulibiso Jojo over Ntlabati Kwakuwalu to the chieftaincy of the region. At the end of 1947, government officials noted "that the dissatisfied element is a fairly strong one… possibly so strong now that the whole

[12] Ibid.

[13] Confidential Letter from the Magistrate of Mt. Ayliff to the Chief Magistrate, Umtata, May 10, 1947 (CA CMT 3/1480).

district is against the rehabilitation schemes… Their wishes are clear, namely that they want the rehabilitation scheme stopped and that they are prepared to fight to retain their stock."[14] Officials remained troubled about not only the spread of the movement but the numbers of people who had joined it.

In late April 1948, Mr. Binckes, an agricultural officer in the district, noted the existence of the IKongo movement with a degree of concern. This was, in fact, the first time that a government official mentioned *iKongo* by name. Mr. Binckes stated that "The Kongo movement made it known that any person found driving stock to the sale yards would be attacked."[15] He continued to state that the "influence of this small but armed group in local affairs is greatly underestimated outside the district and until they are successfully dealt with, thousands of potential supporters of progress will continue to exhibit an apathetic attitude for fear of reprisal."[16] His statement that *iKongo* was an armed movement alarmed officials and prompted an immediate investigation.

Upon investigation, officials could not confirm Binckes's assertion that the group was armed: "The allegation that the Kongo is armed, has been thoroughly investigated, but no corroboration of the allegation could be obtained. The natives

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[14] Confidential letter from the Magistrate, Mt. Ayliff to the Chief Magistrate, Umtata, July 10, 1947 (CA CMT 3/1480).

[15] Confidential Letter: From the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria, June 21, 1948 (CA CMT 3/1480).

[16] Confidential Letter: From the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria, June 21, 1948 (CA CMT 3/1480).

do carry sticks… No firearms have been acquired… by or through the organization."[17] They did, however, find the collection of funds for the engagement of attorneys to fight the Rehabilitation Schemes to be in contravention of Proclamation 272 of 1930 and ordered police to monitor the group closely for any signs of continued subversive activity.[18]

Despite this increase in government surveillance, *iKongo* intensified their resistance. In 1948, an article appearing in *Torch* (the newspaper for the Non-European Unity Movement) reported a large gathering of *iKongo* in Qumbu District during which members complained to the Chief Magistrate about the implementation of betterment policies.[19] The Chief Magistrate told the crowd that they had had the chance to register an objection when first consulted about the schemes. He then informed the crowd that their complaints were too late and there was "no point in their objecting to it now."[20] A designated spokesperson of *iKongo* responded: "We expected that the first thing that you would do was to depose the chief who is causing so much trouble and working against the people." At this point

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[17] Confidential Letter: From the Office of the District Commandant, Kokstad to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Umtata, July 1, 1948 (CA CMT 3/1480).

[18] Confidential Letter from Divisional Headquarters of the South African Police, Umtata to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata, July 8, 1948 (CA CMT 3/1480).

[19] "How the Amaxesibe Fought," *The Torch*, May 10, 1948 (CA CMT 3/1480). It is interesting to note the presence of representatives of the Non-European Movement (NEUM) in the region at this moment. The organization, emerging from the Workers Party of South Africa (WPSA) in the late 1930s and 1940s, might have hoped to make inroads in the rural areas during periods of "worker" resistance.

[20] Ibid.

state officials closed the meeting. Outside the hall, tension between *iKongo* members and supporters of the betterment schemes quickly escalated. Several members of iKongo assaulted a teacher who expressed support for the betterment schemes.[21] The article concluded with the following statement: "Their organization, the Kongo, still meets on the hills."

iKongo Opposes the Chiefs

While the initial meetings of the *iKongo* in 1947 and 1948 focused specifically on the issue of stock culling, in 1949 *iKongo*'s attention turned to the issue of chiefly succession. Wilson Tangana stated that, on March 23, 1949 as a member of *iKongo*, he attended a meeting at the kraal of a fellow *iKongo* member, Ntlabati Kwakuwalu. During this meeting, numbering approximately 250 men, a man named Elias Mabodla said We have come to appoint a Chief here today," after which a discussion ensued about how the government appointed chief Gaulibiso Jojo "had sold the natives to the Europeans."[22]

An undated and unsigned letter sent to the local magistrate expressed further dissatisfaction with Gaulibiso. "We may state that a person who creates discord in a community is an undesirable element. We submit that this policy of the Government is to be deprecated. Again we submit that we detest the policy of Chief

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Statement by Wilson Tangana to the South African Police, April 27, 1949 (CMT 3/1480).

Gaulibiso Jojo who disregards the opinion and interests of his people."[23] Although this letter was unsigned, there is reason to believe that members of the *iKongo* wrote and submitted it to the local magistrate. Both Joseph Mangqoba and Wilson Tangana indicate in their statements, given at different times and in different locations, that *iKongo* did sent a letter to the magistrate objecting to the appointment of Chief Jojo.

Through voicing their frustration with and lack of respect for Chief Jojo, *iKongo* members participated in a long history of resisting the government policy of appointing chiefs amenable to state rule. Rather than asking that the government appoint a chief who reflected the needs of the people, members of *iKongo* refused to recognize the authority of the Transkeian Territories General Council (TTGC) and the South African state. *iKongo* believed they, not the South African government, had the right and authority to determine who would be Chief.

Wilson Tangana, during his interrogation by the South African police regarding his involvement with *iKongo*, stated that members of the organization had nominated Ntlabati as chief in place of Jojo. "I have since heard that the 'Kongo' committee have approached him (Ntlabati) and asked him whether him whether he would be prepared to accept the Chieftainship, and it is said that he has agreed if he is elected."[24] Elliot Mbata, also a member of *iKongo,* corroborated Tangana's statement regarding the nomination of Ntlabati as chief. "I am satisfied from what I

[23] Unsigned letter sent to the Magistrate of Mt. Ayliff District, late 1949 (CA CMT 3/1480).

[24] Statement by Wilson Tangana to the South African Police, April 27, 1949 (CA CMT 3/1480).

have heard at the meeting that the new Chief has already been appointed by the Kongo and that the Kongo wants the present Chief and all Headmen in this district to be present when he will be pointed out and recognized in place of the present chief**."**[25]

In October 1949, *iKongo* sent a delegation to the district commissioners in Umtata to argue their case concerning the removal of Chief Jojo. During this encounter between the official representatives of the "Government" and the representatives of *iKongo*, the commissioners asserted their right, according to the guidelines of the TTGC, to determine the "traditional line of succession." Consequently, Chief Jojo was to remain as chief of the peoples in the district.[26] The ensuing exchange illustrates the kind of battles over political authority that became increasingly common throughout the following decade.

> Tiki Nkosana of Dundee Location: In the place of the present Chief we appoint Ntlabati Kwakuwalu
> The Native Commissioner: But you have a chief.
> Bambata Mangeleti of Sidakeni Location: Gaulibiso does not have association with us…

As a spokesperson for *iKongo*, Mangeleti remained clear in his statement that members of the organization did not recognize the authority of Chief Jojo. By virtue of his government appointment, Chief Jojo was an illegitimate chief.

The official response to Mangeleti's assertion was clear: the South African state maintained the right to appoint whomever they saw fit to the position of chief

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[25] Statement by Elliot Mbata to the South African Police, April 26, 1949 (CA CMT 3/1480).

[26] Official notes of a meeting between the Native Commissioner and approximately 170 persons, October 28, 1949 (CA CMT 3/1480).

or headman and that any act against those persons constituted an act of disloyalty to the state:

> The Chief Commissioner: I now want to warn you. [You] have a reputation for loyalty. You people show signs that you are no longer loyal either to your Chief or the Government…[27]

In the late 1940s, members of *iKongo* remained primarily concerned with who held the right to decide political succession in the region. They did not propose a new political system as an alternative to that enacted by the state. However, to contest the authority of the chief was to contest the authority of the government. The South African government thereby aimed to suppress the movement.

Government Response and the Disappearance of iKongo

During the early the early days of *iKongo*, officials did not see the threat as particularly immediate. Police responded to acts of sabotage by increasing the numbers of patrols around stockyards and dipping tanks. Perhaps they thought that the problem would begin to dissolve as time passed and, in many ways, they were correct.

Between 1947 and 1950, *iKongo* resisted government policy in Mt. Ayliff and Qumbu districts. Its members dismissed the state claims regarding the legitimacy of government appointed chiefs and asserted their right to appoint their own representatives. As such, the movement operated within a long history of critique of and resistance to government policy that dictated the terms of political, social, and economic life for rural Africans. Members of *iKongo* did not seek to dispose of chieftaincy but rather challenged the right of white South African officials to

[27] Ibid.

determine political succession. Additionally, they rejected government attempts to regulate the ways in which they which worked the land.

The last record of *iKongo* before its sudden and explosive re-emergence in 1958 occurred in a Matatiele District (directly neighboring Mt Ayliff District to the northeast) police report in May 1950.[28] After this, *iKongo* disappeared completely from archival record. Perhaps the movement completely disbanded or lost what influence it did wield in the region. The disappearance of the movement is not surprising. Like many other rural Africans, members of *iKongo* disagreed with government policies that controlled their economic, social, and political lives. Rather than advocating a new political platform, *iKongo*, like other resistance movements before it, did not advocate a new political platform but instead requested that the government stop implementing such policies as stock culling and fencing, and while demanding that they retain the right to determine their local representatives.

The Implementation of Bantu Authorities and States of Lawlessness in the Transkei (1950-1959)

During *iKongo*'s eight-year absence, the landscape of South Africa changed dramatically. The election of the Nationalist Party in 1948 marked the beginning of apartheid. The implementation of apartheid, literally meaning "apartness" rested on the belief that "Die wit man moet altyd baas wees" or "The white man must always

[28] Statement by Constable C.T. Lebenya, May 20, 1950 (CA CMT 3/1480).

remain boss."[29] The laws enacted following the election of the Nationalist Party sought even greater control over Africans, particularly in the rural areas. Government officials intent on keeping Africans separate from the white population while simultaneously guaranteeing a permanent pool of cheap African labor in the industrial sector, endowed chiefs and headmen with considerable power. Hatred of these chiefs increased throughout the rural areas as the government, now controlled by the Nationalists, introduced apartheid policy. Additionally, rural Africans began to feel the social effects of migrant labor as groups of youths, reluctant to participate in those networks, terrorized their communities and blatantly disrespected their elders.

The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 marked a significant moment in the implementation of apartheid in the rural areas. Designed as a way to "restructure the government of the reserves on more traditional lines," the Act "came to mean the establishment of a system of indirect rule through the medium of subservient and sometimes well-rewarded chiefs, chosen for their preparedness to implement government policy at the expense of their own popularity."[30] The theory of separate development was integral to the vision of the Bantu Authorities Act, and indeed to the Nationalist vision of apartheid. Based on the assumption that tribe and ethnicity were both static and ahistorical, the Act prescribed that members of particular tribes or ethnic groups live in spatially defined and distinct areas apart from the

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[29] Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1994), 97.

[30] Rodney Davenport, *South Africa: A Modern History* (Hampshire, England: Macmillan Press, 1987) 383.

white population.[31] With the election of the Nationalist Party, politicians and state officials finally had the resources and political power to implement this vision of a racially and ethnically divided society.

The belief that the "average" African could not grasp "Western" governmental structures informed the Nationalist vision of separate development and Bantu Authorities. The Secretary and Treasurer of the Transkeian Territorial Authority, E.W. Pearce, concisely articulated the government position on the implementation of Bantu Authorities and the reasons why it had garnered some African support in a speech to the Umtata Rotary Club in May 1957. In this speech, Pearce stated that the TTGC employed "wholly western methods of organization," and ignored "traditional methods of Bantu tribal administration."[32] As such, the "average rural Bantu" had never fully grasped its governmental structure.[33] In order to remedy this problem, the apartheid government sought to dismantle the TTGC because it did not "lend itself to large-scale development in the sense of allowing tribes and communities to manage their local affairs or to carry out and maintain developmental projects in their own interests."[34] Bantu Authorities ultimately aimed to create semi-autonomous Bantustans throughout South Africa in

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[31] Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 149.

[32] "How Bantu Authorities will Function in the Transkei'": Address given by E.W. Pearce (Secretary and Treasurer of the Transkeian Territorial Authority) to the Umtata Rotary Club, May 1957 (CA 1/COF 9/1/86), 1-12

[33] Ibid., 3.

[34] Ibid., 4.

which the majority of Africans lived under the control of government appointed chiefs.

A great fiction of apartheid and the policies associated with the Bantu Authorities Act concerned the degree of African support for these new policies.[35] Indeed, De Wet Nel, Minister of the Bantu Affairs Department, went as far as to say that "the government's approach was jubilantly approved of by easily 98 percent to 99 percent of the Bantu population throughout South Africa."[36] There was considerable support from those chiefs and headmen who directly benefited from the system. A staunch supporter of Bantu Authorities, Paramount Chief Kaizer Matanzima regarded Bantu Authorities as "a milestone because it was a further step in the direction of nation-building and independence."[37] As one of the most powerful chiefs in the region, Matanzima stood to gain, and indeed did gain, considerable power and wealth through his acquiescence to and support of separate development and the creation of Bantustans.

The government position, articulated by Pearce, was that Africans in the Transkei, recognizing the deficiency of the TTGC, had, in 1955, "unanimously resolved that the Council system be integrated into the Bantu Authorities system."[38]

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[35] Carter, Karis, and Stultz, *South Africa's Transkei*, 61-62.

[36] Ibid., 64.

[37] Kaizer D. Matanzima, *Independence My Way*, (Pretoria: Foreign Affairs Association, 1976), 11.

[38] "How Bantu Authorities will Function in the Transkei'": Address given by E.W. Pearce (Secretary and Treasurer of the Transkeian Territorial Authority) to the Umtata Rotary Club, May 1957 (CA 1/COF 9/1/86), 4.

Throughout that year, state officials and African representatives of the General Council discussed how to integrate the TTGC into the structure of Bantu Authorities. In November 1955, they presented their findings to the entire General Council. The Council, composed entirely of African representatives amenable to the implementation of Bantu Authorities, including Matanzima and Botha Sigcau, approved the recommendations that promulgated the following years as Proclamation 180 of 1956.[39]

The policy of separate development dismantled local Native Representative Councils and the Transkeian Territories General Council (TTGC). Originally endowed with only an advisory function, the 1927 Native Administration Act granted African representatives of the TTGC increasing power and wealth in exchange for their support of government policy. Providing for the disestablishment of the TTGC and the subsequent establishment of "traditional" modes of governance, Proclamation 180 advanced a reified and wholly fictional image and understanding of African society and governance. Intent on returning to an imagined pre-colonial political template, officials endowed chiefs amenable to the policies of Bantu Authorities with even greater power than previously allowed. However, the experience of the colonial encounter and the intrusive measures of the colonial state had irrevocably changed the nature of chiefship in the Transkei.[40] In

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[39] Ibid., 4.

[40] See Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 150-152: Fluidity was a major feature of the pre-colonial African state – states were porous in nature. A state in which power and boundaries could and did shift was "incompatible with the formation" of a modern nation state. Subsequently, over a period of years, the Native Affairs Department devoted considerable resources to establishing "royal pedigrees"

order to appoint more pro-Bantu Authorities chiefs and headmen, the state embarked on a system of rule not dissimilar to the policies of indirect rule applied by colonizers in other parts of the African continent. Government officials created "traditional" practices and ethnic groups as part of an effort to both understand and then to incorporate indigenous peoples within the bounds of the modern state.

Mamdani has described this practice as a kind of *decentralized despotism* utilized by colonial states throughout sub-Saharan Africa. The major feature of a decentralized despotism was "the Native Authority comprising a hierarchy of chiefs" that functioned as a "regime of extra-economic coercion… that makes intelligible the powers chiefs wielded over peasants."[41] With respect to the "peasant" or, more broadly, the base of rural Africans, the chief "signifie(d) power that is total and absolute, unchecked and unrestrained."[42] However powerful the chief was with respect to his immediate subjects, he remained, nevertheless, an employee of a Native Administration that sought to keep "free peasants closeted in separate ethnic containers" apart from a "civil society bounded by the modern laws of the modern state."[43] Mamdani argued that this form of decentralized despotism constituted a bifurcated state in which those members of civil society identified themselves as "citizens" capable of enjoying the privileges that accompanied such a distinction

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among political entities throughout South Africa. In some cases, as Crais notes, these ethnographers, including Hammond-Tooke, discovered royal houses where none had ever existed.

[41] Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, 52.

[42] Ibid., 58.

[43] Ibid., 61.

while overseeing the "customary" rights of their African subjects. The Bantu Authorities system functioned in precisely this way: government officials gave chiefs significant powers as part of an effort to oversee the process of separate development that would at once segregate black Africans from the white population while simultaneously guaranteeing a permanent black African labor pool dependent an industrial core dominated by white South Africans.

When implementing the Bantu Authorities system in the Transkei, the South African government retained some elements of the administrative structure of the TTGC. The structure of Bantu Authorities resembled a pyramid with the Bantu Commissioner at its apex. The Bantu Commissioner appointed all chiefs and headmen and retained the ultimate power of veto. Below the position of the Bantu Commissioner was the Territorial Authority, consisting of all Paramount Chiefs in that Territory. The Territorial Authority nominated a presiding head with the permission of the State President. Beneath the Territorial Authority was the Regional Authority. At the head of the Regional Authority was the Paramount Chief. All chiefs within the jurisdiction of the Regional Authority were technically included in its administrative structure. However, loyalty to Bantu Authorities remained a prerequisite. Beneath the Regional Authority was the District Authority with the chief of the dominant tribe in the district at its apex. Sitting with the chief were at least eight other members from the community – all nominated by the Bantu Commissioner. At the bottom of this administrative pyramid were the local Tribal Authorities composed of councilors nominated by the chief and Bantu Commissioner.

While technically allowing taxpayers to elect a small number of councilors on the location and district level, the Bantu Commissioner controlled (directly or indirectly) the vast majority of appointments to all rungs of this administrative hierarchy. As Mbeki noted in his discussion of the implementation of Bantu Authorities in the rural areas throughout South Africa, "The System entirely excluded the elective principle. The Minister and his officials had strict control over the membership of the Authorities; and members of the general public could be excluded from their meetings."[44]

The enthusiastic support voiced by African supporters of Bantu Authorities, including Kaizer Matanzima and Botha Sigcau, enraged many Africans throughout the 1950s. During *iKongo*'s insurgency, members called for the deposition of these government appointed chiefs and the dismantling of Bantu Authorities.[45]

While officials sought to implement Bantu Authorities in the face of growing opposition throughout the 1950s, the rate of crime, particularly stock theft, increased exponentially. One official described the crime of stock theft as "moving towards epidemic proportions" and that "natives are themselves clamouring for

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[44] Mbeki, *South Africa*, 39.

[45] "Baboon Authorities Rule with Knobkerrie: Suspended Man Assaulted to Point of Death," *Indaba Zase Monti*, 3, no. 8, February 20, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1468): "Reports are received from time to time of contemptible treatment meted out to the people by the baboon authorities. These actions show clear and confirm the truth of statements… that those in authority are determined to drive the Bantu people back to barbarism."

severe sentences on stock thieves."[46] Stock theft was not a new phenomenon. Carried out for centuries as a means of demonstrating masculine prowess, it was a familiar part of life in southern Africa. However, before the 1950s, most cases of stock theft involved one or two animals. By the mid- 1950s, stock thieves stole upwards of thirty sheep or cattle at a time.[47] Far from being a demonstration of prowess, in times of severe economic uncertainty, stock thieving became an economic activity in and of itself. Crais notes "thieving had… become a way of life, occasionally even an occupation passed from father to son."[48]

Compounding the issue was the fact that many of the alleged stock thieves brought to trial were young men. Elders in the community saw these young men as "running wild" and going against the very structure of society by disrespecting and even attacking their elders.[49] Groups of youths engaging in acts of hooliganism were familiar to Africans living in the region. Before the age of circumcision, these youths participated in the *intlombe* (dance party). The *intlombe* functioned as community-

[46] Confidential letter from the Magistrate of Flagstaff to the Registrar of the Supreme Court in Grahamstown Re: Criminal Case 17/1954, February 5, 1954 (CA 1/FSF 1/1/34).

[47] See, State v. Zamani Tiya and Others, 1952 (CA 1/QBU 1/1/1/37); State v. Siquetengu Mnitshane and Others, 1954 (CA 1/QBU 1/1/1/37); State v. Siwatla Yila and Others, 1954 (1/ QBU 1/1/1/37); State v. Dloti Kuqu and Five Others, 1959 (CA 1/MTF 1/1/1/220).

[48] Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 167.

[49] Address by Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories at the Opening of the Chief and Headmen's Course, Tsolo District, January 13, 1959 (CA 1/ECO 6/1/1).

sanctioned activity that strengthened ties between youths and, in theory, did not seriously threaten social norms.[50]

However, during the 1940s and 1950s, officials noted that after an *intlombe*, large groups of uncircumcised youths, engaged in faction fights with one another and, on occasion, attacked older members of the community.[51] Many of these youths, unwilling to participate in migrant labor networks, joined the stock thieving gangs. These gangs of men frequently called themselves the "Nephews" a title that, as Redding suggests, "resonated with the cultural license often taken by nephews."[52] However, the lack of respect shown by the "Nephews" transgressed accepted social convention and revealed the fragility of a community under considerable stress due to a rapidly changing landscape. These gangs attacked kraals and stole livestock at night. Such nocturnal attacks further transgressed accepted social norms because nighttime was the time when witches and sorcerers practiced their acts of malevolent magic. To be out at night was to demonstrate an affiliation with the realm of the supernatural.

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[50] For a discussion of youth organizations amongst rural Africans during the twentieth century, see Philip Mayer, *Townsmen or Tribesmen: Conservatism and the Process of Urbanization in a South African City* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1971); Thomas McClendon, *Genders and Generations Apart: Labor Tenants and Customary Law in Segregation-Era South Africa, 1920s to 1940s* (Oxford: J. Currey, 2002).

[51] Case Number 46 of 1959: State v. Nqotwana Pakolo and Others, February 7, 1959 (CA 1/EDL 1/1/1/35).

[52] Redding, *Sorcery and Sovereignty*, 184. Within the structure of a patrilineal society, the maternal side of a young man's family tended to be more lenient with respect to impudent or irresponsible behavior exhibited by a young man.

As Crais has shown, Makulu Span emerged as a vigilante organization composed of local men determined to stop stock theft and return the region to a state of relative calm. The movement was particularly strong in Tsolo, Qumbu, Mt. Ayliff and Umtata Districts.[53] The first mention of the movement occurs in 1955 in a letter signed only "Mkulu Span" addressed and delivered to a chief in Tsolo district:

> We are writing this letter to you so that you should summon a general meeting of all your location residents with a view that in the course of that meeting, you should read out the contents of this letter and the list of the names contained herein. You must tell them to return things belonging to other people before September 25. Those are thieves. We, Mkulu Span, will get to know when you have done this thing… The time for the thieves is past. We kill them and burn them."[54]

Members of Makulu Span saw themselves as up-standing members of the community who endeavored to fix the problems caused by stock thieves.[55] According to a statement given to South African police in 1958, the group had organized itself into committees organized by location.[56] Convened on the hillsides, these committees, which included secretaries and treasuries, determined who in the location and district had committed the crime of stock theft. These committees also formed courts to judge and convict the accused. Serving as both judge and jury, local cells of Makulu Span generally convicted the accused and then demanded

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[53] Ibid., 186.

[54] Anonymous letter signed by "Mkulu Span" addressed to Chief Enoch T. Macasa, approximate date 1960 (CA 1/TSO 5/1/52).

[55] Clifton Crais, "Of Men, Magic, and the Law: Popular Justice and the Political Imagination in South Africa," 55-56.

[56] Statement of Mgangeli Rangana, April 1958, (CA 1/TSO 5/1/52).

"large sums of moneys from the person so as not to be burned."[57] Even if the money were paid, a section of the committee would gather and march upon the kraal of the convicted stock thief with the intent of burning his property and stealing his livestock.[58] On occasion, members of Makulu Span went beyond arson and murdered the stock thief.[59]

The actions of Makulu Span did not go unnoticed by the gangs of stock thieves operating in the region. Stock theft continued at a relatively high rate throughout the latter half of the 1950s. At night, the hills burned as the Nephews attacked kraals and stole cattle and sheep and, during the day, the hills burned as members of Makulu Span sought to undo the damage done by the stock thieves.

A particularly interesting about Makulu Span during this period is the degree to which the organization took on the mantle of a government. Recognizing and responding to the fragility of a community torn apart by political dissent and the social and economic pressures brought on by migrant labor, members of Makulu Span implicitly rejected the ability of government appointed chiefs and state officials to govern and sought to fix a society that appeared to be careening out of control.[60] They did not necessarily propose a new form of government but they did

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[57] Ibid.

[58] Case Number 336 of 1957: State v. Baasboyi August, Babana August; Mpiti Mphomana; Sonwabo Twetwa and Others (CA GSC 1/2/1/797).

[59] Ibid. Virtually all of GSC 1/2/1/797 and 1/2/1/798 are the trial records of men accused of participating in Makulu Span.

[60] Many families experienced great anxiety when sons or husbands were away on the mines or in the plantations. Peter Delius, "Sebatakgomo: Migrant Organization, the ANC, and the Sekhukhuneland Revolt," *Journal of Southern African*

go further than previous resistance movements, including *iKongo* in the 1940s, in their attempt to step in and take responsibility for that which the official government could not or would not correct. Members of Makulu Span saw themselves as power brokers in the region. With respect to the prevention of stock theft and the regulation of community norms, they embarked on a regime of justice and punishment. Crais suggests that members of Makulu Span "appropriated categories and much of the institutional language and practice of the state."[61] They sought to fill a void left by an ineffective and corrupt administration; yet, they did not articulate a vision of a new political system.

Makulu Span operated throughout the remainder of the 1950s and into the early 1960s.[62] However, beginning in 1959, an organization emerged that, while similar in structure to Makulu Span, envisioned a wholly new political structure. It is unclear the extent to which members of Makulu Span became members of or even participated in the creation of *iKongo*. Redding suggests that the state arrested some members of Makulu Span in Qumbu District in early 1961.[63] She is careful to note that those arrest records differentiate between Makulu Span and *iKongo*. It is

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Studies," 15, no. 4 (October, 1989), 589. "Despite all the barriers which they attempted to erect, rural communities nonetheless suffered a steady hemorrhage of men to the towns and some families were left bereft of support and with the anguish of not knowing whether their sons or husbands were dead or alive."

[61] Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 174. See also Redding, *Sorcery and Sovereignty*, 188-189. Redding agrees with this interpretation arguing that Makulu Span "had usurped the state's place by punishing stock thieves."

[62] Tsolo residents and taxpayers to district commandant, 1961 (CA CMT 3/1482). Quoted in Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 177.

[63] Redding, *Sorcery and Sovereignty*, 195.

feasible that the movement disappeared during the state suppression of *iKongo* beginning in 1960. However, I suggest that while Makulu Span took on elements of governance, *iKongo* emerged as a wholly new organization with a political structure that defied both that of the apartheid state and the ANC. T he re-emergence of *iKongo*, silent for nearly ten years, heralded a new moment in the history of resistance to white rule in the Transkei.

The Re-emergence of iKongo and Suspicion of "Foreign Agitators"

Beginning as early as December 1958, officials in Bizana District noted that the number of "illegal" meetings had increased considerably amongst the African population.[64] Officials remarked on this was some surprise given that, two weeks earlier, they had reported that the people of Bizana District were not against Bantu Authorities" and that any animosity displayed against the Paramount Chief was rooted in "personal animosities" that had "been settled."[65] In this December report, officials identified Gambushe Baleni, brother of the headman Gangata Baleni, as the primary agitator who "endeavored to cause division in the location and put people against the headman."[66] Over the next three years, Gambushe emerged as a primary leader of *iKongo,* wielding much influence not only in Bizana District but also in the

[64] Report from the Office of the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Bizana District, December 4, 1958 (CA CMT 3/1054, Folio N.1/1/5-21).

[65] Confidential Letter from the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata to the Secretary for Bantu Administration and Development, Pretoria, November 21, 1958 (CA 1/BIZ 6/47, Folio C.9.6).

[66] Office of the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Bizana District, December 4, 1958 (CA CMT 3/1054, Folio N.1/1/5-21).

districts of Lusikisiki and Flagstaff. Additionally, while *iKongo* is not specifically named in any official report until early 1960, the presence of Gambushe as an agitating figure at "illegal" meetings in late 1958 indicates that this may have been the moment when *iKongo*, as a resistance movement, first re-emerged.

Unsure of what exactly was happening in the countryside and who was responsible for it, officials tended to view the groups meeting on the hillsides of Pondoland as "communist-inspired."[67] The focus on the political affiliation of the movement indicates the belief on the part of officials that another movement, like the ANC, was actively stirring up trouble in the region. There is little indication of any sustained ANC activity in the region throughout the 1950s.

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the ANC exercised very little influence in the rural areas throughout South Africa. This was particularly true in the Transkei. A confidential memo sent to the Secretary of Native Affairs in 1944 illustrates the extent of this absence:

> I understand that the African National Congress is a well-established native political organization whose activities in the main have been confined to urban and industrial centres. Although I do not think there is much scope for its enterprise in rural Native areas such as the Transkeian Territories and although there may be undesirable elements within its ranks, I think more harm than good would be done by refusing facilities.[68]

The memo demonstrates several factors regarding the ANC's involvement in the rural areas. Even before the election of the Nationalist Party in 1948 and the

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[67] "Proposed Future Action to Overcome the Present Difficulties," Memo distributed by the Chief Magistrate, Umtata, January 1960 (CMT 3/1470).

[68] Confidential Memo from the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata to the Secretary for Native Affairs, Pretoria, March 4, 1944 (CA CMT 3/1471).

institution of apartheid policies, South African officials were aware of the disruptive potential of the ANC. However, because the ANC drew the majority of its support from an urban base, government officials believed that the organization did not pose a considerable threat to the stability of rural African populations in the Transkei. At the time of the memo, officials did not see the ANC as posing a sufficient threat to merit the banning of meetings in the region. However, after the passage of the Bantu Authorities Act in 1951, government attitudes towards the disruptive potential of the ANC in rural areas began to change significantly.

In the early 1950s, the ANC began a more aggressive campaign of protest in urban areas throughout South Africa. The ANC's various campaigns against the introduction of apartheid policy occurred in conjunction with increasing resistance to the imposition of Bantu Authorities in the Transkei. Government officials in the Transkei believed that a link between urban and rural resistance was beginning to develop. Commissioners during this period issued numerous communications about the dangers of allowing "foreign" or outside organizers into the rural areas to conduct meetings. In fact, government communications ceased to use the word "organizer" and instead referred to ANC operatives as "agitators," a shift that reflected the increasingly tense situation in the rural areas. The government was determined to collect as much information about these "agitators" as possible: "The department requires information regarding Native churches… which support the resistance movement and the African National Congress."[69] Officials clearly

[69] Circular Telegram to the Magistrate at Cofimvaba, November 12, 1952 (CA 1/COF 9/1/44, Folio C.5).

anticipated a significant surge in ANC activity in the rural areas as the organization sought to expand outwards from its core urban base.[70]

Government officials remained concerned about the presence of ANC operatives throughout the 1950s. In a kind of preemptive strike, Proclamation 198 of 1953 which provided that "the Native Commissioner may consult the chief or headman about the holding of meetings," was bolstered by the passage of Proclamation 180 in 1956. Requiring Africans go directly to the District Commissioner's office to obtain permission to hold meetings of more then 10 persons, Proclamation 180 aimed to curtail ANC (as well as All African Convention (AAC) and the Cape African Teachers Association (CATA)) operatives from working in the rural areas.[71]

That the ANC did exercise some influence in the region throughout the 1950s is a plausible supposition. Discussed in the Introduction, out of an approximate population 1.4 million Africans living in the Transkei, between 170,000 and 200,000 people participated in the migrant labor network.[72] Many of these people, usually young men, worked in the industrial areas surrounding Johannesburg or on the sugar plantations of Natal. Additionally, in the 1950s, many men travelled to the

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[70] Circular Telegram to the Magistrate at Cofimvaba, no date (CA 1/COF 9/1/44, Folio C.2.1): "In view of the anticipated activity of the ANC, I am reluctant to accept advances of payments by Natives who cannot be traced."

[71] "Control of Meetings or Gatherings in Native Areas," From the Department of Native Affairs to All Officials of the Department of Native Affairs, All Magistrates, Additional and Assistant Magistrates, and Full Time Special Justices of the Peace, July 4, 1958 (CA 1/ECO 6/1/29: Minute No. 146/276).

[72] Census of the Transkei, 1951 (CA CMT 3/1385).

Western Cape to work in industry and agricultural locations outside of Cape Town. The areas surrounding Johannesburg, Durban, East London, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town had become hotbeds of ANC and PAC political activity. When the terms of the contract expired, many migrants travelled back to their home villages before embarking on another contract. This ebb and flow of labor between urban and industrial areas and rural villages in places such as Pondoland functioned as one way through which the ANC, alongside other urban-based movements, could disseminate information about its plans for liberation.[73] As early as the late 1930s, magistrates in the Transkei confiscated ANC-based newspapers from migrant workers returning from Johannesburg.[74] Several years later, in 1954, police seized a considerable amount of ANC "propaganda" (including letterhead and ninety copies of the ANC constitution in both English and Xhosa) from a migrant laborer just returned from employment in Johannesburg.[75] During the insurgency itself, Saul Mabude, a councilor to Chief Matanzima, told officials that even though the ANC was

[73] An interesting study on the ways in which migrant labor networks did serve as conduits for the transmission of ANC ideology from the urban to the rural areas is Peter Delius' work on the Pedi migrants and the role of the ANC during the Sekhukhuneland Revolt. Peter Delius, "Sebatakgomo: Migrant Organization, the ANC and the Sekhukhuneland Revolt": 581-615.

[74] Circular Minute (Confidential) from the Office of the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata to All Magistrate in the Transkeian Territories, March 9, 1938 (CA 1/ECO 6/1/78, Folio C.2/108).

[75] Police Raid on T.M. Vanqa's home in Cabe Location, Kentani District, July 30, 1954 (CA 1/KNT 7/1/40).

a banned organization it was still there "in spirit" and that "young men hear stories in the towns and then bring those stories home with them."[76]

In addition to the infiltration of ANC literature through migrant laborers, government officials had cause for concern about an increased presence of ANC operatives in the region. This was, in part, due to the increased prominence of Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu, and Govan Mbeki within the liberation movement, all of whom hailed from the Eastern Cape. In 1954, the ANC sent Mbeki, a prominent organizer for the organization and an editor of *New Age*, to the Transkei to organize and report on political activity among the rural population.

> Apparently, it is intended to begin a propaganda campaign with a view to stirring up some kind of agitation among the Native people… It is also understood that a man named Mbeki may figure in this propaganda work. Up to the present, I have no information of any definite activities on the part of this Organisation in the Territories, but there is the possibility that it may send emissaries from Johannesburg, Cape Town, or East London.[77]

The ANC did maintain a physical presence in the Transkei throughout the 1950s. The Ganyile family of Bizana District were known ANC supporters. In 1960, the local police reported that Nelson Ganyile had participated in the disturbances at Cato Manor while studying at Natal University.[78] Anderson Ganyile, allegedly the "Secretary of the Congo Movement in Pondoland," appears to have maintained ties

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[76] Minutes of Meeting, Umtata, November 11 1960 (CA CMT 3/1470).

[77] Circular Minute (Confidential) from the Office of the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata to All Magistrates in the Transkeian Territories, June 23, 1944 (CA 1/COF 9/1/44: Folio C.5).

[78] Police Report, Amanikwe Location, 1960 (CA 1/BIZ 6/48, Folio 9/6/14).

with Govan Mbeki and an attorney named Rowley Arenstein.[79] Arenstein was an active member of the Congress of Democrat's and several different cells of *iKongo* retained him to represent defendants. Members of the Ganyile family active in the insurgency, including Anderson Ganyile, fled to Quacha's Nek in Lesotho in the late months of 1960. In early 1961, Govan Mbeki received instructions from the Head Office of the National Action Council in Johannesburg to set up a sub-office in Quacha's Nek to monitor developments in Pondoland.[80]

While it is clear that there was some degree of ANC presence within the movement during the insurgency period, the ANC did not exercise a significant degree of power within the movement. During the Commission of Inquiry held in the wake of the shootings on Ngquza Hill, residents of the region remained adamant in their denial of any ANC influence within the movement. One witness stated emphatically "No, there is no Congress here."[81] When asked if "people from away gave money to *iKongo*," informants agreed that there was no financial assistance from any organizations outside of Pondoland.[82] One informant who lived in Bizana during the insurgency explicitly stated, "The ANC was not here."[83]

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[79] Statement given by Solomon Bekilizwe Skotoyi, October 27, 1961 (CA CMT 3/1480).

[80] Ibid.

[81] Testimony of Mamfengu Nkwankwe (PA K-185).

[82] Interviews by author, November 29, December 2, and December 7, 2007 – Bizana and Lusikisiki Districts. During interviews, I was careful not to mention the ANC in the questions in order to avoid leading the conversation in any particular direction. I also instructed my translator to avoid any language pertaining to the ANC explicitly. Any mention of the ANC on the part of an interview subject was unprompted.

The Beginning of the Insurgency

Throughout 1959, officials continued to note that "agitators" held illegal meetings on the hills throughout Eastern Pondoland and the surrounding districts.[84] However, by the end of 1959, the situation had escalated in Bizana District prompting officials to express considerable concern about the inability of local police to "arrest all the leaders of the rebel element."[85] The situation in Bizana District, particularly around Ndhlovu Hill location, was so dire that the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner further noted the "realistic fear that… personal safety and property are in danger whilst the rebel group… remain at large."[86]

State officials stepped up efforts to prosecute illegal meetings of five or more people in an initial attempt to suppress the movement.[87] Officials identified, correctly, Bizana District as the epicenter of the movement. Throughout the entirety

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[83] Interview by author, December 15, 2007 – Bizana District. While it would make sense that during the suppression of the insurgency, and indeed throughout the remainder of apartheid, people in the region would be reluctant to acknowledge ANC presence or influence during the insurgency, it is interesting that people in the region continue to assert that the ANC was not involved. Future research will continue to focus on the ways in which people now remember *iKongo* particularly as the movement related to the ANC.

[84] Letter from Chief Hlatikulu to B.A. Midgley, Chief Magistrate, Umtata, August 22, 1959 (CA 1/ECO 6/1/2); Minutes of meeting with Headman Mbungwa Billy and 46 members of the Enksimbini and Amangulyane Locations, November 10, 1959 (CA 1/BIZ 6/47).

[85] Letter from Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Transkeian Territories to the Secretary for Bantu Administration, January 3, 1960 (CMT 3/1472).

[86] Ibid.

[87] Case Number 56 of 1960: State v. Mapindisa Mapondo, Maviti Copi, and Makalese Fono, January 28, 1960 (1/BIZ 1/1/14).

of the insurgency, it proved difficult to identify *iKongo*'s leaders due in part to the fact that, as the movement grew, there were multiple sections of *iKongo* spread across locations and districts in Eastern Pondoland and beyond.

In February 1960, police focused on two potential leaders of this "rebel movement." Gambushe Baleni continued to be a person of interest – he attended and led meetings. The second person of interest was a man named Caledon Mda.[88] Police suspected Mda because he maintained close ties with J.J. Steyn, an anti-apartheid activist in the region who was "friendly with Attorney R. Arenstein."[89] Police arrested both Mda and Gambushe at some point during the suppression of the insurgency, although there is no record that either were charged or brought to trial.[90]

It is also difficult to establish exactly who joined *iKongo*. There is little information about many of the members although it is clear that members came from all segments of society. As with earlier resistance movements, including the earlier incarnation of *iKongo*, it is likely that many members had participated at some point in migrant labor that took them to the gold mines or the sugar plantations. Discussed earlier in this chapter, migrant laborers did experience a variety of different forms of liberation politics that very likely helped to inform *iKongo*'s own quest for liberation during the insurgency.

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[88] Confidential Memo from Sergt. C.J. Dreyer (Security Branch, Kokstad) to the Commanding Officer of the Mobile Unit in Bizana, February 12, 1960 (CA 1/BIZ 6/47).

[89] Ibid.

[90] Arrest Records (CA 1/BIZ 6/47).

In February 1960, officials and police first began to learn more about the structure of the group calling itself *iKongo*.[91] People held meetings on hillsides, contributing to the alternate names of the movement which included "Men of the Mountain" and the "Hill Committees." Structured in much the same way as the first meetings of *iKongo* in the 1940s, members of *iKongo* formed small committees within their locations and elected a president, secretary, and treasurer. During these meetings, the leaders encouraged newcomers to join the movement and collect dues. After this, the discussion turned to the task of identifying government collaborators within the community. Expressly against Bantu Authorities, members of *iKongo* expressed particular dissatisfaction with those men who submitted to Bantu Authorities as government employees and "sold their country" without the consent of the people.[92] *iKongo* members also expressed their anger about the general implementation of Bantu Authorities, stating that officials were executing these policies and installing chiefs without obtaining the consent, yet alone consulting, the people.[93] Regardless of how dissatisfied and angry members were with the white officials who stood at the apex of the entire Bantu Authorities system, the focus remained on the African collaborators who betrayed their people in return for money and power. In coming months, as the insurgency intensified, these

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[91] Memo from the Bizana Magistrate to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata, February 19, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1475).

[92] J. Fenwick (Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Lusikisiki District), "Disaffection in the Lusikisiki District," June 1, 1960 (CA 1/BIZ 6/47).

[93] Ibid.

perceived collaborators become the targets of violent attacks directed against their property and person.

Throughout the remainder February 1960, police reported increased acts of sabotage throughout Bizana District also noting that more migrant laborers than usual were returning from Durban and Port Elizabeth.[94] Police noted an increase in boycotts of European traders.[95] Govan Mbeki described one particularly incendiary attack on traders that occurred on February 17, 1960. During the incident, a "riotous mob of more than 100 native men and women… threatened to burn all (traders) property in the area."[96] After this incident, white traders throughout Bizana and Flagstaff districts fled their stations. Contingents of armed police were required to restore order.[97]

Despite increasing support for *iKongo* among the local population in Bizana and Lusikisiki Districts, district magistrates continued implementing Bantu Authorities through the early months of 1960. On January 28, 1960, the Bizana Magistrate, Eric M. Warren, travelled to Unqunqundhlovu Location to inspect sites scheduled for rehabilitation. A group of approximately fifty people blocked the magistrate and prevented him from meeting the headmen and conducting his

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[94] Letter from Magistrate, Bizana to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata, February 19, 1960 (CMT 3/1475).

[95] Incident Report, February 16, 1960 (1/BIZ 6/48).

[96] J.A. Copelyn, "The Mpondo Revolt 1960" (honors thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1974), 34.

[97] Govan Mbeki, "Government Measures Provoke Pondos to Violence," *New Age,* 6, no. 19 (February 25, 1960).

inspection of the rehabilitation sites.[98] Warren later cited the location with an obstruction of justice (Article 2(9) of Act 23/1943) and with illegal ploughing (Article 12(2) of Proclamation 26 of 1936).

Despite their efforts, state officials and government appointed chiefs could not prevent the spread of *iKongo*. Rather than slowly diminishing in influence as the first cells of *iKongo* had nearly a decade earlier, *iKongo,* throughout the autumn of 1960, continued to grow in influence throughout Eastern Pondoland. By mid-winter, large sections of Eastern Pondoland and districts immediately outside its borders had functioning *iKongo* cells.

In March 1960, *iKongo* increased the level its activity in Bizana and Lusikisiki. This was a period of significant turmoil and uncertainty. With the assistance of government appointed councilor Saul Mabude, officials anticipated that Bantu Authorities would go into full effect in March. As that date approached, officials met considerable resistance throughout the region.[99] South African police reported that, on March 9, a group of approximately two hundred people assaulted three councilors of the Isikelo Tribal Authority while attending a meeting at the kraal of the recently appointed, government endorsed sub-chief Mhlabuvelile Hlamandana.[100] Two days after the assault, Lieutenant Colonel C.K. Smith,

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[98] Confidential Report, February 18, 1960 (PA SAP 596).

[99] J. Fenwick (Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Lusikisiki District), "Disaffection in the Lusikisiki District," June 1, 1960 (CA 1/BIZ 6/47).

[100] E.M Warren, "Disturbances in the District of Bizana and Eastern Pondoland 1960," June 11, 1960 (CA 1/BIZ 6/47), 4-8. The councilors included Obadia Pingama, Mobolana Nqagamatye and Robert Godlimpi – see Police Report, March 14, 1960 (PA SAP 596).

accompanied by sixteen white and five native constables, travelled to the scene of the assault where Mhlabuvelile gave a statement. In this statement, the sub-chief said that the group of men who had assaulted the councilors had accused both he and his councilors of "selling the land" and that the crowd had yelled that the councilors must be killed.[101]

After this assault, *iKongo* increased their meetings throughout Bizana and Flagstaff Districts.[102] Indeed several people said that existing *iKongo* members had intimidated them into joining the movement.[103] At these meetings, members now not only identified government collaborators but also agreed upon which ones to "burn out." Drawing upon a long tradition, typically associated with the punishment of practitioners of malevolent magic, burning the property and, on occasion, the body, served as a way of identifying and punishing a person who had transgressed a series of societal norms. In the minds of *iKongo* members, a government collaborator had betrayed his people by submitting to and accepting the principles of Bantu Authorities. Burning property and inflicting physical violence on the body

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[101] Police Report, March 14, 1960 (PA SAP 596). See also, Police Report, April 23, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1475). While Mhlabuvelile denied having instigated this attack, Smith believed that the sub-chief, thought by government officials to be of questionable loyalty, had indeed participated in the planning and execution of the assault.

[102] Statement made by Fonki Vellem against Gilbert Macingwane, No Date (CA CMT 3/1054).

[103] Statement made by David Mfenyana during an appeal of a deportation order, March 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054).

of the alleged collaborator served as a kind of punishment that demonstrated to the larger community what happened when this type of transgression occurred.[104]

Among the first of the government appointed "collaborators" to be burned out was Saul Mabude. A secretary to Paramount Chief Botha Sigcau, Mabude was a visible supporter of Bantu Authorities and for this, members of *iKongo* decided that he must face punishment. Members made the decision to burn him out in the late afternoon of March 19, 1960. The following day, a Sunday, several hundred men marched on Mabude's home in Isikelo Location, Bizana District. In a later report by *New Age*, a leftist newspaper aligned with the ANC, the crowd yelled "Mabude you have brought us stock culling and fencing" while torching his property and killing his livestock.[105] Several days later, on March 23, a crowd of one hundred men burnt the kraal of councilor Isaiah Xaka in Esikumbeni Location.[106]

Officials based in Umtata faced a rapidly expanding movement - both in numbers and in intensity of violence. Anxious to contain *iKongo* before it grew any further, the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Mr. Leibrandt, held a meeting at Mhlabuvelile's kraal on April 4, 1960. Accompanied by Bizana Magistrate Erica Warren, Mr. Leibrandt addressed a crowd of over two thousand.

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[104] In some cases, *iKongo* insurgents made a direct connection between the traitorous actions of government collaborators and the possibility that these collaborators employed malevolent magic to bolster their power. For further analysis, see Chapter Two.

[105] "Pondos Revolt Against Bantu Authorities," *New Age,* 6, no. 24 (March 31, 1960).

[106] E.M Warren, "Disturbances in the District of Bizana and Eastern Pondoland 1960," June 11, 1960 (1/BIZ 6/47).

He reiterated that order had to be maintained and that, despite *iKongo* threats and intimidation, Bantu Authorities would be both accepted and implemented. Leibrandt later noted that sub-chief Mhlabuvelile enjoyed virtually no respect from his tribesmen and that "although he had been appointed Chief of his people, he [had] absolutely no authority over them."[107] These exhortations to accept Bantu Authorities and to stop violent actions against government appointed chiefs and headmen had little to no impact on *iKongo*.

Indeed, several weeks later, on April 29, during a meeting held by Mr. Warren at Ndhlovu Hill in Entsimbini Location in Bizana District, a group of approximately one thousand five hundred people attended to air their grievances. Represented by a man only known as "the Evangelist," the people stated that the "Government" dating back to the time annexation had always informed the people "when it wanted to introduce anything that was new."[108] As the apparent spokesperson for the people in attendance, "the Evangelist" continued to state that "now the Government [was] introducing new things without consulting the people."[109] These "new things" included an increase in the Stock Rate (from 1/3d to 1/9d), an increase in the Health Rate, and an increase in the General Tax. People articulated their displeasure with the state practice of installing chiefs.

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[107] Letter from the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories to the Secretary for Bantu Administration and Development, Cape Town, April 9, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1475).

[108] Minutes of the Meeting Held at Ndhlovu Hill in Entsimbini Location in the District of Bizana, April 29, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1475).

[109] Ibid.

The man identified as "the Evangelist" during the meeting at Ndhlovu Hill is not named within the archival record. However, Beinart identifies him as Solomon Madikizela.[110] Subsequent interviews with persons who participated in the insurgency confirm that Solomon Madikizela was active in the area during this time.[111] My research of the arrest records contained in the Bizana Magistrate files indicate that he, along with at least five other members of his family were arrested by authorities in Bizana in July 1960 during the beginning of the insurgency's suppression.[112] There is almost no mention of Solomon after this particular incident, although participants do recollect that he lived in Bizana District and did travel, as a leader of *iKongo* to other cells in Lusikisiki and Flagstaff Districts.[113]

Throughout April, cases of arson against suspected collaborators with Bantu Authorities continued to rise. Prosecutors charged Mlahlwa Mjalo and nine other men of Flagstaff District on charges of arson for no less than ten incidents between April 1 and April 30, 1960.[114] A report submitted by the station commander of the South African Police in Flagstaff District noted that *iKongo* was holding meetings in Nqabeni and Ntlenzi Location "for the purposes of sweeping tribesmen up against the Tribal Authorities and either to burn the kraal of sub-Chief Vukayibambe or kill

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[110] William Beinart, "Environmental Origins of the Pondoland Revolt," 89.

[111] Interview with Author, December 15, 2007 – Bizana.

[112] Arrest Records, (CA 1/BIZ 6/47, Folio 9/6/B).

[113] Interview with Author, December 17, 2007 – Lusikisiki.

[114] Case 375 of 1961, State v. Mlahlwa Mjalo and Nine Others (CA GSC 1/2/1/938).

him."[115] *iKongo* made good on their threats to burn out and kill Vukayibambe several months later.

By the beginning of April 1960, Ndhlovu Hill in Bizana District functioned as a central point of contact for smaller *iKongo* cells based in locations throughout Bizana, Lusikisiki, and Flagstaff Districts.[116] In fact, members came to refer to the place as the "National Headquarters."[117] Leader of the smaller cells used Ndhlovu Hill as a center from which to gain information to then pass along to their members. The leadership at Ndhlovu Hill "produced and distributed to each cell 'a list of grievances' that included virtually the entire edifice of separate development, from taxes to the legal system, from Bantu Authorities to influx control."[118] Gambushe Baleni at Ndhlovu Hill disseminated the majority of information about the goals of the movement.[119]

In a statement made to the district office in Bizana on May 13, 1960, Chief Makosonke describes the influence of the leadership at "National Headquarters."

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[115] S.A. Police Report: Office of the Station Commander, Flagstaff, April 25, 1960 (CA 1/FSF 6/47).

[116] Statement by Chief Makosonke of Bizana District, May 13, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1475).

[117] E.M Warren, "Disturbances in the District of Bizana and Eastern Pondoland 1960," June 11, 1960 (1/BIZ 6/47).

[118] Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 196.

[119] Minutes from the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Bizana to the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Umtata, June 15, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1054, Folio N.1/1/5-21); Statement by Mbungwa Nonkwashu about a meeting led by Gambushe during the winter of 1960, March 3, 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054).

He stated that these "malcontents are continuing to extend their influence. They are gradually subverting the people of my Location. They are also holding meetings during the night."[120] Several days later, the magistrate's office for Bizana District reported a meeting at Amanikwe Location at which a source identified Mteununizima Ganyile and Nkosana Mbodla as leaders.[121] According to this source, Ganyile and Mbodla "seemed to be determined to make as much trouble as possible and to whip up the feelings of the crowd."[122]

The appearance of a member of the Ganyile family at this point in the archival record is of particular interest. In his narrative of the insurgency, Mbeki identified the Ganyile family as among the primary leaders of the insurgency.[123] There is no doubt that Mteununizima Ganyile, Nelson Ganyile, Edlington Ganyile, Anderson Ganyile and Mthetho Ganyile were all present in Pondoland in 1960 and were, between June and August of that year, arrested on charges related to the insurgency. Given the connection of the Ganyile family with the ANC (particularly Nelson and Anderson Ganyile), Mbeki and other scholars have taken the presence of this family as an indication of an explicit link between the ANC and *iKongo*. However, there is little archival evidence to confirm this link. Indeed, the magistrate's office in Bizana, determined to attribute any overtly political action

[120] Statement by Chief Makosonke about a meeting led by Gambushe during the winter of 1960, March 3, 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054).

[121] Letter from Magistrate of Bizana District to the Chief Magistrate in Umtata, May 16, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1475).

[122] Ibid.

[123] Mbeki, *South Africa*, 123.

demonstrated by *iKongo* to the outside influences of the ANC, ended by stating that, after investigation, it was impossible to make such a link.[124]

By the end of April, *iKongo*'s influence had spread beyond the districts of Bizana and Flagstaff. As of May 1, 1960, the district of Tsolo reported arson attacks on at least twenty kraals owned by supporters of Bantu Authorities.[125] Police in this district went on a heightened state of alert beginning on May 1 and reported that, between May 1 and May 10, insurgents had attacked and burned 207 huts. Tsolo Station Commander Early Charles Darington Long provided an account of when and how these attacks occurred: "The majority of the attacks on the kraals were in broad daylight by armed and identified impis frequently in the presence of Police Patrols [with] three or four impis launching an attack on one location."[126] These daytime attacks were short-lived and, as the insurgency deepened throughout the winter months and into the spring, the majority of attacks occurred under the cover of darkness.

In the wake of a May 21 meeting on Ndhlovu Hill, officials expressed concern about the growing popularity of the movement and the potential for considerable violence.

> [Eric] Warren [Bantu Affairs Commissioner of Bizana] believes that the rebel movement at this moment changed into a fully-fledged rebellion against the government, as law and order did not exist anymore, and the rebels assumed

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[124] Report on potential leaders of the Congo Movement, No Date (CA 1/BIZ 6/48; Folio 9/6/14).

[125] Case 169 of 1961, State v. Sinxeze Marexeni and Others, (CA GSC 1/2/1/920).

[126] Ibid.

> control of most for the district. He thought the police to be powerless to protect law abiding residents of Pondoland and that the rebels did exactly as they pleased.[127]

Officials had reason to be concerned about rapidly escalating levels of violence. Immediately following the May 21 meeting on Ndhlovu Hill, *iKongo* members burnt the kraal of Chief Makasonke Sigcau. In later court testimony, the chief gave a vivid description of the incident.[128] Under the cover of darkness, as the moon began to rise, Makasonke noticed people approaching his kraal. After firing five shots towards the approaching silhouettes, Makasonke and his family fled the compound and watched from a nearby hill as the crowd, in a "fighting mood," set all his huts on fire while yelling insults about the "friends of Bantu Authorities."[129] After a period of shouting and burning, a voice cried out "Let us now go to Meje's kraal" and, to the sound of the war bugle, the crowd finally left. Meje's kraal, headman of Amangulyane Location, was burnt out several hours later.[130] The next day, when Police attempted to enter the location, a group of people surrounded the vans and forced all police from the location.

Over the next several days, tense conditions continued throughout Eastern Pondoland. On May 22, in Lambasi Location of Lusikisiki District, George Tshonkweni died during a similar night attack. The previous day, after a meeting

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[127] Ibid.

[128] Case 158 of 1960: State v. Mafuku Mbali and Eleven Others (CA 1/BIZ 1/1/14).

[129] Ibid.

[130] Ibid.

convened by Lusikisiki Magistrate and attended by approximately two thousand people, *iKongo* held an impromptu meeting. Tshonkweni's wife stated that during this meeting, *iKongo* members had convicted him as a collaborator with Bantu Authorities.[131] That night, a group of people marched upon Tshonkweni's kraal and, after beating their intended target to death, one man allegedly said "Let's carry on with the work and burn the kraals, we have killed the dog."[132] Several hours later, the same group of men burned the kraals of government appointed headman Zifumela Sitivini and the kraals of three other men.[133]

On May 29, after breaking up a meeting in Mtshayelo Location, Lusikisiki, police discovered the first of several plots to kill Botha Sigcau.[134] When questioned by South African police, a witness stated that the treasurer of the cell, Bambata Dokolwana, reported on the May 21 meeting held at Ndhlovu Hill. According to Dokolwana, the leadership, including Gambushe Baleni, had discussed "making laws in connection with the land" and that they must reject Bantu Authorities.[135] He also said that

> [T]he people who had spoilt the land, Sub-Chief Gladwin Sigcau and Paramount Chief Both Sigcau should be murdered and that they had sold the land and that they had sold the land to the Boers. That anyone who was

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[131] Case Number 57 of 1961, State v. Jeke Zondwayo, (CA GSC 1/2/1912).

[132] Ibid.

[133] Case 191 of 1961, State v. Mtengiswa Ndlwaypeli and Others (CA 1/GSC 1/2/1/917).

[134] SAP Incident Report, (CA CMT 3/1475).

[135] Statement against Bambata Dokolwana by William Sigola, April 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054).

> employed at the Great Place should be murdered and that any one who was a messenger to the Great Place and ate the food of the Great Place should be murdered because he was a 'Jendevu' (traitor).[136]

In these passages, the platform and aims of *iKongo* were beginning to solidify. No longer did *iKongo* conceptualize itself solely in opposition to Bantu Authorities. Rather, members understood themselves as the creators of a new society with new laws about land and new rules of inclusion and exclusion. Insurgents applied the label of "traitor" or "Jendevu" specifically to those people who did not support their cause to move away from Bantu Authorities.

The sense that *iKongo* was moving from a movement dedicated solely to the ousting of Bantu Authorities and other government mandated schemes to a political organization envisioning a new kind of society also emerges in the testimony of Maguyebe Kuseni. Referring to an arson case in which himself, Gladwin Sigcau, and Albert Somadlangati, were targets of *iKongo*'s campaign, Kuseni testified that Kaka Rubela, a local cell leader in Bizana District, had stated that "Congo would rule the Bantu people of Pondoland" and that if "Congo [took] over the Government of the country taxes would be abolished."[137] Albert Somadlangati, a prominent informant for the government, corroborated this statement, saying that, during the burning of his kraal, he had heard the leader of the mob say that "Congo intended to take over

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[136] Ibid.

[137] Case 107 of 1962, State v. Botomani Majibini and Others (CA GSC 1/2/1/967). It does appear that Kaka Rubela was one of the primary leaders in the movement at this time. A similar statement during the course of this trial by Matandela Bambela indicates that this man, in addition to Wana Johnson, were the leaders of the Ngquza Hill cell of Congo.

the rule of Pondoland."[138] In the days and months following, as the insurgency took on an increasingly tragic and violent tone, *iKongo* continued to elaborate its political platform. The movement increasingly envisioned itself to be building a nation that would, if successful, stand apart from the repressive policies of the South African state.

A Pivotal Moment: The Shootings at Ngquza Hill

Throughout the first half of 1960, *iKongo* spread across locations and districts throughout Pondoland. Its members, like others before, stood in opposition to state intrusion in local affairs and expressly rejected the imposition of Bantu Authorities in the Transkei. Ndhlovu Hill in Bizana District was the center of the movement with Gambushe Baleni taking a prominent role in disseminating information to other cell leaders scattered throughout the region. By the end of May 1960, *iKongo* departed from previous resistance organizations. While retaining an administrative structure that was similar to both the earlier incarnation of the movement in the late 1940s and to that of Makulu Span, *iKongo* members now articulated a political platform that went far beyond merely reacting to government policies. By the beginning of the winter months, the leadership of *iKongo* envisioned that the movement would emerge as the legitimate government in the region. A tragic event occurring in the early days of June 1960 would only spur members of *iKongo* to further articulate this nationalist vision.

Three months after the massacres in Sharpeville and Langa townships, Ngquza Hill in Bizana District became the site of an extraordinary outburst of

[138] Ibid.

violence directed against men, women, and children meeting to discuss the imposition of Bantu Authorities. Several days before, on June 1, 1960, J. Fenwick, Bantu Affairs Commissioner of Lusikisiki composed a report detailing the deteriorating state of affairs in the region.[139] The report detailed the state of affairs in Lusikisiki and surrounding districts, noting that the legitimacy of the Paramount Chief remained in question. Fenwick concluded this report by stating, "that armed bodies of Bantu are marching and counter-marching the district, they are intimidating and burning the kraals of loyal and progressive Bantu without let or hindrance."[140] Desperate to regain control of the approximately one hundred thousand people living in Lusikisiki District, Fenwick asked that the central government declare a state of emergency throughout the region in an attempt to curtail the actions of *iKongo*:

> It is impossible to administer it [Lusikisiki] under present circumstances and the position is rapidly deteriorating… I recommend therefore that the district be proclaimed in order to (a) restrict rumors… (b) to enable those [such] as Segwebo and the witchdoctor Bhambalepe Mbhe to be detained. The latter, together with Segwebe's witch doctor has 'fortified' all those so-called 'warriors' who are taking part in these armed demonstrations; (c) that the disaffected locations be raided on a systematic [basis]…[141].

The placement of the region under Emergency Regulations would have extended the powers of Bantu Affairs Commissioners allowing for, among other things, the declaration of curfews and increased control over who entered and left the region.

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[139] J. Fenwick, "Disaffection in the Lusikisiki District, June 1, 1960 (CA 1/BIZ 6/47, Fol. C.9/6/A).

[140] Ibid.

[141] Ibid.

Emergency Regulations also would have prompted greater military and police presence in the region.

Fenwick's assessment of the tenuous situation in the region was largely correct. Five days after the submission of this report, the Ngquza Hill cell of *iKongo* held a meeting at Ngquza Hill near Holy Cross Mission. Reported in the official record as an unauthorized and illegal meeting of "approximately 250 Bantus," South African forces deployed teargas bombs from two Harvard planes and one helicopter in an attempt to scare and disperse the crowds. An official correspondence regarding the "disturbance" on Ngquza Hill confirms the use of teargas: "the tears had no visible effect."[142]

Die Burger, a pro-Nationalist party, Afrikaans-language newspaper primarily circulated in the Western and Eastern Cape, ran a story about what ensued at Ngquza Hill in its October 29, 1960 edition. In the story, a witness named Elijah Lande, an ex-teacher from Hlabati Location, Lusikisiki District, stated that *iKongo* members raised a white flag immediately after the dispersal of the teargas bombs.[143] Lande corroborated the official report in stating that the teargas had had no visible effect on those assembled on the hillside appears to confirm that these "Bantu raised a white flag as sign of surrender and [that] the Police moved in from

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[142] Report on Disturbances to the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Umtata, June 16, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1470).

[143] Pondo se wit vlag is gehys na 'bloed' in die lug,' *Die Burger,* October 29, 1960. Elijah Lande gave testimony to the Commission of Enquiry convened to investigate charges of police brutality in the aftermath of the Ngquza Hill shootings (PA K-185).

three sides."[144] Using sixteen police vans in conjunction with helicopter cover, South African forces converged upon the crowd gathered at the bottom of the hill. *New Age* reported that a Mr. Johnson held up a white flag in an effort to prevent further violence.[145] From this point onward, we have conflicting reports. *New Age* reported that South African forces shot Mr. Johnson, without provocation, twice.[146] However, a police memorandum stated that police, coming upon the illegal meeting, encountered hostile fire that they returned out of self-defense.[147] By the end of the "disturbance," eleven people (all "Bantu") lay dead, at least sixty were wounded and twenty-one others were arrested (twenty were later convicted).[148]

The actions of the South African police on Ngquza Hill attracted immediate attention, both locally and nationally. Word of the "massacre" spread across South Africa, driven in part by graphic accounts of the aftermath: *New Age* published photographs of the dead.[149] Family members and observers alleged that the families of the victims, unable to immediately visit the site of the violence due to police and military presence, found that police had left the bodies of the deceased exposed to

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[144] Ibid.

[145] "Pondos rebel against Bantu Authorities," *New Age*, 6, no. 26 (September 8, 1960).

[146] Ibid.

[147] *Memorandum: Onluste – Pondoland*, January 1, 1961, (PA SAP 597).

[148] "Ngquza Hill Disturbance: June 6, 1960," (CA CMT 3/1475); See also Mbeki, *South Africa*, 121. Govan Mbeki reported the arrest of 23 people on charges of "fighting" in connection with the events on Ngquza Hill.

[149] "Pondos rebel against Bantu Authorities," *New Age* 6, no. 26 (September 8, 1960).

the elements and stray dogs.[150] The situation intensified as state officials, in the days and weeks following the event, refused to grant requests for post-mortems.[151] A priest at the Holy Cross Mission, where many of the wounded had been taken after the shootings, later submitted a document to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei requesting a judicial enquiry into the shootings.[152] The shootings served not only to incite further rage against representatives of Bantu Authorities but also brought national attention to the insurgency in the Transkei.

Conclusion

iKongo first emerged in the 1940s as an organization grounded in a long history of rural resistance to state policies regarding land, livestock, and political succession. The members of this movement saw the actions of the South African state as illegitimate and sought to prevent the state from interfering in their daily lives. However, these original members of *iKongo* did not propose a new kind of society – they wanted the South African state to stop meddling in their political and economic lives. The movement disappeared from the archival record for much of

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[150] Govan Mbeki, *South Africa*, 121.

[151] Sukude Matoti and Lungisile Ntsebeza, "Rural Resistance in Mpondoland and Thembuland, 1960-1963," 186. It is of note that, four months after attorney Rowley Arenstein made the initial request, the government finally granted the request for exhumation. The exhumation confirmed the contention made by the families of the victims that South African forces had killed eleven people on June 6, 1960. The Nationalist Party later banned Arenstein from entering the Transkei. Attorneys Albie Sachs and RS Canca took over the case against the government.

[152] Letter from the Rev. F.E. Vaugh-Jones of Holy Cross Mission, Eastern Pondoland to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei (copied to the Minister of Justice and the Magistrate of Lusikisiki), July 25, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1475).

the 1950s only re-emerging in late 1958 in the midst of significant instability. The implementation of Bantu Authorities and the growing sense of lawlessness in the region prompted many rural Africans to resist the South African state and its representatives in an attempt to restore equilibrium.

In the early months of *iKongo* in 1959 and 1960, the movement did not look markedly different from resistance movements that came before it. However, in mid-May, the leaders of the organization, based in Bizana District began to formulate a political platform that not only rejected the rule of Bantu Authorities but also proposed the creation of a distinct and independent nation in the Transkei.

Government officials attempted to suppress the movement in the first half of 1960. The shootings Ngquza Hill on June 6, 1960, rather than stopping *iKongo* in their tracks, only further enraged rural Africans in Pondoland and surrounding districts. Government officials had revealed themselves as murderers and *iKongo* intensified their campaign against Bantu Authorities and all its representatives. Between June 7 and July 1, South African police recorded approximately forty-nine incidents of hut burning in Bizana District alone.[153] As the South African government desperately sought to regain control of a region that was increasingly ungovernable, *iKongo* continued to develop its vision of nation in defiance to that offered by the apartheid state.

The following chapter turns to an examination of this emergent nationalist vision. This articulation of independent nation in the Transkei did not adhere to political vision of the South African state or that of the ANC. Rather, the creation of a

[153] Property Damage Report, Bizana District, July 10, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1477).

constitution and the invocation of the supernatural served as moments of rural cosmopolitanism in which *iKongo* insurgents sought to create a nation that organizations like the United Nations would both understand and mark as legitimate.

Chapter Two

Constitutions, Petitions, and Invocations of the Supernatural: Rural Cosmopolitans and the Construction of an *iKongo* Nation

Between 1959 and 1960, *iKongo* launched an insurgent action against the apartheid state and its representatives. The movement initially appeared to share much in common with previous resistance movements in the region throughout the twentieth century. During the early months of the insurgency, members of *iKongo* voiced their opposition to the various policies associated with Bantu Authorities. Particularly upset with the government practice of appointing pro-Bantu Authorities men to the positions of chief and headmen, *iKongo* members targeted these men for attack. Marching upon the kraals of these traitors under the cover of darkness, the insurgents burned their property and, on occasion, assaulted or killed the men.

In mid-1960, the members of *iKongo* took the movement in an entirely different direction than those resistance movements that had come before. Insurgents began to see their organization as an independent political entity. Its members asserted that *iKongo*, not the South African state in the form of Bantu Authorities, had the right to govern. Sometime in late June or early July, the leadership of the movement, based in Bizana District, drafted a constitution in which they sketched out the basic parameters of this new nation. Several months later, the movement sent a petition to the United Nations requesting recognition of their national sovereignty. Members of *iKongo* knowingly and readily incorporated the language and image of the modern liberal democratic nation state into their vision of a new political order.

At precisely the same moment as *iKongo* drafted these founding documents, the movement's leaders invoked the ancestors and deployed lexicons of magic and sorcery in their fight against government appointed chiefs and headmen. The acquiescence of chiefs and headmen to Bantu Authorities led many *iKongo* members to believe that these men were not only traitors guilty of "selling the country," but that they acquired their powers through recourse to sorcery. *iKongo* insurgents believed that in order to realize their vision of an independent nation that invoked the language of the liberal democratic state, they had to purify a world run through with the use of malicious magic. In order to purify this world, members of *iKongo* implored their warrior ancestors, referred to as "Russians," to come to their aid and exercised forms of violence typically used against alleged witches and sorcerers upon the bodies of the government appointed chiefs and headmen.

The drafting of a constitution and a petition to the United Nations in combination with invocations of the ancestors and of magic constituted a moment of rural cosmopolitanism. Rather than viewing these actions as demonstrative of the irrationality of the peasant, it is more useful to read *iKongo* as creating a national identity and political order that at once reflected the values and concerns of people living within the community, while at the same time remained recognizable to organizations like the United Nations as a legitimate nation. In constructing a future nation, members of *iKongo* looked to and invoked lexicons of the supernatural that traced their origins back over one hundred years to the Cattle-Killing. To *iKongo* insurgents, the use of documents rooted in a secular tradition like the constitution and the recognition of the UN as an arbiter of nationhood alongside the invocation

of ancestors and the doctoring of wars did not constitute an unbreachable rupture between the secular and the sacred. Instead, it appears that members of *iKongo* implemented both traditions in attempt to, borrowing from Appiah's conception of cosmopolitanism, both understand the secular nation state and be understood by it.

Founding Documents: The Constitution of the Congo and the Petition to the United Nations

In the weeks following the shootings on Ngquza Hill, *iKongo*'s insurgency against the South African state and supporters of Bantu Authorities intensified. The shooting of *iKongo* members by South African police galvanized the movement. Additionally, the very nature of *iKongo* began to change. Even before the shootings, leaders talked about not only rejecting Bantu Authorities but also making their own laws.[1] Discussed in the previous chapter, these early meetings in May 1960 indicate the degree to which the movement was moving away from previous resistance movements. Rather than focusing primarily on rejecting Bantu Authorities and its various political and land policies, *iKongo* moved towards imagining a future political order in which it governed the region.

Archival records indicate that *iKongo* members began to draft their constitution in late June or July of 1960. Simply titled "The Constitution of the Congo," leaders distributed this document to local cells beginning in July 1960.[2] The

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[1] Statement against Bambata Dokolwana by William Sigola, April 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054).

[2] "The Constitution of the Congo," (CA CMT 3/1472). During the suppression of the movement, police confiscated these documents throughout the districts of Bizana, Flagstaff, Lusikisiki, Engcobo, and Butterworth. The first time that officials confiscated the document appears to have been in late July 1960 in Bizana District.

Constitution outlined the society that *iKongo* envisioned would emerge upon successfully banishing Bantu Authorities from the region. Translated from Xhosa to English by local officials, the document, upon initial observation, appears rather scattered in its objectives. Ranging from assertions that cases should not be taken to sub-chiefs to an outright prohibition of dances, it might be easy to dismiss the document entirely (See Appendix B for a full text of the document). However, when placed in the long history of state attempts to regulate and suppress African life in rural areas and African resistance to such attempts, the Constitution stands as a rejection of current forms of government while simultaneously proposing a new form of government amenable to the situation of rural Africans in the Transkei. It was a foundational document in which *iKongo* members articulated their national vision.

Beginning with the command that all people must "obey the Congo," Points One through Six of the Constitution addressed the question of who held the right to rule in Pondoland. Point Four rejected the authority of Paramount Chief Botha Sigcau while Point Six rejected Bantu Authorities. Points Two and Five established *iKongo* as the legitimate government in the region. Points Seven through Nine identified the leadership of *iKongo* as the legitimate arbiters with respect to tax collection specifying how much each person has to pay. The remainder of the document, Points Ten through Seventeen, identified *iKongo* as the arbiter of appropriate social behavior in the region. Acknowledging the instability caused by stock thieves and youth gangs in previous years, *iKongo* wished to re-establish a

sense of social order by prohibiting dances and parties (events during which violence most frequently occurred) and specifying a financial penalty for assault.

Rather than merely rejecting Bantu Authorities, *iKongo* members created a series of laws and societal codes that served as the guiding principles of the new nation. One interview participant recalled "in those days, the leaders gave law from Ndhlovu Hill."[3] At no point did members of the movement call for a return to "tradition" or to a way of life that existed before the implementation of Bantu Authorities. Instead, members identified issues of immediate concern to Africans in the region such as the authority of the chiefs, taxation, and various social issues. Having recognized these issues, the movement endeavored to create a political, economic, and societal order that addressed these concerns and set the foundations for a new society.

At approximately the same time as the composition and initial distribution of "The Constitution of the Congo," the movement also drafted a petition to the United Nations. The original document appears to have been lost and there is no indication that it ever reached the United Nations. However, the October issues of *Contact* and *Fighting Talk* ran articles about the petition and, in the case of *Fighting Talk,* printed excerpts from the original document.

According to *Contact*, Enoch Mbhele, a thirty-four year old tinsmith, smuggled the petition out of South Africa.[4] The nine thousand-word document,

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[3] Interview with Author, December 17, 2007 – Bizana.

[4] "Pondo to the United Nations," *Contact*, 3, no. 20 (October 8, 1960). None of my interview participants knows what happened to Mbhele. Most confirm that he

addressed to the Security Council of the United Nations, listed the grievances that *iKongo* had with Bantu Authorities and the "schemes of the De Wet Nel-Verwoerd hierarchy."[5] The document continued to describe the bribery and corruption encouraged by Bantu Authorities: "The Councilors no longer sit with their tribesmen. They are tricky and bullying, often accept bribes and questions put to them are answered by force and compulsion and they take no trouble to convince anyone of the justice of their decisions."[6] The petition then addressed issues of taxation and the impoverishment suffered by rural Africans due to the migrant labor network and pass laws. An additional set of passages, reproduced in *Fighting Talk*, discussed the rehabilitation schemes.

> We have been told that if we reduced our stock, reduce our land, live in locations we will become wealthier… We are not against the improvement of our land by the use of modern methods of agriculture. But we do not see the necessity of reducing our land."[7]

The passage reproduced in *Fighting Talk* ends with a request that the United Nations recognize the constitution created by *iKongo*.[8] Several former participants in the insurgency additionally remember that the petition requested that the United

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did in fact leave the country with the document but what happened afterwards remains a mystery.

[5] Ibid.

[6] "Pondoland! The Pondo Petition to the United Nations," *Fighting Talk* 14, no. 5 (October 5, 1960).

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

Nations reject as illegitimate the implementation of Bantu Authorities and the legitimacy of the South African state in the region.[9]

iKongo did not reject "modernity" or all that it implied – indeed the movement notes its appreciation for many of the benefits that modern agricultural techniques had brought. Members did not seek to step back into an idealized past. Rather, members of *iKongo* engaged with modernity in their own way. Instead of adopting the nationalist platform offered by the ANC, a platform deeply rooted in a Western tradition of liberal democracy, *iKongo* used conceptions of citizenship and sovereignty to determine the contours of a political and social landscape that at once called upon "traditional" ways of life while at the same time engaging with a Western forms of governance. The very fact that *iKongo* turned to the United Nation, an organization founded upon liberal democratic ideals of rights and sovereignty, is an indication of the organization's desire to engage with rather than run from a world that was undergoing rapid, and at times, violent change.

At exactly the same moment that *iKongo* created their constitution and petition, the leaders of the movement, particularly Gambushe Baleni, told the insurgents that the Russians were coming to help them.[10] Additionally, when attacking the kraals of suspected government collaborators, *iKongo* insurgents employed witch doctors to doctor their bodies in an attempt to remain impervious to the malicious magic they suspected these traitorous chiefs and headmen

[9] Interview with Author, December 15, 2007 – Bizana.

[10] Anonymous Witness Statement, 1960 (CA 1 BIZ 6/47, Folio N1/9/210-3); Statement by Chief Gangata Baleni, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1054); Testimony of Albert Somadlangati (PA K 185).

wielded.[11] In some cases, the insurgents used the same types of violence typically employed against a witch or sorcerer when they killed the man suspected of betraying his people. How can we make sense of these rumors of Russians and invocations of magic in the context of *iKongo*'s political vision of nation – a vision grounded in the language of the liberal democratic state?

The Supernatural World and its Role in Everyday Life

Before this vision of nation could come into being, before the leaders could implement the Constitution, *iKongo* members believed that they had to purify society from the contaminating influences of witchcraft.[12] Discussed in the previous chapter, the implementation of Bantu Authorities following the election of the Nationalist Party in 1947 had a significant impact on rural Africans. Forced to follow policies regarding land use and the care of stock while attempting to provide for their families, many Africans in the Transkei believed that white people had cursed their land.[13] The actions of doctoring warriors, killing chiefs as sorcerers, and invoking the ancestors (what I argue occurred when leaders discussed the "Russians"), all functioned as a means through which people in the Transkei simultaneously made sense of an unstable world and sought to purify it.

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[11] Statement by William Sigola of Mtshayelo Location, Bizana, April, 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054); Case Number 700 of 1961, Statement by Reuben Tshazi, August 28, 1961 (CA 1/LSK 1/1/16).

[12] Crais discusses this sense of pollution in his work on resistance in the Eastern Cape in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Crais, *The Politics of Evil*.

[13] Anonymous Letter sent to Reverend Masela, October 1960 (CA 1/ECO 6/1/98).

The belief that white people had access to malevolent power was not new. Throughout the early twentieth century, as colonization intensified, Africans believed that East Coast fever resulted from an "orgy of *uthakatha* (witchcraft/sorcery), or that they [were] sent by the Europeans.[14] Additionally, many Africans believed that European administrators possessed an intimate knowledge of sorcery and magic that they in turn used to exact control over their subjects. One of Wilson's informants believed that "all really dangerous *ubuthi* (materials of sorcery) came from Europeans towns."[15] As Geschiere has noted, the ways in which people understood witchcraft and its connection to whites expressed "a determined effort for signifying politico-economic changes or even gaining control over them."[16]

Both Crais and Redding have argued that the ritual of tax collection enacted by Europeans in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries fits into this schema of sorcery. Through participation in the ritual of tax collection, Africans believed that they were making "their (Europeans) use of those powers more predictable."[17] Crais' description of the murder of the British magistrate Hamilton Hope in 1880 by

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[14] Wilson, *Reaction to Conquest*, 273.

[15] Ibid., 294.

[16] Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997), 3. Many rural Africans also believed that European attempts to inoculate cattle against rinderpest were actually indications of malicious magic. See Benedict Carton, "The Forgotten Compass of Death: Apocalypse Then and Now in the Social History of South Africa," *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 1, Special Issue (autumn, 2003), 204.

[17] Redding, *Sorcery and Sovereignty*, 10.

members of the Mpondomise tribe in the Transkei reflects the degree to which Africans endowed colonial authorities with a kind of supernatural power. Stabbed in the chest and then dismembered, the body of Hope and the buildings signifying his authority were ritually destroyed in an attempt to "eat up" the power that the Mpondomise chief thought Hope possessed.[18]

The belief in magic and the abilities of certain persons to access those forces extended far beyond the belief in the supernatural abilities of whites. Xhosa-speaking peoples across the Ciskei and Transkei believed that the ancestors exerted a significant power over the fortunes of their living descendants. Diviners (*igqira*) could make ritual appeals to the ancestors and other spirits in order to bring blessings or lift afflictions from a person or an entire community. War doctors *(inyanga yempi*) used a range of medicines to doctor warriors from afflictions sent through malicious spirits.

These specialists maintained an important political function within society. In Xhosa cosmology, chiefs historically possessed a strong connection to the realm of spirits. Many believed that chiefs had the ability to make rain. However, chiefs needed to protect these powers and many, like the Mpondomise chief who killed Hamilton Hope, sought to accumulate or "eat up" the powers of others around them.[19] Periods of considerable instability like famine, drought, or war, prompted concern about the power of the chief. During these times, a chief might seek the aid of ritual specialists to help protect his powers. In return for the cosmological

[18] Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 38-41.

[19] Ibid., 50.

protection provided by a chief, his subjects presented him with cattle. The act of gifting thereby reinforced the contours of the political realm.[20]

While certain people could exercise extraordinary power with respect to the supernatural realm, this power or control over magical forces was never absolute. Diviners, war doctors, or even chiefs could use their knowledge of the supernatural for malicious ends. Witchcraft and sorcery was "the idiom for explaining misfortune: suspicious deaths, crop failure, the death of cattle, devastating rains, and lightning."[21] The very people who could legitimately access the world of spirits could easily take on the role of witch or sorcerer.[22]

An especially dangerous power of witches and sorcerers was the ability to control lightning. Described in animistic terms as an *impundulu* or lightning bird, Xhosa—speaking peoples believed that it functioned as the vehicle through which malevolent magic crossed from the supernatural to the tangible world.[23] Only an extraordinarily powerful sorcerer could summon the power of the *impundulu*.[24]

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[20] Ibid., 50.

[21] Ibid., 128-129.

[22] While Evans Pritchard, in his study of the Azande, differentiated between the practice of witchcraft and sorcery by asserting that witchcraft was intrinsic to the witch while sorcery was the utilization of particular forms of knowledge with the intent of harming others, it is useful to note that Xhosa-speakers switch back and forth between the terms of *umthakathi* and *igqwira* when discussing witchcraft and sorcery. However, the terms are gendered: women are witches and men are sorcerers. See E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), 21.

[23] Interview with author, December 13, 2007- Bizana.

[24] Wilson, *Reaction to Conquest*, 282; 301.

In order to counteract acts of sorcery one could appeal to the ancestors (*amathongo*) through the ritual killing of stock.[25] If satisfied by the ritual killing, the ancestors could protect a person attacked by the curses of a witch or sorcerer. However, if people failed to appease the ancestors, disease might suddenly worsen or the general fortunes of the community might decline precipitously.[26] The health of the community as a whole remained in many ways dependent on the satisfactory appeasement of the ancestors. If properly respected, the ancestors could help the entire community in times of desperation.

From the beginning of the colonial period through the twentieth century, both missionaries and government officials saw this belief in magic and the supernatural as the major impediment in the civilization of rural Africans. Not only did officials criminalize the practice of witchcraft but they also criminalized imputations of witchcraft. Judges remained reluctant to accept witchcraft as a defense in murder trials referring to the prevalent belief in witchcraft "as a very great blight upon the native people in the Union."[27] Despite the legal prohibition on witchcraft, officials noted that not only did people continue to believe in the existence of witches and sorcerers but that more people sought out the services of witches.[28] This appears to have been the case throughout other parts of the colonial

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[25] Ibid., 234.

[26] Redding, *Sorcery and Sovereignty*, 107.

[27] Case Number 146 of1958: State v. Fumanekile Matadi (CA GSC 1/2/1/811).

[28] Communication from the Magistrate, Engcobo to the Secretary of the Engcobo Civic Association, February 8, 1930 (CA 1/ECO 6/1/28).

world as well. Audrey Richards, an ethnographer working in Rhodesia in the 1930s, argued "native belief in witchcraft and the widespread use of protective magic… has actually increased by contact with white civilization."[29]

The existence of the supernatural served as an explanatory device for both ordinary moments and extraordinary events. In the 1950s, many *iKongo* insurgents believed that government appointed chiefs were so powerful in part because they either possessed the powers of sorcery themselves or had access to sorcerers. In order to rid the region of these traitors (*jendevu*) and to purify the land in preparation for implementing their vision of a nation, *iKongo* insurgents called upon elements of the supernatural to aid in defeating these malicious powers.

The Russians are Coming: iKongo's Appeal to the Ancestors

In late May 1960, during a meeting on Ndhlovu Hill, the epicenter of *iKongo*, one of the leaders, Gambushe Baleni, told the crowd of approximately one thousand that anyone who purchased paraffin from European traders would be "killed when the Russian planes came." In order to avoid the destruction that these Russian planes would visit upon the land, "the people should reap their crops early because thousands would come on horseback and trample all the mealie lands."[30] Over the next several days and weeks, representatives of other *iKongo* cells who attended this meeting, relayed this promise across locations and districts throughout

[29] Audrey Richards, "A Modern Movement of Witch-Finders," *Africa* 8, no. 4 (1935), 460.

[30] Testimony of Albert Somadlangati (PA K-185); Anonymous Witness Statement, 1960 (CA 1/BIZ 6/64, Folio N 1/9/210-3); Statement by Chief Gangata Baleni, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1054).

Pondoland.[31] Who were the "Russians"? Did *iKongo* believe that Soviet fighters would come to a remote corner of South Africa to aid in the fight against Bantu Authorities, or, did the term tap into a much longer history of appealing to the ancestors for help?

Driven by fears of Communism and the potential influence of the Soviet Union amongst the African population, South African officials interpreted Baleni's promise of Russian intervention literally: the Russians could invade South Africa by way of the Transkeian coast. The possibility that Russians might be landing in the Transkei to aid the insurgents, while disturbing, helped officials to explain the recent outbreak of violence in Pondoland. These officials, unwilling to believe that a group of largely illiterate African peasants could mount a campaign of resistance against the state, took the rumor to a full session of the South African Parliament in 1960. During this session, the Minister of Bantu Administration, Mr. de Wet Nel, elaborated upon the rumor, telling members of parliament that white Communists were already operating in Pondoland and that "they had landed on the coast from submarines."[32]

Very few scholars studying the insurgency in Pondoland have ever taken up this issue of Russians. While Evans argues that the government response to Baleni's

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[31] Statement by William Sigola of Mtshayelo Location, Bizana, April, 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054); Case Number 700 of 1961, Statement by Reuben Tshazi, August 28, 1961 (CA 1/LSK 1/1/16).

[32] Albert Luthuli, *Let My People Go: An Autobiography* (London: Collins Clear-Type Press, 1962), 229-230. The Soviet Union never invaded South Africa, and there is absolutely no evidence of the existence of a marine-based Soviet presence off the coast of Pondoland during the 1950s or 1960s.

promise of Russian intervention was "ludicrous," he does not necessarily contest the South African's government's literal interpretation.[33] Redding does note that while *iKongo* were probably referring to fighters from the Soviet Union, Baleni's phrasing was "reminiscent of a part of the 1857 Xhosa cattle-killing that suggested that Russians were coming to assist the fight against the British."[34]

I argue that not only was Baleni's promise of Russian aid reminiscent of the prophecy from the period of the Cattle-Killing but that it emerged directly from that prophecy. Far from referencing the Soviet Union, Baleni's statement regarding the Russians was an invocation of the ancestors that had a long and established place in Xhosa history.

Rumors of Russians coming to the aid of a stricken people originate during the Xhosa resistance to British colonial advances during the Frontier Wars. As British colonial forces and white settlers pushed eastwards in the early nineteenth century, the Xhosa faced a multitude of challenges. Externally, the British threatened to conquer their land, and internally, a series of droughts and famines threatened the very stability of the socio-political order. The legitimacy of the chiefs, dependent in part on their ability to make rain, suffered even further as British forces placed increasing pressure on Xhosa warriors.

The combined factors of drought, famine, and military conquest caused many Xhosa to believe that witchcraft was to blame for the misfortunes suffered at

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[33] Ivan Evans, *Bureaucracy and Race: Native Administration in South Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 263. See also: Redding, *Sorcery and Sovereignty*, 192.

[34] Redding, *Sorcery and Sovereignty*, 192.

the hands of the British during the Fourth Frontier War (1810-1811).[35] Several years after this war, during which the Xhosa suffered considerable military loss, a man named Nxele-Makanna preached that the only way for the Xhosa to extricate themselves from their abject state was to abstain from cow's milk and to forsake the use of *ubuthi* (the materials used by witches and sorcerers).[36] He further prophesied that on the day of reckoning, Xhosa ancestors would rise from the sea and cast the witches and sorcerers into eternal damnation, thereby purifying the society and stopping the British conquest of Xhosaland.[37]

The Xhosa continued to suffer defeat throughout the 1820s and 1830s. In the 1840s, faced with a series of droughts and outbreaks of lung sickness, millenarian prophecies similar to those proposed by Nxele Makanna emerged once more. A new prophet named Mlanjeni prophesied that the killing of all cattle was the only solution.[38] During the Eighth Frontier War (1851-1853) Mlanjeni, as the official war-doctor, oversaw the doctoring of Xhosa forces with herbs designed to turn British bullets into water.[39] Mlanjeni's prophecies did not come true: bullets did not

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[27] Jeff Peires, *The Dead will Arise,* 2.

[36] Noël Mostert, *Frontiers*, 428.

[37] Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 33. The Xhosa did begin to slaughter their cattle, an act interpreted by settlers as a preamble to an attack on the white population.

[38] Ibid., 9-10; See also Mostert, *Frontiers*, 1000.

[39] As war-doctor, Mlanjeni instructed Xhosa warriors to rub their bodies with the juice of the pelargonium plant. He believed that this would cause British rifles to spurt hot water instead of bullets. [Mostert, *Frontiers*, 1000]. The trope of "turning bullets into water" appears in numerous colonial encounters throughout the colonial world of the 19th century. Cf. Paul A Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The*

turn to water, and the Xhosa suffered even greater losses at the hands of the British than in previous wars.

Several years later, in 1856, a young woman named Nongqawuse offered to do what Mlanjeni had failed to do: rid the world of this 'wicked' force and finally expel the British. Nongqawuse prophesied that, if the Xhosa slaughtered all their cattle and stopped cultivation of their crops the ancestors would rise from the dead. The cattle had to be slaughtered because "they [had] been reared by contaminated hands because there are people about who deal in witchcraft."[40] According to the prophecy, the ancestors would not only rid the land of the British but would gift their descendants new cattle, fresh grain, and materials with which to start again.

However, the prophecy soon mutated and it is in this mutation that we locate the genesis of the rumor of "Russians" coming to protect the people from the malicious influences of witchcraft. Approximately six months before Nongqawuse first revealed prophecy, Nathaniel Merriman, an Anglican missionary, wrote in his journal about a series of conversations between himself and Chief Sarhili concerning the Crimean War and the death of George Cathcart.[41] Cathcart was the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope during the Eighth Frontier War and, as such, was both hated and feared by the Xhosa. In late 1853, Cathcart left South Africa to serve in Crimea.

Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Paul M. Lubbock, "Islamic Protest under Semi-Industrial Capitalism: Yan-Tatsine Explained," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 55, no. 4 (1985), 369-389.

[40] Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 79.

[41] N.J. Merriman, *The Cape Journals of Archdeacon N.J. Merriman, 1848-1855*, ed. D.H. Varley and H.M Matthew (Cape Town: Van Riebeck Society, 1957).

Russian soldiers at the Battle of Inkerman killed him on November 5, 1854. As word of his death slowly made its way across the colonial world, rumor began to circulate among the Xhosa that a mysterious group by the name of "Russians" had slain their hated foe.

Over a series of months, the rumors of these "Russians" continued to grow. Merriman records that, while attending a meeting of fifty *Pataki* (senators) in Umhala, he was asked "what colour the Englishmen's enemy were of." [42] One of the *Pataki* later informed Merriman that many Xhosa believed these "Russians were in fact black men who were coming to South Africa to defeat the British."[43] Several weeks later, Merriman reported a similar conversation with Chief Sarhili during which the Chief expressed his pleasure with the British defeats in Crimea. Sarhili reportedly stated that, because the Russians were enemies of the British and because the Xhosa were enemies of the British, the Russians must in turn be black.[44]

By the beginning of 1856, as Nongqawuse's reputation spread, the rumor again mutated: the "Russians" were now an army of black ancestors believed to have the power to both purify and resurrect the abject Xhosa peoples.[45] The rumor

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[42] Ibid., 215-216.

[43] Ibid., 216.

[44] Mostert, *Frontiers*, 1187.

[45] Military communiqué to Lieutenant-General Jackson, April 4, 1856 (GH 8/31 Schedule 417), Quoted in Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 77. It is important to note that the report specifically used the Xhosa word for ancestor, *amathongo*, thereby reducing the possibility that it was a mistranslation on the part of the British

gained even greater traction when Nxele-Makanna's son, Mjuza, announced that he too believed that these "Russians" were indeed Xhosa ancestor warriors.[46]

While Merriman and his contemporaries dismissed these beliefs as mere rumor and superstition, what appears to have occurred were a series of (mis)translations.[47] Employing the familiar trope of appealing to the ancestors for help, the Xhosa believed that a force powerful enough to kill the hated person of Cathcart must necessarily have been part of their ancestors. As Mostert notes in his narrative of the Cattle-Killing, the dire conditions of the 1850s resulted in an "easy transposition to see them [Russians] as the 'new people' and the ghosts of warriors past."[48]

As the slaughter of cattle intensified through 1856, the belief in the imminent arrival of the "Russian" ancestors spread throughout the region. Mhlakaza, Nongqawuse's uncle, having emerged as a spokesperson for the prophetess, told Chief Sarhili that once the Xhosa slaughtered all their cattle, and destroyed their crops and food reserves the food reserves, the "Russians [would] appear to sweep the English off the face of the earth."[49]

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[46] Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 77.

[47] For further discussions of rumor and its transmission, see the following: Tamotsu Shibutani, *Improvised News: A Sociological Study of Rumor* (Indianapolis; New York: The Bobbs-Merill Company, Inc., 1966); Arlette Farge and Jacques Revel, *The Vanishing Children of Paris: Rumor and Politics before the French Revolution*, trans. Claudia Mieville (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991); Louise White, *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).

[48] Mostert, *Frontiers*, 1187.

[49] Ibid., 1189.

Despite the promises that the Russians would appear and rumors of their arrival in Gxara (just east of the Kei river), no one came. By the end of February 1857, the physical resistance of the Xhosa was broken. The battle against British annexation and colonization of Xhosaland had ended.[50] While the prophecy did not come to fruition, the Xhosa did not forget the events of the Cattle Killing. Indeed, the displacement of people across the breadth of the Western and Eastern Capes actually promoted the dissemination and installment of the prophecy and its aftermath in the collective memory of Xhosa-speaking peoples.[51] Many surviving Xhosa journeyed eastward into Pondoland and Lesotho. A May 1857 edition of the *King William's Town Gazette* reports that at least several hundred survivors settled in eastern Pondoland.[52]

Over the next hundred years, references to strangers emerging from the sea to set right a world undone by witchcraft virtually disappear from the official archival record. However, in times of deep instability, the basic template of the promise of "Russian" intervention did reappear. The most notable example occurred during the Wellington Movement in the 1920s. Rural Africans in the same

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[50] Ibid., 1222.East of the Kei River, at least 40,000 people perished from starvation. The displacement of the Xhosa was even greater: approximately 150,000 people left their homes, many looking for work in the Cape Colony and on the farms of white settlers.

[51] The question of how memories of trauma are relayed across time and space is particularly interesting. Benedict Cantor argues that the memory of a particularly destructive epidemics of rinderpest in the late nineteenth century exert a great influence on the memory of the Zulu to this day. See Benedict Carton, "The Forgotten Compass of Death: Apocalypse Then and Now in the Social History of South Africa," 203.

[52] Ibid., 1222.

districts that would later engage in *iKongo* activity suffered a considerable degree of instability in the 1920s due to crop failure, stock quarantine, and the beginnings of more significant intrusion by the South African state. Many Africans believed, like their ancestors in the early and mid-19th century, witchcraft lay at the root of the misfortune they experienced in their daily lives.

The rhetoric and exhortations of Wellington Buthelezi consequently drew a significant amount of attention and support when he began to urge rural Africans in the Transkei to stop paying taxes and cease dipping their cattle. Claiming that he was from Chicago and had received an American education, although he was originally from Natal, Wellington used Marcus Garvey's platform of black liberation as a foundation from which to gain support amongst peoples in the Transkei.[53] One of the ways he gained the support, particularly in the Transkei, was through the suggestion that if people did not pay their taxes or dip their cattle, a black army of Americans would come and drive all white people from Africa.[54] While the nationality of the invading force coming to the aid of Africans suffering at the hands of white society had changed, the construction of the later prophecy remained virtually unchanged from the one that prompted the Cattle-Killing. This prophecy, like that circulated nearly seventy years earlier, spread quickly throughout the Transkei. In November of 1927, the Magistrate in Mt. Fletcher reported that Headman Edward Zibi had been making "inflammatory" statements about foreign armies invading South Africa: "'Americans' are coming to the District and are going

[53] Redding, *Sorcery and Sovereignty*, 133-134.

[54] Report by the Magistrate of Tsolo, 1921 (CA 1/TSO 5/1/19, Folio 3/16/6).

to drop bombs on all 'Vetvoots' in the District who have not joined the organization [Wellington]."[55]

In his discussion of the Wellington movement, Crais asserts that the movement is notable for "its appropriation of the artifacts of modernity."[56] This is certainly true. Wellington administered electric shocks with the aid of a car battery to heal his followers. Additionally, he endowed such banal objects as pin-on buttons with an aura of salvation: these buttons were to be a symbol to the Americans that the wearer was one of the group and, as such, save that person from the resulting slaughter.[57] These were appropriations of the paraphernalia of modern society and, as Crais argues, constituted an act of mimicry in order to contest the "power of the white and bring into being a black nation."[58]

A striking feature of the Wellington movement is the simultaneous appropriation of modern objects and the inclusion of the ancestors as a guiding force in the creation of a new political and social landscape. People believed that the impending arrival of "American" forces would help to cleanse a society corrupted. In order to mark those who would not suffer the wrath of these forces, Wellington and his followers turned to various "artifacts of modernity." Not only did the Wellington movement, as Crais suggests, advance a kind of subaltern nationalism; it

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[55] Confidential Memo from the Magistrate of Mt. Fletcher to the S.A. Police, Mt. Fletcher, November 14, 1927 (CA 1/MTF 7/1/17).

[56] Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 139.

[57] August 26, 1927, (CA 1/MFE 8/14). See also Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 139-141.

[58] Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 140.

was a form of rural cosmopolitanism. Rather than discarding the "old for the new" or adopting wholesale a "new" form of technology or doctrine, rural peoples adapted and deployed both traditional and modern lexicons and images alongside one another to create new political and social imaginaries

The Wellington movement decreased in influence towards the end of the 1920s. As the movement disappeared, so did references to a foreign group coming to help black Africans break free from oppressive white rule. However, this is no indication that memory of the Cattle Killing or the belief in the power of the ancestors had faded. Indeed, during the insurgency, South African officials considered "making full use of Bantu superstition. The disaster of Nongqawuse (1857) and the horrible results that followed should be made to realistically indicate what will happen to the Bantu who follow methods such as this."[59] However, rather than the events of the Cattle-Killing serving as a deterrent, the tropes used during those years appear to have inspired resistance among *iKongo* during the height of the insurgency in 1960.

It was not until the beginnings of the insurgency in 1960 that references to "Russians" surfaced once more. Baleni, as a primary leader of *iKongo*, first spoke of Russians in mid-May 1960. His promise of Russian aid was virtually the same as the original prophecy first circulated over one hundred years before: "Russians" were coming to the aid of African warriors in the fight against Bantu Authorities and its supporters. As the insurgency progressed and intensified through the winter

[59] Confidential Circular from the Office of the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata to All Bantu Affairs Commissioners of the Transkeian Territories, March 25 1961 (CA 1/BUT 7/1/88 Folio C. 25).

months of 1960, rumors of an impending Russian invasion spread across the region becoming increasingly elaborate and specific in structure.

The point of origin of this promise was on Ndhlovu Hill, Bizana district with Gambushe Baleni. During the mid-May meeting, Baleni told the crowd that the Russians, when they disembarked, would destroy anyone who bought paraffin from European traders and that, in order to demonstrate one's allegiance to *iKongo*, people should harvest their mealie crops early. Those who did not harvest their crops early would suffer the wrath of the "Russians."[60] During this meeting, Baleni also stated "Congo intended to take over the rule of Pondoland" and that "Congo and its allies would rule the Bantu people of Pondoland."[61]

The original promise of Russian aid made by Gambushe Baleni on Ndhlovu Hill indicates that, in addition to targeting the African supporters of Bantu Authorities, the Russians would assist *iKongo* in punishing those Africans who continued to purchase paraffin from traders. White-owned trading posts were targets of *iKongo* due in part to the perception that traders sought to cheat Africans by engaging in price-fixing.[62] Consequently, during the insurgency, trading posts were occasionally targets of arson attacks as well as boycotts. Additionally, in asserting that the "Russians" were going to target anyone who bought paraffin, *iKongo* specified which Africans would face the wrath of the "Russians."

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[60] Statement by Chief Gangata Baleni, February 27, 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054).

[61] Statement by Albert Somadlangati, 1960 (PA K-185).

[62] For a longer discussion of the role played by migrant labor and the advance system in destabilizing existing social and political hierarchies in the Transkei, see the Introduction.

It is significant that Gambushe Baleni was the first to speak of "Russian" involvement in the coming conflict. As a primary leader of the movement, Baleni commanded a considerable amount of respect and inspired a great deal of fear amongst people throughout Pondoland.[63] In addition to his political role in the movement, Baleni was both revered and feared as a powerful witch doctor.[64] Reputed for his abilities to protect *iKongo* members from the malevolent powers exercised by other witchdoctors in the employ of co-operative chiefs such as Botha Sigcau and Kaizer Matanzima, he possessed a significant degree of influence throughout the region. For example, sub-chief Gangata Baleni, appointed by Bantu-Authorities on March 20, 1959, believed Baleni had incited men to kill him because he was a supporter of Bantu Authorities and others believed that Baleni would "send lightning after them if they did not join *iKongo*.[65]

As a witch doctor, Baleni could access malicious powers such as lightning, a fact that Gangata Baleni and Bungan Noncash both stressed in their testimony against him. Additionally, his role as a witch doctor gave him access to the realm of the ancestors. His invocation of Russian forces coming from the sea to aid *iKongo* warriors in their time of need drew upon a long tradition of appealing to the

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[63] Statement by Chief Gangata Baleni to the South African Police, February 27, 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054).

[64] Statement by Mbungwa Nonkwashu to the South African Police, March 3, 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054); Order of Removal for Gambushe Baleni, March 5, 1962 (CA 1/BIZ 6/64).

[65] Statement by Chief Gangata Baleni to the South African Police, February 27, 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054).

ancestors and would have been recognizable to people throughout Pondoland as such.

Baleni's authority within *iKongo* was so great that his promise of Russian aid spread quickly throughout the region. Upwards of one thousand people attended the meeting on Ndhlovu Hill, including representatives from other *iKongo* cells in Bizana, Lusikisiki and Flagstaff districts.[66] When the meeting dispersed, these representatives went back to their location-level cells and communicated the information relayed by Baleni. It is in the process of transmission that we see the content of Baleni's promise became more specific. In a statement given to South African police in 1962, William Sigola, detained on charges of incitement to commit violence during the insurgency, said that he had attended a "Hill" meeting on Taleni Hill in Mtshayelo Location, Bizana district on May 29, 1960.[67] During this meeting, the designated representative of the cell, Bambata Dokolwana, reported on the meeting held several days earlier on Ndhlovu Hill in neighboring Amadiba Location, Bizana district. Dokolwana said that during this meeting he had heard that "Russians would disembark at Port St. John and along the Lusikisiki District Coast" and that these " 'Russians' would distribute a supply of rifles for Congo."[68]

Several weeks later, in late June, a group of men belonging to the *iKongo* cell in Lower Hlabati Location in Lusikisiki district, reported that Headman Situketsi and

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[66] Case Number 107 of 1962, State v. Botomani Majibini; Kaka Rubela; Sitembiso Mposwa; Mxalelwa Sikiti (CA GSC 1/2/1/967).

[67] Statement by William Sigola to the South African Police, April 1962 (CA CMT 3/1054).

[68] Ibid.

his son, Mgoduswa, told a meeting that the "Russians were [coming] to fight with us for our freedom" and that they would "bring firearms."[69] Insurgents were told to "attack the Quakeni Great Place" because "Russia would come and liberate us."[70]

By the end of 1960, the rumors of impending Russian aid continued to spread and develop. Originating with Baleni at the epicenter of the insurgency, Ndhlovu Hill, the rumor spread across Bizana and into Lusikisiki District. Not only were the Russians coming to assist in the fighting against supporters of Bantu Authorities; they were also bringing weapons.

We find evidence of the mutation of the "Russian rumor" in testimony given during the criminal trial of Themba Jolweni and seven other men from Bomveni Location in Lusikisiki district in 1961.[71] These men were on trial for failing to obtain permission to hold a meeting. Under Proclamation No. 180 of 1956, Africans had to obtain government permission to hold meetings of more than ten people. During the suppression of the insurgency, government prosecutors used this proclamation as one of the primary ways to prosecute large numbers of men for alleged involvement in *iKongo*.

During the course of this trial, Monaty Mejelo stated that during a meeting held on December 12, 1960 in Bomveni Location, Lusikisiki District, a man named

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[69] Statement by Nkunti Ncunukelwa to the South African Police, April 24 1963 (CA 1/BIZ 6/64).

[70] Statement by Matshitsha Mgigwa to the South African Police, April 24, 1963 (CA 1/BIZ 6/64). The attack on the Great Place at Quakeni never occurred because the men were afraid that "soldiers would kill [them] in the same way they had killed the people at Ngquza Hill

[71] Case Number 700 of 1961 (CA 1/LSK 1/1/16).

Yinge told the assembled crowd of approximately five hundred people that "Congo was a new form of government."[72] Mejelo continued to testify that Yinge had told the assembled meeting that "We don't want Bantu Authorities and we don't want to pay taxes. We don't want our cattle to be dipped. We want to be ruled by the Russians."[73] This was later confirmed in the testimony of Reuban Tshazi who stated that the following day (December 13), Yinge had elaborated on the previous day's statement by saying that "Russians would abolish dipping and that we (*iKongo*) *do not want to be ruled by white people but by Russia* and that we do not want Bantu Authorities."[74] According to Yinge, the "Russians" were not white.

Until this moment in the trial, the testimony about the meetings in Bomveni location is relatively unremarkable. *iKongo* members at the Bomveni location meeting opposed increased taxation, dipping regulations, and other policies associated with Bantu Authorities. Additionally, as testimony indicates, members of the movement wished to take power from collaborationist chiefs and headmen. Members instead proposed that *iKongo* function as a political body with a corresponding judicial system: "It was said that no cases would be brought to court but would be tried by the Congo and that… sites would be issued by the Congo and

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[72] Case Number 700 of 1961, Testimony of Monaty Mejelo, August 28, 1961 (CA 1/LSK 1/1/16). No one by the name of "Yinge" appears in the archival record (arrest records, trial transcripts, confessions) except in this one instance. Many leaders and participants in the smaller cells of *iKongo* escaped arrest and prosecution through fleeing to Lesotho during the height of the insurgency's suppression.

[73] Case Number 700 of 1961, Testimony of Monaty Mejelo, August 28, 1961 (CA 1/LSK 1/1/16).

[74] Case Number 700 of 1961, Testimony of Reuben Tshazi, August 28, 1961 (CA 1/LSK 1/1/16).

hospital admissions would be sanctioned by the Congo."[75] The role of the "Russians" was to help *iKongo* rid the land of the traitorous chiefs in preparation for the new nation envisioned by the movement.

These rumors of impending Russian intervention also circulated amongst those who supported Bantu Authorities. In his testimony before the Commission of Inquiry in July 1960, Samuel Makizwana stated, "Some people say that they are waiting for Russia who will come and free them from the yoke of the Government. They say that we who have sold their country will be deported to another land, as Russia will have no use for us."[76] Government officials interpreted the rumors of a possible Russian invasion literally and disregarded the statements made by Yinge and others that the Russians were not white but were, in fact, black.

iKongo insurgents did not believe that Soviet soldiers would come to their aid. Instead, these insurgents saw Bantu Authorities, introduced by white men and implemented by collaborationist chiefs including Sigcau, Vukayibambe, and Matanzima, as indicative of the influence of malicious magic. To rid the land of this malicious magic brought about by white men and traitorous chiefs, insurgents turned to the supernatural realm through invocations of their ancestors in the guise of Russians.

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[75] Case Number 700 of 1961, Testimony of Mahlazi Qasayi, August 28, 1961 (CA 1/LSK 1/1/16). Qasayi appears to have struck a deal with the prosecution for a suspended prison sentence in exchange for his testimony).

[76] Testimony of Samuel Makizwana, 1960 (PA K-185).

Smelling out Traitors: The Killing of Government Collaborators

Chiefs and headmen, most notably Botha Sigcau, Vukayibambe Sigcau, and Kaiser Matanzima, who not only acquiesced but fully supported Bantu Authorities were accused by many of their people of having sold the country. *iKongo* insurgents came to view these men as "enemies of the people."[77] Indeed, the Constitution of the Congo specifically refers to these men, and anyone who did not join the movement, as *jendevu* or traitor.[78] However, these men had not just betrayed the people by selling the land and becoming wealthy through the salaries promised them by the South African government. According to insurgents, these chiefs and their followers participated in the web of witchcraft that had settled across the land and contributed to the suffering of the people.[79] Their guilt established, *iKongo* members invoked their constitution, which stated that *jendevu* would "be seen to" and demanded that these men, "who love(d) the Europeans" must have their throats cut.[80]

During the very meetings in which the leaders of the insurgency promised that the ancestors were coming to help in the defeat of the white men and the collaborationist chiefs, *iKongo* members also determined which men had betrayed

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[77] Anonymous Letter sent to Reverend Masela, October, 1960 (CA 1/ECO 6/1/98).

[78] Constitution of the Congo (CA 1/BIZ 6/47, Folio C.2.1).

[79] Statement by Edward Pinyana, 1960 (PA K-185): "they are full of trouble… they have an evil spirit among them."

[80] Constitution of the Congo (CA 1/BIZ 6/47, Folio C.2.1.); Testimony by Albert Somadlangati, 1960 (PA K-185).

the nation. Once members had identified a collaborator, they organized a party of men to go to the house and burn out the man and his family.

The act of burning and mutilation has a long history in the region. Historically, people who believed that they had been cursed burned the kraals of people thought to practice witchcraft. Magistrate records dating back to the early twentieth century contain cases in which the accused stood charged with killing and then burning the home of the alleged witch or sorcerer.[81] Throughout the 1950s, during the height of Makulu Span, the vigilante group of men formed to address the exponential increase in stock theft, the homes of suspected thieves would be burned as a warning to others and as punishment.[82] Members of Makulu Span believed that these thieves were symbols of the malicious spirit that had descended upon the land.[83]

Before the *impi* - the Xhosa word for "army" – of *iKongo* insurgents set out, under the cover of night, for the kraal of the alleged collaborator, witch doctors fortified them with medicines to protect them against the wicked curses wielded by their targets.[84] This fortification involved the use of various plants and powders applied to the bodies of the insurgents. Discussed earlier in this chapter,

[81] For a detailed example of these kinds of cases, see Case Number 352 of 1956 – State v. Zweklaka Twala (CA 1/EDL 6/1/34).

[82] For a longer discussion of Makulu Span, see Chapter One.

[83] Anonymous Letter to Chief Enoch T. Mcasa, 1960 (CA 1/TSO 5/1/52): "The time for thieves is past. We [will] kill them and burn them." See also: Statement by Samson Mnyanda, ND (CA 1/TSO 5/1/52).

[84] Statement by Ngxuza Lalu, June 27, 1960 (PA K-185): "All the people from the Taweni Location were bearing signs of having been 'doctored'…"

fortification against witchcraft had a long history in the region. Xhosa warriors before going into battle against British forces underwent a similar ritual in the hopes that these applications would protect them from the bullets of the white men. *iKongo* insurgents believed that the men they sought to kill as traitors had access to malicious spirits and powers and, consequently, sought to fortify themselves against these forces.

As they approached the kraal, the war bugles would sound and women standing on the ridges would sound the war cry. Throughout the course of the insurgency, members of *iKongo* generally remained careful to inflict violence only upon the bodies of those people they believed had actually collaborated with Bantu Authorities. Insurgents generally allowed the family members of these collaborators to escape.[85]

Once the *impi* reached the kraal of the intended target, the men surrounded the structure and call out the name of the man they intended to kill. Shouting "*Tahisa Tahisa*" ("burn, burn"), *iKongo* members then forcibly removed the collaborator while setting his kraal on fire. Sometimes the men targeted by the insurgents managed to escape into the brush on the hills.[86] However, those unlucky enough to fall into the hands of the insurgents suffered the fate reserved for witches

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[85] A notable exception to this occurred in the early days of the insurgency when a crowd of *iKongo* surrounded the kraal of Julius Qayiso and burned it. He, his wife and two other women were physically prevented from fleeing the hut as it burned. See Correspondence from the Magistrate, Umtata to the Chief Magistrate, Umtata, December 12, 1959 (CA 1/UTA 6/1/30).

[86] Case Number 106 of 1961: State v. Mampondweni Langa; Pindani Mampondweni, and Meykwa Mampondweni (CA 1/FSF 1/1/1/38).

and sorcerers: an extraordinarily violent death. Fire purified evil influences, and the insurgents saw fire, following the mutilation of the body of the victim, as the most effective way of disrupting and dispelling the evil influences of sorcery or witchcraft.[87]

iKongo identified Paramount Chief Both Sigcau as the primary government collaborator. A supporter of Bantu Authorities from the beginning, Botha Sigcau had attained the position of Paramount Chief with the support of the white government after a protracted succession battle. People throughout the region commonly assumed that Chief Both Sigcau received medicines from a local diviner and herbalist, Khotso Sethuntsa. Although no one accused Khotso of sorcery, many people in the region believed that the famous medicine man knew how to use and had used the materials necessary for sorcery, *ubuthi*. Rumors circulated that Khotso used this knowledge to help protect Chief Sigcau from the wrath of *iKongo* by supplying him with medicines that would turn him into a dog or a chicken.[88]

Botha Sigcau's brother, sub-Chief Vukayibambe Sigcau, also a government appointed chief, suffered at the hands of *iKongo*. Not only had he "sold his people" to Bantu Authorities, a term commonly used in connection with the government appointed chiefs and headmen, but he had also opened fire on a group of men, women, and children several days before his murder. This last act, the killing of his own people, was the catalyst for the *iKongo*'s decision to murder him. During the

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[87] Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 204-205.

[88] Felicity Wood and Michael Lewis, *The Extraordinary Khotso: Millionaire Medicine Man from Lusikisiki* (Cape Town: Jacana Press, 2007), 214.

meeting on November 20, 1961, a man named Mkatazo, the man who allegedly later wielded the ax that killed the Chief, stated, "we have decided that an informer should have his throat cut and thrown over a cliff."[89]

In the early hours of November 21, 1960, under the cover of darkness, a group of more than two hundred men arrived at Vukayibambe's kraal of ten huts and proceeded to set fire to all the structures. As the structures burned, they pulled the Chief from the building and proceeded to kill him with an ax-strike to the back of his skull. When the Chief lay dead in front of his burning kraal, his attackers mutilated his body: his right hand and left ear were chopped off and the fingers of his left hand were severed just above the knuckles.[90] The mutilation of his body bears a striking similarity to a murder case in Mt. Fletcher District several months earlier in which a man was murdered because his neighbors believed to that he was a sorcerer in the employ of Sigcau.[91] In this case, four men took the victim, Ndabeni Mjokojeli, from his kraal. One of the men shot him in the chest and, while still "kicking," his murderers "skinned the right side of his face" and severed his right hand and left ear. The body parts of the man, now dead, were given to a witch doctor, who proceeded to make a medicine.[92] Even in death, the man's body retained significant power that diviners and war doctors could utilize.

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[89] Case Number 376 of 1961: State v. Mkatazo and Twenty-Nine Others (CA GSC 1/2/1/939).

[90] Ibid.

[91] Case Number 115 of 1961: State v. Nthatise Jupiter Lehana, Mariel Heisi, Fiva, Moleleki, Robbie Bocheletsana (CA GSC 1/2/1/917).

[92] Ibid.

While *iKongo* insurgents did not throw Chief Vukayibambe's body off a cliff as they had threatened, the circumstances surrounding his death demonstrate that members of the *iKongo* made an explicit connection between government collaborators and witches. The insurgents saw Chief Vukayibambe as a traitor who exercised a malevolent power: only an evil man, a sorcerer, would fire on his own people. The only way to counter-act these malevolent forces was to treat him as a sorcerer and to kill him in the same fashion that people killed witches and sorcerers before Europeans outlawed such actions.

The belief that government collaborators had access to the materials used for sorcery also appears in a statement given to police by Mvulu Venda in 1961 during the suppression of the insurgency.[93] A member of *iKongo*, he gave information to the South African police about an *iKongo* meeting in Cofimvaba district in late 1960. During this meeting, *iKongo* members discussed the employment of a woman near the town of Umtata who was a "witch-doctor." Members planned to "engage this doctor who has medicine which will be used to make the Chief (Matanzima) blind and this will enable a party of people to attack the Chief and slay him."[94] *iKongo* insurgents saw Chief Matanzima, one of the primary collaborators with Bantu Authorities, as exercising a kind of sorcery counter-acted only by magic. The Chief

[93] Venda was arrested for his participation in *iKongo*. The record of his arrest appears in the arrest rolls of CA CMT 3/1470.

[94] Statement made by Mvulu Venda of Mcuncuzo Location, Cofimvaba, November 15, 1961 (CMT 3/1054).

had burned over 120 kraals of those people who opposed his rule in the late 1950s, and people commonly believed that he was "faster than lightning"[95]

To claim that Chief Matanzima was faster than lightning was a very serious accusation that would have resonated deeply with people throughout Pondoland. Members of *iKongo* would have regarded him as a particularly dangerous figure given his connection with Europeans, who, as discussed earlier, had long been associated with the material of sorcery. In a letter addressed to Chief Matanzima and signed only by "the Congo", the association between the Chief and the practice of sorcery is clear: "It is immaterial to us where you doctored yourself, we are sure to see you this time."[96]

The Place of Ancestors and Magic in the Political Platform of iKongo

While *iKongo* insurgents sought to punish government collaborators as witches and exacted the same punishment upon their bodies as Chiefs had once done to men and women accused of witchcraft and sorcery, they also sought to construct a nation that embodied ideals of Western governance such as democracy and public participation. This constituted a moment of rural cosmopolitanism. The movement did not fold themselves into the nationalist discourse of the ANC. Instead, as rural cosmopolitans, *iKongo* insurgents envisioned a nation that

[95] Statement by Gilbert Hani to the South African Police, 1962 (1/COF 9/1/44).

[96] Anonymous Letter, 1960 (1/COF 9/1/44).

incorporated a range of traditions and images.[97] The movement sought recognition of its nationalist vision from organizations such as the United Nations. In order to achieve this recognition, members created a constitution. This document specified the rights of all *iKongo* members and outlined the basic parameters of the nation.

However, before this constitution could be enacted and the nation be fully constituted, *iKongo* members embarked on a mission of purification. Drawing upon the belief that the ancestors could help counter-act the influence of malicious magic, leaders of the movement implemented a hundred year trope that described the ancestors as Russians emerging from beneath the sea. The leaders promised that, upon their arrival, these Russians/ancestors would assist *iKongo* warriors in destroying the power of Bantu Authorities. Additionally, members of the insurgency perceived collaborationist chiefs as possessing and deploying significant powers of sorcery. Labeled as traitors, insurgents killed these collaborators as witches; their bodies mutilated and burned, their homes destroyed.

As they purified a landscape polluted by witchcraft, members of *iKongo* looked towards the creation of a nation. They drew up a constitution, established courts, and began collecting taxes.[98] They petitioned the United Nations for recognition of their national sovereignty.[99] Envisioning themselves as a nation, *iKongo* viewed government appointed chiefs and headmen as usurpers and as

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[97] Case Number 700 of 1961: State v. Themba Njolweni and 7 others, August 28, 1961 (1/LSK, 1/1/16).

[98] "Constitution of the Congo" (1/BIZ 6/47).

[99] Govan Mbeki, *South Africa*, 42.

traitors. On the hillsides, in the new judicial arenas of the *iKongo*, the leaders of the IKongo tried, convicted, and condemned these men (frequently *in absentia*) as traitors to the people.

However, instead of couching the discussion of the traitorous actions of men like Chief Kaiser Matanzima, Chief Botha Sigcau, and Chief Vukayibambe Sigcau in a discourse of secular law, a discourse typically associated with Western post-Enlightenment justice, the men of the *iKongo* condemned them through the language of witchcraft. As practitioners of malicious magic, these collaborationist chief polluted the landscape.[100] As the *iKongo* developed a political imaginary of the nation, they also developed a language flexible enough to incorporate sorcery as a legitimate explanatory device for treason. The traitors were guilty of betraying their nation through the exercise of *ukuthakatha* and as such, they were to suffer the fate of witches and sorcerers: burning and mutilation.

Discussions of cosmopolitanism in the colonial world typically refer to the experiences of urban Africans. Cooper's work on the adoption of nationalist languages and ideas about labor rights in colonial Africa is part of this tendency that privileges the urban experience over the rural.[101] Appiah takes this even further

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[100] Clifton Crais, "Of Men, Magic, and the Law: Popular Justice and the Political Imagination in South Africa," 49. In a discussion of popular justice in Africa, Crais contends that too "neat" a distinction exists between "traditional" kingly and chiefly courts and the "modern" courts of European colonial officials. He instead argues for the term "peoples' courts" that act as "complex and creative bricolages that appropriate critical signs from various sites, contest the dominant order, and become spaces within which people imagine, communicate and enforce ideas and visions of society and morality.

[101] Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: the Labor Question in French and British Africa*.

when, in his analysis of Ghanaian liberation movements, he states "Who… excoriated the British and built a movement for independence? Not the farmers and the peasants. Not the chiefs. It was the Western-educated bourgeoisie."[102] While it certainly is necessary to acknowledge the historical specificity of the experience of decolonization in Ghana, Appiah implements a relatively rigid formula regarding the cosmopolitanism of Africans in the colonial world: elite Africans, educated in the West, were the only ones capable of pushing for independence.[103] Not only does Appiah not attribute this capacity to rural actors (farmers, peasants, etc), he does not appear to see them as playing any significant role in the liberation of their countries from colonial rule.

The case of *iKongo* pushes us to move away from this image of the urban, elite cosmopolitan. There is no question that members of *iKongo* engaged in a liberation struggle and that they sought to create a nation. Appiah's basic understanding of cosmopolitanism as both a curiosity about that which seems foreign and a desire to engage with it as part of an attempt to understand (rather than tolerate) the experiences and beliefs of other people remains useful. Members of *iKongo* exhibited a desire to engage with elements of the nation state and sought to incorporate it into their new political order. However, this desire to engage and incorporate did not necessitate that *iKongo* discard belief in the power of the ancestors or the existence of powerful (and sometimes malicious) forms of magic.

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[102] Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism*, 79.

[103] Ibid., 79. It is clear that, in this section of *Cosmopolitanism*, Appiah is creating a general theory regarding cosmopolitanism in the colonial world. He references Gandhi, Nehru, and Muhammad Ali Jinnah as examples of Western-educated bourgeoisie who led liberation struggles.

Insurgents believed that something had gone terribly wrong with the world in which they lived and, in order for their liberation to be successful, those wrongs had to be both confronted and corrected.

Rather than a contradiction in terms, rural cosmopolitanism reflects the ways in which *iKongo* insurgents sought to understand the world in which they lived. Adopting components of the nation state, they also called upon their ancestors for help, doctored themselves, and fought the malicious powers of the government appointed chiefs. In doing so, they created a vision of society that bridged the gap between the world of the secular nation state and a world that did not contest the reality of sorcerers and ancestors.

Conclusion

There are many ways to understand why people resist a state or an organization, but at the core of any resistance movement or insurgency is the issue of power. Insurgents attempt, through violence, to regain power that has been lost or has never been possessed. During the insurgency waged by *iKongo* against representatives of the South African state, insurgents attempted to regain power and establish stability in both the material and supernatural realms.

In 1960, Africans in Pondoland found themselves in a precarious position. Completely disenfranchised on the level of national politics and, due to the policies of Bantu Authorities, functionally disenfranchised locally, Africans struggled to make sense of an unstable world. The development of *iKongo* was an attempt to make sense of this unstable landscape through the creation of a society that engaged with modernity and nationalism on their own terms. *iKongo* members connected

the implementation of Bantu Authorities with the practice of witchcraft. Before they could fully implement their vision of a nation in which they held political power, the polluted and corrupted landscape had to be purified. Power on the supernatural level had to be regained.

The invocations of ancestors and the killing of chiefs and witches occurred as part of this attempt to purify the land in preparation for their new nation. However, South African officials, watching the insurgency develop, saw a resistance movement that threatened the stability of the entire region and that potentially heralded wide spread violence against the white population. As *iKongo* insurgents fought to regain power in both the material and supernatural realms, South African officials employed the full force of the state to suppress and destroy the movement.

Chapter Three

"It has only been equaled by Mau Mau": State Representation and Repression of *iKongo* (1960-1963)

On June 5, 1963, the Office of the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner for the Transkeian Territories reported that both *iKongo* and Poqo activities were on the decline in the Transkei.[1] The report continued to exhort all commissioners of the imminent threat of an ANC "intensive programme [designed] to cause disruption in the country – particularly in the Transkei."[2] This tenuous calm, held together by a series of emergency regulations, was the result of considerable effort on the part of government officials, local police, and various branches of the military over a three-year period.

Chapter One examined the development of *iKongo* between 1947 and 1960. Chapter Two analyzed the ways in which the construction of a constitution and petition in conjunction with the utilization of lexicons of the supernatural, constituted a moment of rural cosmopolitanism in which *iKongo* attempted to create a nation that simultaneously reflected local concerns about social order while seeking recognition as a legitimate political order by organizations like the United Nations. This chapter analyzes the state response to the "disturbances" in the Transkei beginning with the repression of the *iKongo* meeting on Ngquza Hill on June 6, 1960. After the shootings, faced with a rapidly deteriorating situation in

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[1] Correspondence from the Office of the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata to all Bantu Affairs Commissioners of the Transkeian Territories, June 5, 1963 (CA 1/BUT 7/1/88).

[2] Ibid.

Bizana, Lusikisiki, and Flagstaff Districts, the state passed a series of emergency regulations that allowed for, among other things, the indefinite detention of Africans. When implementing these emergency regulations, South African officials borrowed tactics employed by British military forces in Kenya during the suppression of the Mau Mau between 1952 and 1959. Scholars have not addressed the degree to which South Africa participated in counter-insurgency measures taken against liberation and anti-colonial movements across the colonial world.

I argue that the state of emergency, instituted in 1960 and retained through the end of the 1970s, constituted a state of exception in which extraordinary measures became ordinary. During this state of exception, the state routinized and normalized violence. At stake was controlling and diffusing the revolutionary potential of rural Africans, a revolutionary potential made visible by the nationalist vision of *iKongo*.

Through an examination of the different ways in which state officials conceptualized and approached *iKongo*, we gain a deeper understanding of the history of the Pondoland insurgency. Additionally, this chapter demonstrates the extent to which the South African state participated in the dissemination of knowledge about counter-insurgency techniques throughout the colonial world of the mid-twentieth century. South Africa was not isolated from the conversations about decolonization occurring throughout sub-Saharan Africa in the 1950s and 1960s. Rather, its engagement with the suppression of the Mau Mau in Kenya and the subsequent use of similar tactics during the suppression of *iKongo* indicate the degree to which the state did participate in discussions about decolonization.

Saracen Tanks and States of Emergency: The Beginnings of Repression in Sharpeville, Langa, and Ngquza Hill

By mid-1960, anti-apartheid resistance had spread and intensified throughout South Africa. The June 6, 1960 shootings of alleged *iKongo* members on Ngquza Hill occurred within a broader context of violent state repression of reported non-violent protest of apartheid policies. The government response to Ngquza Hill represented the beginning of a prolonged attempt to repress insurgent activity in Pondoland. It also functioned as a pivotal moment in the development of state sponsored violence against anti-apartheid movements throughout South Africa.

The 1940s witnessed significant division within the ranks of the ANC. In 1944, frustrated with the ANC leadership, notably Albert Luthuli, Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, and Oliver Tambo (among others), formed the ANC Youth League (ANCYL). The Youth League advocated civil disobedience and strikes as a means of protesting government policy.

ANC efforts at mobilization increased considerably after the election of the Nationalist Party in 1948. With the election of the Nationalist Party and the beginnings of apartheid legislation, the Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents Act (1952) extended pass laws to include African women. This prompted, in part, the ANC to launch the Defiance Campaign later that year. These campaigns protested specific legislation requiring Africans to obtain passes in order to work in urban or white locations.[3] In the early years of the Defiance Campaign

[3] Pass legislation dated to the British colonial period when, in 1828, Ordinance 49 imposed pass controls on African workers seeking to enter the Cape

(1952-1953), ANC membership grew considerably prompting the South African state to issue legislation banning civil disobedience (the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1953).[4]

Despite the increased popularity of the ANC in urban areas, some within the movement remained dissatisfied with the organization's ban on the use of violence as a means of protest and resistance. Beginning in early 1959, an organization calling itself the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) emerged under the leadership of Robert Sobukwe. The PAC, in contrast to the ANC, "espouse[d] a militant Africanism" and attempted to "upstage the ANC in mass mobilization."[5] Cooper argues that this strand of Africanism emphasized, "the integrity and value of African culture and above all the militance that lay within it," strongly influenced the formation of the PAC.[6] As part of its attempt to participate in the campaigns of mass mobilizations also employed by the ANC, the PAC lent considerable support to anti-pass campaigns throughout various locations in South Africa in 1959 and 1960.

Colony from various frontier territories. Legislation seeking to regulate and restrict the flow of African labor continued to intensify after the union of South Africa in 1910 in the 1923 Natives (Urban Areas) Act and in the 1927 Native Administration Act. For further background on nineteenth century legislation directed against Africans, see: Clifton Crais, *White Supremacy and Black Resistance in pre-Industrial South Africa: the Making of the Colonial Order in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[4] Nigel Worden, *The Making of Modern South Africa: Conquest, Apartheid, Democracy* (Oxford: Blackwell Press, 2007), 110.

[5] William Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa*, 166.

[6] Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 56-57.

In early March 1960, in an effort to upstage the ANC's planned anti-pass demonstrations scheduled to begin on March 31, the PAC planned a series of anti-pass demonstrations in the African location of Vereeniging (south of Johannesburg). On the morning of March 21, a crowd of several thousand people converged at the local police station in the township of Sharpeville. Police officers set up a line of Saracen armored vehicles facing the protestors in an attempt to intimidate and disperse the crowd.[7]

Most witnesses stated that the crowd was peaceful. However, police reports claim that the crowd threw stones at the Saracen vehicles, prompting police to open fire on the crowd.[8] Official records indicate that police fire killed sixty-nine and injured one hundred eighty-six men, women, and children.[9]

Outrage over the events quickly spread throughout South Africa; growing as witnesses alleged that many of the people killed or injured at Sharpeville were shot in the back as they tried to run from the police. Several days later, during an anti-pass protest in the Cape Town township of Langa, police shot and killed two and wounded forty-seven people. In response, on March 30, local groups organized a

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[7] It is worth noting that the Saracen armored vehicles used by the South African police and military throughout the 1950s and 1960s were first introduced by the British during the Malayan Emergency in 1952.

[8] Anxiety among police forces present at Sharpeville maybe have been heightened due to the recent violence at Cato Manor on January 23, 1960 during which nine police officers (five white, four black) had been killed.

[9] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (1999), 3: 17.

march of approximately thirty thousand people in Cape Town to protest police brutality in both Sharpeville and Langa.[10]

By the end of March 1960, the situation throughout South Africa had reached explosive levels. On March 24, the state declared a national state of emergency. Two weeks later, on April 8, the Nationalist government passed the Unlawful Organization Act. This act (No. 24 of 1960) banned the ANC and the PAC.[11] The national state of emergency remained in effect until August 31 of that year. In the six months of the national state of emergency, the state detained 11,503 people, including PAC leader Robert Sobukwe.[12]

As resistance to apartheid policy increased throughout the country, insurgent activity in Pondoland against Bantu Authorities and government appointed chiefs also intensified. In early June 1960, government officials in the Transkei, specifically in the districts of Bizana and Lusikisiki, expressed concern that the levels of violence present in the urban locations would spread to the Transkei.

Discussed in Chapter One, the events on Ngquza Hill in early June 1960 marked a pivotal moment in the course of the insurgency. Not only did it signal an escalation in *iKongo* violence but they also marked the beginning of a sustained

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[10] Tom Lodge, *Insurrectionism in South Africa: the Pan-Africanist Congress and the Poqo Movement*, PhD Dissertation, University of York, Centre for Southern African Studies (April, 1984), 160.

[11] The Suppression of Communist Act (No. 44) banned the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) in 1950.

[12] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, (1999), 3:17. The courts found Robert Sobukwe guilty on charges of burning his pass and sentenced him to three years imprisonment.

military presence in the region as the South African state aggressively pursued the suppression of the movement. On June 1, 1960, the Bantu Affairs Commissioner in Lusikisiki, J. Fenwick asked that the central government declare a state of emergency throughout the region in an attempt to curtail the actions of *iKongo*.[13] The report further recommended that military "raiding units" consist of land rovers and Saracen tanks.[14] While the central government did not enact special emergency regulations immediately upon the submission of this report, local officials did implement certain recommendations regarding the deployment of extra police forces and equipment.

Five days after the submission of Fenwick's report, a group of *iKongo* members held the now infamous meeting on Ngquza Hill near the Holy Cross Mission. Discussed in Chapter One, the shootings on Ngquza Hill resulted in eleven dead, sixty wounded, and the arrests of at least twenty-three people. Condemnation of the shootings was swift particularly after *New Age* published photographs of the dead.[15] Far from quelling the insurgency, the actions at Ngquza Hill not only brought national attention to the actions of *iKongo* but also served as a tragedy around which members of *iKongo* gathered and from which they continued forth in their fight against the South African state. Between June 7 and July 1, 1960, South African police recorded approximately forty-nine incidents of hut burnings in

[13] J. Fenwick, "Disaffection in the Lusikisiki District, June 1, 1960 (CA 1/BIZ 6/47, Fol. C.9/6/A).

[14] Ibid.

[15] "Pondos rebel against Bantu Authorities," *New Age* 6, no. 26 (September 8, 1960).

Bizana district alone.[16] As the hills burned at night and the damage and loss of life increased, the South African state, desperate to retain order, realized that the situation was, indeed, out of control.

The Commission of Enquiry

In the latter part of June 1960, state officials convened a commission to investigate the events on Ngquza Hill. Because the commission was composed entirely of Bantu Authorities officials, many felt that its results were a foregone conclusion: the government would absolve police or military personnel of all responsibility. Despite considerable hostility demonstrated by many Africans throughout Lusikisiki, Bizana, and Flagstaff Districts, the government continued with the commission and took evidence during the following month.

During the period of investigation between July and October, *iKongo* continued to attack government appointed chiefs and headmen throughout the region. State officials increased the number of armed personnel in districts with a strong *iKongo* presence, but this appears to have had little to no impact on the resolve of the insurgents. One participant stated that

> We are not going to stop what we are doing. We were told in Bizana Village that we must stop holding illegal meetings but we are not going to stop. Any person who belongs to the Tribal Authority must be killed…[17]

South African police, later called to testify at the trials of alleged insurgents, recall these months as particularly chaotic.

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[16] South Africa Police Report, July 11, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1477).

[17] Statement by Same Mpeke, July 19, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1475).

> In those days we had to go in [with] reinforcements as we could not enter locations alone. At the height of the disturbances, the S.A. Air Force was called in to assist. At that time, Bantu men were always found in large groups and armed. We often encountered roadblocks and they did not want to assist police in any manner. Women also took part – sending out war cries wherever police entered locations… Police could not enter the locations alone.[18]

In this environment, the Commission concluded its investigation and, on October 11, 1960, announced its findings at a public meeting in Bizana attended by over five thousand people.[19]

During this meeting, representatives of the Commission, including the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the Ciskei, Mr. J.A.C. Van Heerden, stated that while the Commission dismissed the complaint that the people were not properly consulted about the implementation of Bantu Authorities.[20] However, the Commission did find that some discrepancies with respect to following "Bantu custom" did exist: "when Tribal Authorities were formed, the old customs of the tribes who reside in Bizana were not observed in every respect."[21] Additionally, the Commission acknowledged that the "Paramount Chief of Eastern Pondoland did not

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[18] Case Number 188 of 1960: State v. Mtetonzima Ganyile and Others, Statement by Leonard Eugene Muller, Sergt. S.A.P. (CA 1/BIZ 1/1/14).

[19] Department Committee of Enquiry, Pondoland Disturbances, Statement by Chairmen, Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the Ciskei, Mr. J.A.C. Van Heerden, October 11, 1960 (PA K-185).

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

consult the people when nominating members of Tribal Authorities" and that "some of the locations had no representation."[22]

While members of the Commission did admit that the implementation of Tribal Authorities (as part of Bantu Authorities) had not gone according to plan, they asserted that the complaints about rehabilitation, increased taxation, the general levy, reference books, and Bantu education were without merit.[23] Finally, as generally expected by many Africans, the Commission found that the police involved in the shooting had acted out of self-defense. The Commission adjourned to allow the people, represented by *iKongo*, time to accept or reject the findings. On October 25, 1960, the people of Pondoland officially rejected the findings of the Commission and refused to pay further taxes.[24]

Proclamation 400 and the Militarization of the Transkei

At the end of October 1960, state officials throughout the Transkei, particularly in the districts of Lusikisiki, found that the situation had deteriorated precipitously since the shootings at Ngquza Hill. The rejection of the findings on October 25 by the people, represented by *iKongo* leaders, revealed the extent to which the South African state had lost control over much of the African population in eastern Pondoland. In preceding years, annual reports compiled by District Commissioners had described the people living in Bizana and Lusikisiki districts as

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[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Mbeki, *South Africa*, 122.

"generally law abiding and contented."[25] Officials worried that the ANC or SACP might infiltrate local political groups.[26] In fact, state officials generally attributed any case of opposition to the introduction of Bantu Authorities to outside or "communistic" influences.[27]

The situation had dramatically changed by 1960 with District Commissioners throughout the region noting that local tribal authorities had either stopped governing entirely or were barely functional in the face of considerable resistance from *iKongo*. While annual reports for Bizana district during the years 1959-1961 appear to have been destroyed, the 1962 report exists. The report notes that a "measure of success was attained in winning back the confidence of the Bantu in the district" and that "most of the effort were directed to this end before any attempt was made to re-establish Tribal Authorities."[28] Officials held meetings with local councils in an attempt to gain support for the implementation of Bantu Authorities. It does appear that there was a measure of success in terms of re-establishing councils but this does not indicate whether there was any significant African support for the councils. In 1963, the district commissioner in Bizana noted that, while state officials made significant progress towards re-establishing local councils

[25] Annual Report: Bizana District, 1955 (CA CMT 3/1454).

[26] Annual Report: Bizana District, 1957 (CA CMT 3/1454).

[27] Annual Report: Bizana District, 1958 (CA CMT 3/1454).

[28] Annual Report: Bizana District, 1962 (CA CMT 3/1454).

of Tribal Authorities, only five councils were operational due to continued suspicion about the legitimacy of government appointed native representatives.[29]

The insurgency rendered large swathes of the region ungovernable in the latter half of 1960 and through the first part of 1961. The annual report issued by the commissioner's office in Flagstaff noted that "as a result of the disturbances in this district the Tribal Authorities ceased to function."[30] The annual report, issued the same year by the office in Lusikisiki, stated that *iKongo* had disrupted daily life throughout much of the region and that "the state of unrest which developed during 1960 dwarfed all else."[31] The situation improved marginally in the following year when the Lusikisiki office reported that "some Tribal Authorities [were] operating on a limited scale while others [had] completely ceased to function."[32]

In addition to the cessation of Tribal Authorities as a functioning arm of Bantu Authorities during the height of *iKongo*'s insurgency between 1959 and 1961, state officials also noted a significant decrease in their ability to conduct the census and to enforce the dipping of cattle. In mid-1961, the Bureau of Census and Statistics issued a report stating that, due to "considerable opposition" beginning in 1960, census data for the majority of the Transkei was highly unreliable.[33] The

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[29] Annual Report: Bizana District, 1963 (CA CMT 3/1454).

[30] Annual Report: Flagstaff District, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1456).

[31] Annual Report: Lusikisiki District, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1458).

[32] Annual Report: Lusikisiki District, 1961 (CA CMT 3/1458).

[33] Report from the Bureau of Census and Statistics to the Secretary for Bantu Administration and Development, Pretoria, mid-1961 (CA CMT 3/1386).

report continued to state that in "the district of Bizana, the census was a complete failure, as only 1,439 Bantu, out of an estimated total of 75-80 thousand, were actually enumerated" and that a similar failure had occurred in the "districts of Engcobo, Flagstaff, Lusikisiki, Port Shepstone, Umzinto, Ingwavuma, Ladenburg, Minge, and Alfred."[34] Officials confronted similar difficulties with respect to the dipping of cattle during this period. Dipping rates decreased significantly between 1959 and 1961. In 1958, records indicate a total dipping rate of 23,521,308. The following year, rates decreased to 17,925,627 and decreased even further in 1961 to a low of 16,800,563.[35] Several months after the establishment of the emergency regulations in the Transkei dipping rates did begin to slowly increase, reaching pre-insurgency levels only in 1963.[36] The cessation of Tribal Authorities and significant decrease in the state's ability to conduct basic administrative tasks between 1959 and 1961 indicate the degree to which the South African state had lost control over the daily governance of the region.[37] Over the following months and years, the state used this power to detain without charge thousands of Africans. While the South

[34] Report from the Bureau of Census and Statistics to the Secretary for Bantu Administration and Development, Pretoria, mid-1961 (CA CMT 3/1386). Officials later re-conducted the census in 1962, registering a total population for the Transkei of 1,387,444 persons. See also, Population Census 1962 (CA CMT 3/1386).

[35] Dipping Records for Districts throughout the Transkei (CA 1/COF 9/1/86).

[36] Ibid.

[37] It is interesting to note that tax revenue does not seem to have suffered a significant decrease. Revenue collected between 1958 and 1959 totaled 125,128 pounds while 1960 records indicate total revenue of 116,312. As discussed in previous chapters, taxation of local populations by the South African state had long been a contentious topic and officials consistently complained about difficulty in collecting revenue.

African state had implemented emergency regulations throughout the country earlier in 1960 (those regulations were lifted in August, 1960), the emergency regulations instituted in the Transkei in response to *iKongo*'s insurgency mark the beginnings of increased state repression and surveillance that would come to characterize the experience of many South Africans throughout the apartheid period.

Unlike previous resistance movements, *iKongo* was resilient in the face of government demands to cease and desist its meetings and attacks on government appointed chiefs and headmen. This resilience prompted the South African parliament to pass legislation allowing for the militarization of the Transkei. Passed on November 11, 1960 and enacted ten days later, Proclamation 400 placed prohibitions on meetings, strengthened regulations on who could enter and exit the region, and granted considerable power to native representatives of the Tribal Authorities in each district. Initially intended to cover the districts of Eastern Pondoland, Proclamation 413 (passed by Parliament on December 14, 1960) amended Proclamation 400 by extending the state of emergency to cover the whole of the Transkei.

Under this state of emergency, specifically crafted for the Transkei and the *iKongo* insurgency, the local office of Bantu Affairs had to review and approve applications for meetings attracting over ten people. Additionally, as part of the attempt to re-empower native members of Tribal Authorities, the proclamation made it a criminal offence to treat any Chief or Headman in a disrespectful manner and, gave chiefs and headmen significant power vis-à-vis the forced removals of

Africans alleged to pose a threat to the stability of Tribal Authorities.[38] Previously, only the Secretary of Bantu Administration and Development held the power of removal. Giving local chiefs and headmen this power greatly enhanced the local power of Tribal Authorities. The most significant component of the emergency regulations allowed for the indefinite detention of persons accused of disturbing the peace.[39]

Proclamations 400 and 413 had immediate consequences for Africans throughout the Transkei. Within days of this legislation, military forces moved into the Transkei from neighboring Natal to aid local police forces. An editorial written by Govan Mbeki in the February 1961 issue of *Fighting Talk* describes the state's deployment of the military in the region.[40] Beginning in late November, large numbers of riot trucks and other police vehicles entered the Transkei from Natal. These units included several columns of Saracen tanks.[41] Military records for this period remain classified and, as a result, it is difficult to establish an exact number of police and military personnel in the Transkei between 1960 and 1963. We do know that in late October, the state authorized the establishment of a mobile police unit in Eastern Pondoland and that these military units maintained camps throughout the

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[38] Matoti and Ntsebeza, "Rural Resistance in Mpondoland and Thembuland, 1960-1963," 200.

[39] John Dugard, *Human Rights and the South African Legal Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 92 (footnote 198).

[40] Govan Mbeki, "Jackboot over Pondoland," *Fighting Talk*, 15, no. 1 (February, 1961), 2.

[41] Ibid.

region through much of 1961.[42] Annual reports from 1960 and 1961 document that these mobile units, known as the "Mobile Watch," were particularly active in Flagstaff and Lusikisiki districts.[43]

The "Mau Mau Factor": The Participation of the South African State in the Development of Regional Counter-Insurgency Tactics

By the end of 1960, the Transkei was under a state of emergency The declaration of a state of emergency and the passing of Proclamations 400 and 413 in 1960 reflect state concern that the situation in the Transkei was highly explosive and had potential ramifications for the stability of regions outside the Transkei. By the end of 1960, the South African state faced opposition to its apartheid policies in both urban and rural areas.

During the insurgency, officials expressed concern that violence directed against government-appointed Africans might expand to include violence against Europeans in the region: "the very lives of all persons, of all races were threatened and the situation was very ugly at one stage for quite a long period."[44] Even though *iKongo* rarely targeted whites, the fear that this might occur was heightened by memory of the brutal attacks against white settlers in the Central Highlands of

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[42] "Native Political Unrest: January 1961-November 1963" (CA 1/BIZ 6/47 Folio 1/9/2/1).

[43] Annual Report: Flagstaff District, 1960; 1961 (CA CMT 3/145): Annual Report Lusikisiki District, 1960 (CMT 3/1458). Future research will explore the extent to which the counter-insurgency tactics used in Pondoland constituted the first time the state used such military tactics against the civilian population in South Africa.

[44] Annual Report: Lusikisiki District, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1458).

Kenya several years earlier. White settlers and British authorities feared that the violence committed by Mau Mau might expand into a full-scale war against the white population throughout Kenya. This fear sparked the initiation of a campaign of repression against Mau Mau in the 1950s. South African officials both supported British suppression of Mau Mau and implemented certain procedures used by the British when attempting to suppress *iKongo* in the Transkei.

The Mau Mau insurgency in Kenya is perhaps the most well known of the anti-colonial insurgencies in sub-Saharan Africa.[45] *Life* magazine ran a series of articles and photographic spreads about Mau Mau between 1952 and 1959. Headlines such as "Murder by the Mau Maus: Kenya natives use violence and voodism to terrorize the British," reinforced white settler beliefs that Mau Mau was a primitive and atavistic cult whose participants engaged in rituals of bestiality and ritual murder before setting out to kill whites.[46] In 1957, Robert Ruark published a

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[45] See E.S. Atieno Odhiambo and John Lonsdale, *Mau Mau and Nationhood: Arms, Authority and Narration* (Oxford: James Currey, 2003); Don Barnett, *Mau Mau from Within: Autobiography and Analysis of Kenya's Peasant Revolt* (London: MacGibbon & Keegan, 1966); Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, "Crises of Accumulation, Coercion and the Colonial State: The Development of the Labor Control System in Kenya, 1919-1929," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 14, no. 1 (1980): 55-81; John Lonsdale, "Mau Maus of the Mind: Making Mau Mau and Remaking Kenya," *The Journal of African History* 31, no. 3 (1990): 393-421; Greet Kershaw, *Mau Mau from Below* (Oxford: James Currey, 1997); Cora Ann Presley, *Kikuyu Women, the Mau Mau Rebellion, and Social Change in Kenya* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992); James H. Smith, "Njama's Supper: The Consumption and Use of Literacy Potency by Mau Mau Insurgents in Colonial Kenya," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40, no. 3 (July 1998): 524-548; David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005); Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005).

[46] *Life,* "Murder by the Mau Maus," 33, no. 18, (Nov. 3, 1952), 34.

novel entitled *Something of Value* about interracial relations during Mau Mau; later that year, the novel was made into a movie staring Rock Hudson and Sidney Poitier. A series of high-profile murders of white settlers in 1953 further incensed the white settler population in Kenya. In early January, Mau Mau insurgents allegedly killed a number of white settlers, including women and children.[47] The emotional response to the publication of photographs of the mutilated bodies in newspapers throughout Kenya and abroad exacerbated the sense of rage and fear amongst the white population in Kenya.[48]

Many settlers believed that Mau Mau was an atavistic organization that sought to spark a race war between Africans and whites. However, this interpretation, spurred by fear, racism, and colonial hubris, has not held up under further analysis. As David Anderson has noted in his study of Mau Mau, the movement developed over time. He argues that Mau Mau was an "internecine war waged between rebels and so-called 'loyalists'."[49] As with opposition to apartheid in South Africa, it is misleading to assume that any sense of unity or a shared goal existed among those Africans committed to decolonization in Kenya in the post-WWII period. Beginning in the 1930s, two issues emerged that challenged European colonial rule and divided Africans along rural/urban and ethnic lines. The

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[47] The victims included Ian Meiklhon and his wife (she survived), Erik Bowker, and the Ruck family.

[48] Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, 42.

[49] Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged*, 3-4.

first issue concerned the "need to secure effective, elected African representation."[50] Divisions arose pertaining to how this representation was decided.[51] The second issue of importance during this period concerned land rights and the position of squatters on European farms. As more Africans found themselves increasingly impoverished throughout the 1930s and 1940s, divisions grew not only between the African population and the settler population, but also between those Africans with access to land and those denied access.[52]

Anderson argues that throughout the 1940s and early 1950s, moderate nationalists associated with the Kikuyu Central Authority (KCA), banned in 1940, and the Kenya African Union (KAU) gradually lost influence as militant nationalists among the Kikuyu developed a strategy that to "mobilize cultural nationalism" and addressed "the question of growing landlessness."[53] As part of this strategy, these militant nationalists, many of whom formed the core of the emergent Mau Mau and were themselves among the landless, attacked conservative Africans and characterized them as corrupt betrayers of Kikuyu values and social norms before proceeding to attack moderate nationalists for failing to adequately address concerns about land distribution and African wages.

In the late 1940s, these militant nationalists implemented a series of oathing rituals as part of an effort to maintain the secrecy of the organization. These oaths

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[50] Ibid., 10.

[51] Ibid., 10.

[52] Ibid., 11.

[53] Ibid., 12.

were the center around which accusations of bestiality and other atavistic rites swirled. In 1950, in the face of a series of squatter protests, the government undertook steps to ban the "Mau Mau society."[54] The banning of the organization and attempted prosecution of those persons alleged to be associated with it coincided with the attacks against settlers in late 1952 and 1953 and contributed to Baring's declaration of an Emergency on October 20, 1952.

The initial attempt to contain Mau Mau and the violence against settlers coalesced in a British military operation named Jock Scott. Operation Jock Scott targeted over one hundred alleged leaders of Mau Mau, including Jomo Kenyatta, head of the KAU.[55] Rather than crippling Mau Mau, Operation Jock Scott, arguably empowered the organization even further. With Kenyatta elevated to the status of martyr, Mau Mau violence escalated in the coming weeks and months.

The British faced a full-scale insurgency that threatened the stability of the Kenyan colony. The secrecy of Mau Mau combined with the guerilla tactics employed by fighters against "loyalist" targets, made the movement virtually impervious to traditional military tactics. Consequently, beginning in 1952, the British military employed a process described as "screening." During the screening process, men and women went before a local committee of men and women who themselves had not taken an oath. Colonial administrators and military officials

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[54] Ibid., 45.

[55] Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning,* 35. Although there is little evidence that Kenyatta participated in Mau Mau, British administrators prosecuted him as a leader of the organization. The court convicted him in 1953 on charges related to the insurgency. He remained in prison until 1959.

employed indigenous loyalists to identify men and women they considered sympathizers or active participants in the insurgency. In order to protect the identities of these indigenous informants, the authorities gave them sacks with eyeholes cut out to place over their heads while suspects walked past them.[56] Those identified by an informer went to government screening camps where officials aggressively interrogated suspected insurgents. This screening team worked under a District Officer; it was empowered to recommend that a non-oath taker be given a 'loyalty certificate."

After leaving screening, persons determined to pose a threat to the colonial administration went to one of the detention camps set up throughout Kenya.[57] Governor Baring picked Thomas Askwith to implement the detention facilities throughout Kenya in 1953. Askwith looked to the system of detention facilities implemented by the British during the Malayan Emergency beginning in 1948.[58] Using a classification system similar to that employed in Malaya, upon arrival in

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[56] Ibid., 69.

[57] Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged,* 313. He notes "nowhere in the British empire was confinement ever used as extensively as in colonial Kenya." The majority of those detained were Kikuyu-speaking peoples from the central highland, with a total population of 1.4 million.

[58] Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, 103-104: "According to his rather idealized tour report… the detention camps in Malaya were regarded not as punitive institutions but as opportunities to alter the attitude of communist sympathizers and reinstill confidence in the British colonial government. The administrative structure of Malaya's camps emphasized rehabilitation... Police Interrogation Units labeled detainees 'black' or 'grey,' depending upon their level of communist indoctrination. 'Blacks' were hard-core Reds who were "unredeemable." 'Greys' had weaker communist sympathies and thus were ushered through a series of rehabilitation stages…"

these detention camps, officials classified detainees as Z_1 (senior Mau Mau operatives), Z_2 and Y (the latter being persons of less importance and capable of rehabilitation).[59] Conditions in the camps were brutal: food shortages were common, communicable diseases ran rampant, and wardens routinely used severe forms of corporal punishment in an attempt to prevent acts of sabotage.[60] In his study of Mau Mau memoirs, Clough evokes the image of the Soviet gulag, an image taken up also by both Anderson and Elkins.[61]

The exact number of Africans imprisoned and killed during the Emergency period between 1952 and 1959 remains contested. Elkins argues that the colonial government detained approximately 1.5 million people in camps or prisons scattered across Kenya at some point during the Emergency period.[62] Contrary to the official British figure of 11,000 Mau Mau killed, she believes the actual number was in the hundreds of thousands. [63] These figures have met significant criticism.[64] Anderson suggests a more conservative figure: by December 1954, one in eight

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[59] Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged*, 314.

[60] Ibid., 311-327.

[61] Marshall Clough, *Mau Mau Memoirs: History, Memory and Politics*. (Boulder, Colorado: L. Rienner, 1998), 205.

[62] Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, xiv. Given that the Kikuyu speaking population were the primary targets of anti-Mau Mau counter-insurgency efforts, this number suggests British colonial administration essentially detained the entire Kikuyu-speaking population over a seven-year period.

[63] Ibid., xv-xvi.

[64] See John Blacker, "The Demography of Mau Mau: Fertility and Mortality in Kenya in the 1950s: a Demographer's Viewpoint," *African Affairs*, 106, no. 425 (2007), 205-227.

Kikuyu male adults were held in detention camps (approximately 71,346 persons in the month of December 1954).[65] While officials never properly recorded the names and numbers of inmates in the majority of detention facilities throughout the colony, Anderson suggests, "one in four Kikuyu adult males were imprisoned or detained by the British colonial administration at some time between 1952 and 1958."[66] While it is difficult to ascertain the exact number of people killed during the Emergency period, we do know that 1,090 Kikuyu were sent to the gallows after being convicted on charges related to Mau Mau – a higher execution rate than in Malaya or Algeria.[67]

The images and events of Mau Mau and the suppression of the movement throughout the 1950s did not escape the notice of South African officials. As anti-apartheid resistance increased, officials throughout the country remained alert to any rhetoric that was atavistic or "anti-white" in nature. This was particularly true in the Transkei where officials were both aware of and concerned about the growing use of witchcraft among the African population.

In 1954, during the height of the Emergency period in Kenya, the magistrate of Engcobo made the following report:

> At this Prize Giving [Manzana School], certain students of this school entertained the gathering with song. Mr. Bulwer [Principal Agricultural Officer in the Department of Native Affairs] is a fluent Xhosa linguist and *one of the songs concerned the Mau Mau activities in Kenya. It referred to the*

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[65] Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged*, 313.

[66] Ibid., 313.

[67] Ibid., 7.

> *attacks on Europeans with pangas and was in general of an anti-white flavour.*[68]

Manzana School in Engcobo district is approximately one hundred kilometers from Lusikisiki, the district that in which *iKongo* would maintain a particularly strong presence six years later. Government officials were concerned about the development of an African resistance movement that emulated Mau Mau in its targeting of white settlers. As in Kenya, South African officials saw themselves particularly vulnerable in the face of a potentially "atavistic" and bloodthirsty African population upset by government policy.

In the years following the start of the *iKongo* insurgency and the declaration of emergency regulations in 1960, references to Mau Mau returned in a series of communications about "native organizations." Referring to the development of the Poqo movement and concern about the possible resurgence of *iKongo* activity, one official noted "this organization [Poqo] and the previous one [*iKongo*]… has only been equaled by the Mau Mau of Kenya."[69] Officials feared the possibility that *iKongo* or Poqo posed a similar threat to that of Mau Mau. Beginning in 1960, the South African state started implementing tactics used by British colonial military forces during the Mau Mau as part of the suppression of insurgent groups in the Transkei.

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[68] Correspondence from Magistrate, Engcobo to the Chief Magistrate, Umtata, November 25, 1954 (CA 1/ECO 6/1/98).

[69] Correspondence between the Bantu Affairs Commissioner of Cofimvaba and the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, April 8, 1963 (CA 1/COF 9/1/44).

South African officials supported Britain's handling of the Mau Mau throughout Kenya's Emergency years. D.F. Malan, Prime Minister of South Africa from 1948 to 1954, "applauded Kenya's use of force and arbitrary rule, and saw it as a model for [the] apartheid regime."[70] Faced with an insurgent movement whose members were difficult to trace and who, at least in the minds of government officials, posed a threat to the white population in the Transkei, officials adapted and implemented certain tactics used during the suppression of Mau Mau.

The South African state had direct knowledge of Mau Mau, and in fact sent officers to assist and learn from the British. During the course of the Mau Mau insurgency, South Africa sent small teams of its Special Branch officers to aid in the interrogation of suspected Mau Mau insurgents. According to Anthony Clayton, the Special Branch in South Africa sent at least two operatives to Kenya in 1955 to assist and train British operatives in successful interrogation.[71] Elkins confirms the presence of two South African officers noted for their "sadistic" style of interrogation.[72] These South African special branch officers, identified by British settlers by the surnames of Heine and Van Zyl, became known as "Kenya's SS" due to their reputation for brutality during interrogations.[73] Heine and Van Zyl were stationed at the Mau Mau Investigation Center at the Embakasi detention center

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[70] Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, 119.

[71] Anthony Clayton, *Counter-Insurgency in Kenya: A Study of Military Operations against Mau Mau* (Nairobi: Transafrica Publishers, 1976), 45.

[72] Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, 86.

[73] Ibid., 86-87.

outside of Nairobi. District officer John Nottingham later described this center as "nothing less than a torture area which used everything. And it was run by the Special Branch and I would say *people* were killed there without any news of this being allowed to escape or anything happening at all."[74]

South African military officials used those screening policies developed in Kenya throughout the Pondoland insurgency. Many military records from this period in South Africa remain classified, but when one compares the above description of the Mau Mau Investigation Center run by Heine and Van Zyl to descriptions of interrogation given by men alleged to have participated in *iKongo*, several parallels emerge.[75] Screening in Pondoland involved local informants, in addition to government officials and police, identifying suspected insurgents for the authorities. While in Kenya the screening procedures took on a ghoulish tone with the "screeners" clothed in white sheets to protect their identities, the spirit of the practice in Pondoland was similar. Screening in Pondoland and districts throughout the Transkei functioned as a pre-arrest tactic to obtain as much information about the movement, its participants, and plans as possible.

Beginning in late November 1960, police and military personnel instituted a policy referred to as "screening" provided for under section 19 of Proclamation

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[74] Ibid., 87.

[75] As military archives open in South Africa, it would be interesting to trace the movements of these Special Branch officers: where were they stationed after they returned from Kenya?

400.[76] At no point in the archival record is there a concise or clear definition of what constituted "screening." What is clear is that officials saw the screening process as a means of ascertaining the loyalty of Africans to the South African state and to then determine the extent of the individual's involvement in, or sympathy towards, the insurgency. Screening occurred in Bizana and Lusikisiki as well as in seven districts outside this "epicenter" of insurgent activity. In these districts, which included Engcobo, Cala, Kentani, Idutywa, Willowvale, Tsolo, and Qumbu, at least 4,061 persons underwent screening procedures between late November 1960 and early March 1961(see Appendix C). Upon finishing a particular stage of screening, state officials detained and prosecuted those individuals deemed to constitute a threat to stability in the region. From the districts discussed above, of the approximately 4,061 people screened, the state arrested and charged at least 1,485 people.[77]

In order to streamline the screening process, officials relied upon local informants to gather the names and occupations of suspected insurgents. In a 1961 editorial in *Fighting Talk*, Govan Mbeki describes the region as a "jungle where unscrupulous characters, at the instigation of the Government, hunt people as if they were wild animals, and hand them over to the frenzied agents of Nationalist

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[76] Confidential Memo from the Chief of Bantu Affairs, Umtata to the Secretary for Bantu Administration and Development, Cape Town, Re: Police Activity, Transkei, March 11, 1961 (CA CMT 3/1470).

[77] According to the 1962 census, the combined population of these districts was approximately 340,000 people (Annual Report, 1962 CMT 3/1386). Over 1% of the population went through screening. The screening process may have been more widespread than the archival record indicates. Military documents that might confirm this remain classified.

Apartheid policies."[78] Several months later, anthropologist and specialist on Pondoland Monica (Wilson) Hunter published a letter in the *Cape Times* in which she criticized the state practice of using local informants: "I believe that a technique of terrorism has been developed and now is being applied to one area after another. It involves setting African against African."[79]

It was difficult, and perhaps not a top priority, for state officials to keep the identities of these local informants confidential, and several informants were attacked in 1961 and 1962, the most notable case being that of Albert Somadlangati. Somadlangati resided in the Vlei location of Lusikisiki district. During the course of the suppression of the insurgency, he supplied government officials with information about *iKongo* meetings: who participated, the locations of meetings, the organization's structure, and what was discussed. Indeed much of the material about *iKongo* in Lusikisiki district between 1959 and 1961, comes from or was confirmed, by Somadlangati.[80] In April 1961, members of *iKongo* allegedly burned Somadlangati's residence during the night. He submitted a request for compensation to the district commissioner on the basis that *iKongo* insurgents had targeted him because of his involvement with state officials.[81]

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[78] Govan Mbeki, "Jackboot over Pondoland," *Fighting Talk*, 15, no. 1 (February, 1961).

[79] Monica Hunter, "Techniques of Terrorism in South Africa," *Cape Times*, December 13, 1961.

[80] Much of this material is located in the K-185 files.

[81] Claim for Compensation on behalf of Albert Somadlangati, April 26, 1961 (CA 1/FSF 6/47).

Many of the accusations of torture made by alleged insurgents centered on the screening process. In later trials, alleged *iKongo* insurgents accused police and military personnel of employing torture. One example of this is a case in which the state charged these six men with the murder of Spalding Matyila and William Mtambeka of Engcobo location on January 29, 1961.[82] Supporters of *iKongo* widely believed that Matyila and Mtambeka supported Tribal Authorities in addition to the general implementation of Bantu Authorities. All six men confessed to the charges of murder and arson. However, during the course of the trial, two of the defendants alleged that members of the mobile police had used the following techniques to coerce confessions: the threat of electric torture, and one application of electric shock, and beating: "The State seeks to have admitted against each of them a statement in the nature of a confession. The admissibility of each of those statements is contested… two of the accused alleged that they received certain electrical shock treatment or were threatened with it."[83] In a statement regarding the admissibility of the confessions, the judge rejected these allegations, referring to them as being without substance."[84] The confessions entered the record and the court convicted all six men of murder.

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[82] Case Number 270 of 1961: State v. Sikulu Madiki; Kehle Mazantsana; Nkosayiko Mdayi; Pupu Majija; Makambi Matwele; and Manlexa Majija (CA GSC 1/2/1/927).

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid., Judge's statement regarding the inclusion of confessions: "In my view, there is no substance in these allegations and they are entirely fantastic."

Allegations of torture and forced confession also appear in the capital murder trial of Ktayana Zoya and twenty-two others.[85] The victim, Thompson Nqayana of Glen Grey, a government appointed sub-headman and member of the district council, was widely known to be a supporter of Bantu Authorities.[86] Additionally, *iKongo* members believed that he had "becom [e] to big for power he did not himself possess… It was suggested he was becoming dictatorial, he would punish people summarily."[87] On January 3, 1961, a group of men entered Nqayana's kraal and killed him. The autopsy report indicates that he died from multiple stab wounds and head injuries inflicted by a sustained beating. In a statement for the prosecution Mlungisi Mfene testified that members of *iKongo*, including the accused, had met at night "in-between the mountains" of the district – a claim substantiated later in the trial by Poto Boyi.[88]

As part of their defense, several of the accused stated that two police officers (one Native and one European) had beaten them, promising to stop if the accused confessed to the crime in exchange for testimony and immunity from prosecution. One of the accused, referred to as "accused 3" in the record, states that he was taken

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[85] Case Number 337 of 1961 (CA GSC 1/2/1/931).

[86] Case Number 337 of 1961 Statement by Robert Stuart Glynne, Bantu Affairs Commissioner and Magistrate of Glen Grey District (CA GSC 1/2/1/931). When asked if the deceased was a "pro- or against" man to which Glynne responded that the "Deceased was a pro-chief man." He expanded further by saying that "The recognition of the chief and the granting of civil and criminal jurisdiction to the chief and the eventual establishment of tribal authorities."

[87] Case Number 337 of 1961, Statement by Robert Stuart Glynne(CA GSC 1/2/1/931).

[88] Case Number 337 of 1961, Statement by Mlungisi Mfene and Poto Boyi, (CA GSC 1/2/1/931).

to tents in Mkambati Forest where he was beaten. The trial transcript is not clear, but it does not appear that the judge excluded any of these confessions from the record. Of the six accused, the court found Katyana Zoya, Mpiyizeli Zoya and Mute Nyanya guilty of murder and affiliation with *iKongo.* Sentenced to death, all three men were hanged on December 15, 1961.

The accusation that police and military took alleged *iKongo* insurgents to a makeshift interrogation camp also appears in the proceedings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) after the fall of the Nationalist Party and the dismantling of apartheid policy in the 1990s. The TRC report states that during this period "detentions and arrests were carried out primarily by the police, although several deponents also referred to soldiers having been involved… Detainees and convicted prisoners were held at many different venues. A key place of torture was however, a temporary police station housed in tents in Mkambati forest."[89]

The report details the cases of three accused *iKongo* insurgents. The first concerns a Clement Khelhlana 'Fly' Gxabu. Arrested and injured while participating in the June 6, 1960 protest at Ngquza Hill, Mr. Gxabu testified that police held him for five days at the Lusikisiki police station, during which time police personnel continuously beat him as part of an effort to extract a confession regarding his alleged membership in *iKongo*[90]

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[89] *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report* (1996) 3: 38.

[90] Ibid., pp. 38. Gxabu's arrest is confirmed by the appearance of his name on a list of arrest records, located in CA CMT 3/1471, concerned solely with the "unrest" in the region.

Ngwazi Sipolo also testified to the Commission that officials had screened and then arrested him on charges of affiliation with *iKongo*. During this initial arrest, he testified, "police had tried to persuade him to become an informer, but that he had not helped them."[91] Once released, officials soon arrested Sipolo once more. During this second arrest, Sipolo stated that police personnel took him to Mkambati forest and tortured him in an attempt to gain information about *iKongo*.

Ndovela Nxasana provided the TRC with the final testimony regarding the torture of accused *iKongo* insurgents. Nxasana, like Gxabu and Sipolo, stated that South African police arrested him because of his affiliation with *iKongo*. Nxasana claimed that "he was taken to the tents in Mkambati forest where he was beaten with a stick and his hand was broken."[92] After assaulting him, police personnel gave him "electric shocks 'by an auto engine' while lying down with this hands cuffed behind his back."[93] Arrest records located in the Bizana district archives confirm Nxasana's arrest in 1960.[94] TRC records indicate that following his torture, South African officials transferred Nxasana to another jail. After one year of detention, he went to trial on charges of attempted murder. The court later acquitted him.[95]

The testimony of Ngwazi Sipolo and Ndovela Nxasana indicate that military personnel used a facility in Mkambati forest to conduct interrogations during the

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[91] Ibid., 38.

[92] Ibid., 39.

[93] Ibid., 39.

[94] Arrest Records, Bizana District (CA 1/BIZ 6/47).

[95] *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report* (1996) 3: 39.

screening process. The TRC found that officers of the Special Branch used this facility and facilities like it to coerce testimony. Port Elizabeth attorney John Jackson gave the following evidence to the commission:

> The promise of personal freedom, if satisfactory evidence was given was enough to ensure that they would implicate anyone… During these political trials, the Special Branch, as these policemen were known, conducted the investigation and interrogation. The allegations of torture were plentiful. The accused were mainly illiterate black men who had been recruited into one of the banned movements and arrested after attending meetings of the organization.[96]

Jackson's statement not only confirms the use of local informants in the screening and interrogation process but also indicates that officials promised former members of *iKongo* immunity in exchange for their collaboration with state officials.[97] Ngwazi Sipolo corroborated Jackson's statement. In his testimony, Sipolo indicated that, during his first detention, police personnel had beaten him in part to turn him into a state informant.

The widespread use of torture bears a striking similarity to the use of torture employed as part of the screening process during the repression of the Mau Mau in Kenya several years before. As Mau Mau activity increased throughout 1952 and 1953, screening procedures acquired a considerable degree of brutality. Under revised screening procedures, instituted in late 1953, suspected Mau Mau insurgents and sympathizers underwent sustained interrogation before their arrest and detention. Without representation, and technically not yet under arrest for

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[96] *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report* (1996) 3: 37-38: Testimony of John Jackson (attorney).

[97] I found little information regarding the use of former insurgents in the suppression of the movement. However, this would be an interesting line of research to pursue in the future.

specific charges, many suspects endured extraordinary brutality and torture designed to elicit confessions pertaining to participation in Mau Mau. Elkins contends that, in addition to military personnel, settler, and district officers, members of "native" police forces and African loyalists participated in these screening teams.

> Scores of former Mau Mau adherents… offered similar recollections. Teams made up of settlers, British district officers, members of the Kenya police force, African loyalists and even soldiers from the British military forces demanded confessions and intelligence, and used torture to get them… The screening teams whipped, shot, burned and mutilated Mau Mau suspects, ostensibly to gather intelligence for military operations, and as court evidence.[98]

It is difficult to trace records of torture, particularly when the regime accused of using these techniques maintained the archives. The confluence of trial testimony and testimony given to the TRC almost four decades later helps to establish that police and military personnel in the Transkei were part of a larger system designed to integrate coercive interrogation techniques into the repression of anti-apartheid activity. The TRC established that, between 1960 and 1982, members of the South African police in the Transkei and Ciskei hanged suspected insurgents upside down from trees – a method that, like water-boarding, deprived the victim of air to the point of rendering the victim nearly unconsciousness.[99] The report also states that members of the police poisoned detainees.[100] In a sense, we might see the actions of

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[98] Ibid., 66.

[99] Ibid., 2: 428.

[100] Ibid., 2: 428.

police and military personnel in the Transkei between 1960 and 1982 as functioning as preparation for the sustained counter-insurgency campaign directed by members of the Special Branch against ANC operatives in the 1980s.[101]

While records of military actions during the late 1950s and 1960s in South Africa remain classified, the parallels between the suppression of Mau Mau and the suppression of *iKongo* are compelling. The institution of emergency regulations designed to suppress insurgent activity through any means necessary, including torture, are indicative of a dialogue between Kenya and South Africa about counter-insurgency in a colonial world under threat.

Arrest and Execution

It is nearly impossible to establish with any certainty either how many people were screened between 1960 and 1962 or how many people police or other military personnel tortured during this period.[102] An analysis of the arrest records contained in the CMT and GSC files does give a sense of the number of arrests. Between November 1959 and March 1962, officials arrested approximately 4,500 people throughout the Transkei.[103] Of this number, approximately 3,500 of these

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[101] Ibid., 2: 428.

[102] Confidential Memo from the Chief of Bantu Affairs, Umtata to the Secretary for the Bantu Administration and Development, Cape Town, March 11, 1960 (CA CMT 3/1470).

[103] Arrest records for this period are scattered through a variety of different archival sources including: CMT; 1/BIZ; 1/FSF; 1/LSK; and GSC. It is difficult to establish a precise figure because several files in the 1/BIZ series between 1959 and 1961 are recorded as having been destroyed in the 1980s, it is reasonable to assume that additional arrest records contained in those files have been lost.

people resided in Pondoland.[104] Of the 3,500 residents arrested in Pondoland, 2,200 resided in Bizana District.[105] The majority of the approximately 3,500 persons prosecuted in Pondoland on charges related to *iKongo* during this period, faced charges of tax evasion, and attending illegal meetings.

> Thirty-nine Bantus detained in December last under the provisions of Proclamation No. 400 of 1960 appeared before the court during the month. Two preparatory examinations were opened… In the first case, 5 appeared on an allegation of incitement to commit murder… In the second case, the remaining 34 accused are appearing on a similar allegation with an alternative allegation of attending, holding, etc and unlawful meeting in contravention of Proclamation 400 of 1960.[106]

However, while most people tried under the provisions set forth by Proclamation 400 faced non-capital charges, a series of capital murder trials related to crimes committed during the insurgency occurred in 1961. An analysis of the archival records indicates that prosecutors tried at least twenty-seven men on charges of capital murder for crimes committed during 1960. However there is some disagreement concerning how many people the state executed on charges related to the insurgency. Govan Mbeki contended that the state had sentenced twenty-one men to death and that, of this number, the government executed twenty-one.[107] In

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[104] "Report on Criminal Cases Arising out of the Pondoland Unrest," March 1, 1960 – November 10, 1961 (CA CMT 3/1472).

[105] Arrest Records (CA 1/BIZ 6/47, Folio C. 9/6/B); See Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 206.

[106] Memo from the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Qumbu to the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Umtata; RE: Unrest in the Transkei, Monthly Report, June 27, 1961 (CA CMT 3/1471).

[107] Mbeki, *South Africa*, 159, Appendix 4.

an essay published in 2004, Matoti and Ntsebeza agree with Mbeki's assessment of twenty-one executions.[108]

The court transcripts, located in the GSC files in the Cape Town archives, vary in detail and a number of documents relating to the trials were either lost or have been destroyed. However, in 1961, six capital murder trials occurred in Kokstad during which one hundred men faced a possible death sentence.[109] Each trial resulted in several capital convictions and all those sentenced to death by hanging were transferred to and executed in prisons in Kokstad or Pretoria between August 1961 and March 1962. My research indicates that the courts found twenty-six men guilty and executed for crimes related to the insurgency.[110]

Of all the capital trials occurring in 1961 in relation to the *iKongo* insurgency, the trial of those men accused of killing sub-Chief Vukayibambe and two of his indunas was perhaps the most sensationalistic. Sub-Chief Vukayibambe was widely known as a great supporter of Bantu Authorities and the establishment of Tribal Authorities in the Transkei. According to Mr. Roux, attorney for the defense, the day before his murder, Vukayibambe, on November 19, 1960, participated with South African police in the forcible breaking up of an *iKongo* meeting. In the process he

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[108] Matoti and Ntsebeza "Rural Resistance in Mpondoland and Thembuland, 1960-1963," 199-200. The authors only cite four capital cases from the period.

[109] State v. Mbuyelwa Stwayi and 7 others (CA GSC 1/2/1/936); State v. Mjaneyelwa Mnconco and 11 others (CA GSC 1/2/937); (State v. Dilisha Maqutswan and 19 others (GSC 1/2/1938); State v. Mkatazao Mvonqana and 29 others (CA GSC 1/2/1939-940); State v. Barnabas Maqawana and 29 others (CA GSC 1/2/1/941-943).

[110] See Appendix D.

"shot at his own people and [encouraged] the police to shoot at his people."[111] The people were "deeply shocked and resented this" action. The next night, under the cover of moonlight, a large group of men, wearing black balaclavas, marched upon the sub-Chief's kraal and attacked both he and his indunas. The crowd fell upon the body of the sub-Chief and after killing him, set both his body and his kraal alight. The post-mortem report details the extent of his injuries.

> There were multiple facial and head injuries, one deep into the occipital bone. The face was burnt on the right side; also the body on the right side half, except the legs. All these burnt portions were eaten away by animals. All the fingers of the right hand were amputated in the proximal phalanx.[112]

The coroner reported that the bodies of the two indunas were similarly disfigured. After a lengthy trial, the judge sentenced seven men (see Appendix D) to death. The men were executed by hanging at Kokstad prison on March 21, 1962.

States of Exception and the Routinization of Extraordinary Measures

The Transkei remained under the regulations imposed by Proclamations 400 and 413 until Public Security Act 30 removed the restrictions in 1977, after the state had granted "independence" to the Transkei. The *extraordinary* measures of the emergency regulations introduced in 1960 became, over a period of 18 years, *ordinary*.

In common parlance, a government can declare a state of emergency when the political system is under considerable internal or external threat. Political theorist Carl Schmitt understood the "state of emergency" to mean instead a "state

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[111] Case Number 376 of 1961 (CA GSC 1/2/1/940).

[112] Case Number 376 of 1961, Coroner's report (CA GSC 1/2/1/939).

of exception." His argument, a defense of the political concept of dictatorship, contends that the state of exception "is always something different from anarchy and chaos, in a juridical sense, an order still exists in it, even if it is not a juridical order."[113] In other words, although regular or ordinary law (juridical order) is suspended, order, albeit of a different kind, remains.

The South African state recognized the law-making capacity of *iKongo* as constituting a far greater threat than the physical threat posed by the movement. The military capacity of the state far exceeded that of *iKongo*. There is a notable absence of gun violence or the use of such technologies as bombing by *iKongo* during the insurgency. However, the fact that *iKongo* not only conceptualized itself as a nation but began to take steps towards forming the nation, as seen in the creation of a constitution and a petition to the United Nations, posed a considerable threat to the legitimacy of the South African state. Benjamin believed that inherent to violence, particularly as exercised by an opposition movement within a state, was a law-making character. Recognizing that the capacity to create law that might rival the power of the state as more dangerous than the physical threat of a resistance movement, the legal and military branches of the state tended "to divest… legal subject(s), of all violence."[114] It was precisely this law-making character that, through the implementation of emergency regulations, the South African state sought to eliminate. However, the extraordinary measures of a state of emergency,

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[113] Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985), 12-13.

[114] Benjamin, "Critique of Violence," 283.

or state of exception, that suspended the law became ordinary as the government extended emergency regulations year after year.

Agamben's concept of the state of exception is a useful way in which to understand the processes by which the extraordinary nature of Proclamations 400 and 413 were rendered ordinary in the Transkei. Arguing that the formal declaration of a state of exception is now increasingly replaced by the "paradigm of security," Agamben gestures towards the routinization of exceptional legal measures that effectively suspend the law in the name of security.[115] In an effort to curtail the disruptive and anti-apartheid program of *iKongo*, the South African state instituted a series of emergency regulations, encapsulated in Proclamations 400 and 413, that curtailed the rights of Africans living in the Transkei in the name of protecting the public good. If the procedures of indefinite detention without trial, forced removals, and the restriction of entry and exit from the region were restricted to a short period of time, the emergency regulations would have remained extraordinary: extraordinary measures designed to address *specific* circumstances. Instead, the extension of emergency regulations over a period of months and years transformed the suspension of law from an extraordinary measure to an ordinary state of existence. In this state, the juridical apparatus routinized and normalized both the suspension of law and the application of violence.

Conclusion

The South African state found itself in a precarious position in 1960. Resistance to apartheid policies and anger over police brutality engulfed urban and

[115] Agamben, *State of Exception*, 14.

rural South Africa. The killing of protesters gathered on Ngquza Hill in Pondoland on June 6, 1960 only intensified *iKongo* activity in the region. Following the rejection of the findings presented by the Commission of Inquiry convened to investigate accusations about Ngquza Hill on October 1960, the South African government issued Proclamation 400 and 413 in November and December of that year. These proclamations provided for the declaration of emergency regulations that allowed for indefinite detention, forced removals and granted unprecedented powers to government appointed chiefs and other African representatives of Tribal Authorities.

This attempt to render the Transkei governable drew upon the techniques employed by the British colonial military in Kenya during the Mau Mau insurgency. Fearful that the insurgency might continue to grow and threaten not only Africans in Pondoland but also white residents in the region, South African officials implemented policies such as screening, torture, and indefinite detention.

The Transkei languished under these regulations as a "self-governing" homeland from 1963 until 1977, one year after it achieved "independence." Only South Africa recognized the Transkei as an independent entity. The United Nations General Assembly rejected the "independence of the Transkei" while calling upon "all Governments to deny any form of recognition" because the "racist regime of South Africa" had created a "sham independence".[116] Matanzima retained many of the emergency regulations implemented under Proclamation 400 of 1960 during his

[116] "Policies of *Apartheid* of the Government of South Africa: The So-Called Independent Transkei and Other Bantustans," United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/31/6/A (October 26, 1976), 10-11.

tenure as president.[117] For nearly the entirety of the apartheid period, the extraordinary measures of the Emergency became the ordinary fabric of everyday life.

[117] "South Africa: The Transkei Puppet Show," *Time Magazine* (October 25, 1976).

Chapter Four

The Transformation of the Rural Insurgent into the Peasant Vanguard: The Folding of *iKongo* into the Historical Narrative of the ANC

The final months of 1963 witnessed a conclusive suppression of insurgent activity in Pondoland and surrounding districts. Despite the success in curtailing both the spread and influence of *iKongo*, the region remained under Emergency Regulations. Government officials once again began implementing Bantu Authorities in districts that, during the height of the insurgency, had functioned as *iKongo* strongholds.

Previous chapters have demonstrated the ways in which members of *iKongo* employed a kind of rural cosmopolitanism in the formulation and implementation of their government. Rather than functioning as a purely reactive peasant organization concerned with the retention of "traditional" values, *iKongo* insurgents engaged in a sophisticated rights-based rhetoric and sought validation from transnational organizations such as the United Nations. This rhetoric incorporated local understandings of the role played by the ancestors and imputations of magic.

This uneasy balance between the lexicon of the supernatural and that of the modern nation-state did not fit the societal framework envisioned by the urban-based operatives of the ANC. *iKongo*'s invocations of ancestor cults and magic caused for considerable concern for members of the ANC leadership during the years of insurgency. Consequently, the vision of nation articulated by *iKongo* could not be fully reconciled with that of the ANC. I suggest that the ANC operatives, while supporting the general struggle against the imposition of Bantu Authorities, could not fully back a movement that did not completely adhere to its vision of a

democratic, western-style society. Not only does this help to explain the virtual absence of the ANC from any direct (or indirect) participation in *iKongo* during the insurgency, but it also helps to explain how the historical narrative of the movement has, over the last fifty years, become part of the general ANC historical narrative. Rather than rejecting *iKongo* outright, as it did with Poqo movement and their actions in the Transkei, the ANC recognized the shared similarities between itself and *iKongo* and, in subsequent years, sought to appropriate and subsume elements of *iKongo* into its own particular narrative of resistance.

Despite the considerable media attention *iKongo* garnered during the height of the insurgency, there is little knowledge of the movement throughout South Africa today. Many South Africans, particularly outside of the Eastern Cape, know nothing of the insurgency in Pondoland. Furthermore, what information about the insurgency that is available in the public sphere is part of official ANC narratives of resistance and liberation. An insurgency of which the ANC had no demonstrable role is now subsumed under the umbrella of ANC resistance to apartheid. I argue that as the ANC has moved from the position of liberation movement to the dominant political party in South Africa, there is little room within the emergent official narrative of resistance to apartheid rule for alternative visions of nation. Rather than acknowledging the unique vision of politics and society advanced by *iKongo*, the ANC has sought to incorporate the movement into its own narrative of resistance, going so far as to say that *iKongo* adopted "Freedom Charter, the

programme of the ANC, as its own."[1] Consequently, the unique contributions of *iKongo* to the political landscape of South Africa have been effaced in an effort to create a coherent historical narrative in which the ANC assumes the mantle of unquestioned liberator.

A Vision of a Unified South Africa: The Development of the ANC

Throughout the twentieth century, state officials expressed concern about the potential influence of urban-based African movements in the rural areas of the country. In the 1920s with the Wellington Movement, government officials in Pretoria instructed magistrates in the Transkei to remain vigilant to the possible activities of "various Native separatist religious or political bodies which may be working amongst the Native population."[2] Of particular concern at the time was the potential for urban-based organizations like the ANC or the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) to enter the rural areas in an attempt to encourage African resistance to certain economic and social measures such as dipping or rehabilitation.

With respect to the presence of these "foreign agitators," officials had cause for some concern. In the 1920s, branches of the I.C.U. operated throughout the Transkei.[3] Many rural Africans were initially attracted to the ICU because its leaders

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[1] "Pondoland Revolt: Martyrs Reburied at Site of 1960 Massacre," ANC Today: Online Voice of the African National Congress, 3, no. 22 (June 6-12, 2003).

[2] Department of Native Affairs, Pretoria - Union Circular No. 35/1921, Re: Political Movements Amongst Natives, October 6, 1921 (CA 1/KNT 7/1/40).

[3] Letter from the Transkeian I.C.U. Office to the Resident Chief Magistrate, March 26, 1928 (1/MFE 8/1/14).

"voiced a broad range of popular grievances."[4] In some cases, officials alleged members of the local I.C.U. branches in the region maintained connections with Buthelezi Wellington.[5] Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, other urban-based organizations including the All African Convention (AAC) and the Cape African Teachers Association (CATA) attempted to build a presence in the Transkei among local peasant organizations.[6] Both AAC and CATA operatives worked in the Transkei to help rural Africans organize against government attempts to implement rehabilitation.[7]

The organization that increasingly concerned state officials was the ANC. The origins and history of the ANC is well documented.[8] Beginning in the early twentieth century under the title South African Native National Congress (SANNC), the movement voiced the concerns of the emergent African professional class. It was, from its inception, an urban-based movement drawing much of its base amongst the population of educated Africans living in Johannesburg, Durban, and Cape Town.

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[4] Lodge, *Black Politics*, 6.

[5] Report of Meeting held by No. 153 I.C.U. Agitator E. Mabodla at Siboza's Location, Kentani District, February 7, 1930 (1/KNT 7/1/40).

[6] CATA affiliated with the AAC in 1948.

[7] Lodge, *Black Politics*, 118.

[8] See: André Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu! The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics in South Africa to 1912* (Cape Town, 1984); Peter Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa: The African National Congress, 1912-1952* (London, 1970); Tom Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945* (New York: Longman, 1983); Dale T. McKinley, *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle* (London: Pluto Press, 1997).

In the mid 1930s, due in part to the organization's inability "to organize proactively beyond its dominant petit-bourgeois base" the organization was in a perilous position.[9] By the end of the 1940s, the landscape of liberationist politics in South Africa was bleak. The 1948 election of the Afrikaner led Nationalist Party promised the introduction of harsh economic policies designed to curtail and control the lives of the African or "native" population. In this tenuous environment, the leadership of the ANC increasingly turned to the leadership of the ANC Youth League. Formed in 1944 as part of an internal attempt to reform, and to some extent, radicalize, the political agenda of the ANC, the Youth League drafted its program of action in 1948. This program provided an outline of the basic beliefs and goals that would emerge as the core tenets of the ANC in the coming years and decades. Of particular interest in this document is the degree to which, while advocating a distinct "African Nationalism," members of the ANC, including Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo, drew from Western tropes of nationalism in the construction of the South African nationalist vision. Specifically, the ANC rejected the idea of tribalism as "the mortal foe of African nationalism and African nationalists everywhere should declare relentless war on centrifugal tribalism."[10]

The Youth League sought to move away from "tribally" or ethnically based identities and instead embraced the concept of an imagined community in which all

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[9] McKinley, *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle*, 8.

[10] *Manifesto of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress Youth League*, 1948. Excerpted from: *Mandela, Tambo and the African National Congress: The Struggle against Apartheid, 1948-1990*, ed. Sheridan Johns and R. Hunt Davis, Jr. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 79.

Africans worked together to create a unified nation. "The African people in South Africa are oppressed as a group with a particular colour…The fundamental aim[s] [are] the creation of a united nation out of the heterogeneous tribes…"[11] Additionally, the ANC rejected the "ultrarevolutionary" approach of Garveyism and its cry of "Hurl the white man to the sea."[12] Instead, the ANC recognized that South Africa had become the home to multiple racial groups and that all these groups would ultimately have to adopt a policy of multiracialism in all sectors of life.

While this manifesto rejected the imposition of "cut-and-dried formulae" upon the South African struggle of liberation, it is clear that the ANC Youth League under the leadership of men like Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, and A.P. Mda, did embrace a template of nationalism very much informed by late eighteenth and nineteenth century Western European nationalist discourse. The creation of an imagined community in which the primary means of identification was mediated through the nation and the elevation of a secular approach to government informed the way in which the ANC structured its vision of a unified South Africa.

The Freedom Charter, composed and agreed upon during the Congress of the People in 1955, further solidified the vision articulated in the ANC Youth League program of action. It evokes the French Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789) or the United States Bill of Rights (1791). Beginning with the statement that "only a democratic state, based on the will of the people, can secure to all their birthright

[11] Ibid., 75.

[12] Ibid., 78.

without distinction of colour, race, sex, or belief," the Freedom Charter continues to detail the various rights that every South African should enjoy including human rights, economic rights, and land rights.[13] The drafters of the Freedom Charter embedded the document in a rights-based discourse tracing its origins to the Enlightenment.

The drafting of the Freedom Charter marked an important moment in the role of the ANC within South African liberation politics. Before the South African government banned the organization under the Unlawful Organization Act on April 8, 1960, the ANC had registered approximately one hundred thousand people, with many of its new followers hailing from Natal.[14] In the 1950s, ANC membership shifted to include younger and less affluent men and women. Despite these numbers, the overwhelming majority of people involved in the ANC lived and worked in urban areas.

The ANC Interpretation of iKongo as Opposed to Poqo

During the insurgency, representatives of the South African state tried to establish that the ANC not only maintained a significant presence in the region, but also had taken a leadership role in *iKongo*. Discussed in Chapter One, the ANC did not wield a significant degree of influence in the rural areas. In fact, there is scant evidence to support either the presence of ANC operatives in *iKongo* or that any primary leaders of *iKongo*, with the possible exception of Anderson and Nelson

[13] *Freedom Charter* (June 26, 1955), Excerpted from *Mandela, Tambo, and the African National Congress*, 81-85.

[14] Lodge, *Black Politics*, 75. However, as Lodge notes, this number does not reflect the influence that the ANC wielded in an unofficial capacity.

Ganyile, were ANC members. However, there were ANC operatives, including Govan Mbeki, in the region during the insurgency. Given that the ANC and *iKongo* were committed to the same goal of defeating Bantu Authorities, why then did the ANC not take a more active role in the insurgency?

One major contributing factor that we cannot discount is that, by the time the insurgency entered its most active phase after the shootings on Ngquza Hill on June 6, 1960, the ANC was a banned movement with many of its leaders either underground or in exile. The ANC leadership did not launch its armed wing, *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (The Spear of the People), until December 1961 at which point the South African state had largely suppressed *iKongo*.

Until the formation of *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, also referred to as MK, in late 1961, the ANC remained committed to the practice of non-violent and passive resistance. When formed, the movement clearly stated that, while the "government policy of force, repression, and violence [could] no longer be met with nonviolent resistance only," its primary targets would not be civilian but would instead be confined to "government installations, particularly those connected with the policy of apartheid and race discrimination."[15] As such, the ANC was not necessarily adverse to violence although it did remain committed to avoiding direct attacks on individuals instead choosing to commit acts of sabotage on symbols of the apartheid state.

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[15] "Announcement of the Formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe" in *Mandela, Thambo, and the African National Congress*, 138-139.

In addition to the fact that the ANC was itself under increasing pressure from the military and legal branches of the South African state, I argue that the primary reason accounting for the ANC's reluctance to actively involve itself in *iKongo*'s action against the state lies in the very rural cosmopolitanism enacted by members of *iKongo*. That *iKongo* leadership employed tropes of "Russians" coming to conquer the white men and their collaborators and punished traitors to the nascent nation as witches or sorcerers implied a political agenda and vision that did not map neatly onto a template of a modern nation-state rooted in secularism and jurisprudence. While the ANC did not seek to subscribe completely to all components and trappings of the modern nation state (at least explicitly), its leaders also did not want to depart so significantly from this template.

The kind of nationalism envisioned by *iKongo* was neither "traditional" nor was it "modern." Rather, the movement engaged with and implemented a discourse of sovereignty and rights. This discourse remained very much in line with those theories of nationalism emerging from the Enlightenment and endorsed by the ANC. However, this discourse simultaneously integrated local and historically specific lexicons of ancestors and witchcraft into its liberation struggle. The deployment of such lexicons made sense to *iKongo* but did not fit within the ANC's own vision of nation – a vision of nation that sought to move into the realm of nationalist secular rhetoric. Consequently, the ANC remained reluctant to explicitly support or participate in the movement.

In sharp contrast to other movements, the ANC never condemned the actions of *iKongo*. A brief examination of the actions of Poqo in the region several years

after the suppression of *iKongo* illuminates why this condemnation ever occurred. Following the suppression of *iKongo* in 1961, a second movement that utilized discourses of magic and witchcraft as an integral part of their campaign of resistance emerged in districts neighboring Eastern Pondoland. Unlike *iKongo*, this movement, know as "Poqo," drew upon a considerable amount of "foreign" influence from outside the region. Between 1962 and 1963, Poqo members attempted to assassinate a number of supporters of Bantu Authorities, most notably Chief Kaizer Matanzima, in addition to targeting whites living in the Transkei.

Poqo emerged as a rural branch of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).[16] In the months and years immediately following the Unlawful Organization Act, a militant branch of the PAC formed. Calling itself "Poqo," a Xhosa expression meaning "pure," the group was the first African movement in South Africa that explicitly condone killing people as part of its resistance strategy.[17]

Throughout the early 1960s, Poqo was particularly strong among the migrant labor community in the western Cape. Many of the migrant workers living in hostels and shanties in townships such as Langa had families living in the Transkei. Lodge ascribes the strength of the movement in townships outside of Cape Town to "the particularly fierce effects of influx control in the Cape peninsula, the 'repatriation' of women and children to the Transkei, the refusal of the authorities to construct adequate housing, and sharply deteriorating living

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[16] For a more in-depth discussion of the origins of the PAC and the role played by its members in the Sharpeville protests in March 1960, see Chapter Three.

[17] Lodge, *Black Politics*, 241.

conditions."[18] Additionally, due to these migrant labor networks, Poqo organizers in the Cape peninsula were particularly concerned about the attempted implementation of Bantu Authorities in the Transkei.

The primary agenda of the Cape Poqo was the reclamation of South Africa from the whites and the removal of collaborationist Africans from positions of power.[19] The organization operated through a cell system. Each cell contained approximately ten men, and many of these cells were composed of men who hailed from the same region.[20] Archival records indicate that, beginning in late 1962, Poqo leadership held a number of meetings in Langa Township outside of Cape Town.[21] Many migrant workers from the Eastern Cape lived in Langa, particularly in Zones 12 and 18 in Langa. Men later arrested and interrogated for their involvement in the movement described in detail the processes of recruitment.[22] "I left Cofimvaba at the end of 1961 for Cape Town. I joined the Poqo organization during 1962."[23]

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[18] Ibid., 241.

[19] See CA 1/BUT 7/1/88 (Folio C. 25).

[20] Robert Fatton, *Black Consciousness in South Africa: the Dialectics of Ideological Resistance to White Supremacy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 243. See also, Brown Bavusile Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State, 1960-1963," in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,1960-1970*, South African Democracy Education Trust (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004), 262-263.

[21] See CA GSC 1/2/1/1007 and CA 1/COF 9/1/44 for documents related to the recruitment of Poqo members in Langa.

[22] Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 209. He notes that recruitment for Poqo first began in Mbekweni - a township outside of Paarl (a town in the wine-region outside of Cape Town).

[23] Confession of Willie Dindala (CA 1/COF 9/1/44).

Because cells were composed of men from similar regions, a sense of solidarity emerged that made infiltration of the movement extraordinarily difficult. Secrecy was paramount: members swore an oath of loyalty to the movement. Absolute obedience to the organization was expected.[24] Members knew that they faced death at the hands of their comrades if they fell under suspicion of informing on the group's activities to the police.

Poqo initially concentrated its activities in the Cape peninsula. In 1962, police attributed a spate of murders of white farmers in and around the town of Paarl to Poqo.[25] However, during 1962, Poqo extended its activities into the Transkei. Drawing support from migrant workers with ties to Pondoland and neighboring Thembuland, Poqo focused its attention on the person of Chief Kaizer Matanzima. Made Chairman of the Transkeian Territorial Authority (TTA) in 1961, Matanzima remained unequivocal in his support of Bantu Authorities, making him a prime target for resistance movements throughout the region. As Crais notes, Matanzima was "explicitly connected with the prosecution of influx control in the Western Cape as well as rehabilitation and resettlement in the Transkei."[26] Beginning in mid-1962, members of Poqo plotted to assassinate Matanzima.

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[24] Maaba, "The PAC War Against the State," 269.

[25] Confession of Mankankela Mimi (CA 1/COF 9/1/44): "I went to Paarl in January 1962… and worked for a firm called Tractors Spares. I joined an organization called Poqo in April this year. One Circa of Willowvale told me to join Poqo and I paid 25 cents."

[26] Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 209-210.

During Poqo meetings, cell leaders told their men that, in addition to killing Matanzima, they had to kill "all the Europeans including the Magistrate."[27] Whites were legitimate targets because they had stolen land from the "real" Africans: "conquer the Europeans and take our country back from them as they had stolen our country."[28] These instructions demonstrate the difference between Poqo's aims and those of *iKongo* several years before. In both movements, it was acceptable, and indeed expected, to kill collaborationist chiefs, but *iKongo* had never advocated the murder of whites. Poqo reflected the more radical agenda of the PAC in its commitment to the use of violence against both African collaborators and white South Africans.

Upon agreeing to join the movement and taking the oath of loyalty, members of Poqo, still in Langa received an incision on their forehead just below the hairline. The leaders then rubbed a black powder into the incision.[29] This practice, also used by *iKongo* insurgents several years earlier, drew upon a long history amongst peoples throughout South Africa of doctoring the bodies of warriors against the bullets of their enemy.

In December 1962, groups of Poqo embarked on their mission to kill Chief Matanzima and made their way from Cape Town to the Transkei. The men transferred from railway cars in Queenstown to buses that took them to Cofimvaba District. The first groups of men to arrive in early December made camp outside

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[27] Confession of Mgwaja Miso (CA 1/COF 9/1/44).

[28] Confession of Ndozi Tyulu (CA 1/COF 9/1/44).

[29] Ibid.

Qamata village in mountain caves. Over the next several days and weeks, small groups were sent to Queenstown to greet the newly arrived recruits from Cape Town.[30] Despite their attempts to keep their movements secret, police were alerted to the eastward movement of the groups. In Stormberg, a group of police raided rail cars and discovered a cache of weapons stored in the roof of the compartments.[31]

Poqo members, many of whom were from the Transkei, believed that they were part of an "organization to liberate people from oppression."[32] Undergoing further doctoring to protect their bodies from the bullets of white men, the men armed themselves with sabers, sticks, assegais, and battleaxes in preparation for the impending conflict.[33] Throughout December and early January a series of fights between these Poqo warriors, police, and representatives of loyalist headmen and chiefs occurred on the hills near Qamata.[34] A report of a fight between the impis of loyalist headmen and Poqo warriors in late December described a force of at least eighty men clashing with the impi of loyalist Headman Mgweba.[35] State officials,

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[30] Confession of Ndozi Tyulu (CA 1/COF 9/1/44) Memo from the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Cala to the Chief Magistrate, Umtata, December 31, 1962 (CA CMT 3/1470).

[31] Confession of Willie Dindala (CA 1/COF 9/1/44): "At Stormberg, we, ten of us, were arrested for being in possession of dangerous weapons. The weapons were hidden in the ventilation window in the roof of the compartment."

[32] Confession of Melton Pistoli (CA 1/COF 9/1/44).

[33] Confession of Ndozi Tyulu (CA 1/COF 9/1/44).

[34] Confession of Mpiti Qinileyo (CA 1/COF 9/1/44).

[35] Memo for the Office of the Magistrate and Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Cofimvaba to the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Umtata, January 4, 1963 (CA 1/COF 9/1/44).

alert to the potential of Poqo violence, sent warnings to loyalist headmen to "watch the activities of persons returning from the Western Cape area and to report the presence of strangers."[36]

On December 12, 1963, a group of Poqo attacked Matanzima's village. Warned beforehand, a group of European policemen met the fighters on the edge of the village. A fierce fight ensued resulting in the deaths of six Poqo.[37] Several weeks later, Poqo engaged police at the Queenstown rail station resulting in the death of a white policeman, hacked to death as he tried to escape.[38]

Having initially failed in their assassination attempt on Matanzima, Poqo members turned their attention to whites living in the Transkei. On February 5, 1963, a group of Poqo attacked the Grobbelaar family who were camping on the banks of the Bashee River.[39] The men threw petrol bombs into the caravan and then hacked the five occupants to death. Police detained fifty-three persons and eventually prosecuted thirty for the murders.[40] The judge did exclude the confessions of several of the accused due to evidence of torture. However, the

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[36] Memo from Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Libode to Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Umtata, January 2, 1963 (CA CMT 3/1470).

[37] Case Number 116 of 1963: State v. Hotase Albert Shweni and Others (CA GSC 1/2/1/1007).

[38] Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 211.

[39] Case Number 346 of 1963: State v. Patsolo Xhego and 29 Others (CA GSC 1/2/1/1027-1028).

[40] Ibid.

courts convicted twenty-one men of murder and acts of terrorism. They received the death sentence.[41]

By mid-1963, the South African state had largely diffused the active cells of Poqo in the Transkei.[42] Emergency regulations implemented during the *iKongo* insurgency remained in effect, making it easier for police to detain and interrogate Poqo suspects. However, officials were quick to urge caution, stressing that Poqo and *iKongo* cells might still be active or easily reconstituted.[43] Additionally, there was considerable concern that the ANC was preparing to embark on an "intensive programme to cause disruption in the country – particularly in the Transkei."[44]

ANC operatives were indeed active in certain areas of the Eastern Cape in 1963. After the formation of *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, operatives prepared for acts of sabotage directed against government targets in Port Elizabeth, East London, Queenstown, and Cradock.[45] ANC officials were aware of Poqo's actions, yet, unlike *iKongo*, the organization was quick and decisive in its condemnation of Poqo

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[41] Ibid.

[42] Confidential Memo from the Office of the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata to All Bantu Affairs Commissioners of the Transkeian Territories, June 5, 1963 (CA 1/BUT 7/1/88; Folio C. 25).

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid. See also: "Secret History of the African National Congress – How and When it Changed Colour": Distributed by the Office of the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the Transkeian Territorial Authorities, Umtata to all Bantu Affairs Commissioners of the Transkeian Territories, May, 1963 (CA 1/BUT 7/1/88, Folio C. 25).

[45] Case Number 378 of 1963: State v. Richard Tokwe and 25 Others (CA GSC 1/2/1/1034).

violence in the Transkei. In a pamphlet issued in March 1963, nearly four months after the formation of the ANC armed wing and one month after the Poqo attack on the Grobbelaar family, the ANC asserted its superiority within the field of the liberation struggle through the condemnation of the ruinous acts of violence employed by Poqo.

> The people are led by the most trusted and tried organisation, the ANC. It remains the one and only vanguard of the oppressed people in this country… Much as we admire the valour and militancy of the Poqo rank and file, we cannot encourage them in their wrong acts, nor shall we refrain from condemning any activity of theirs that is calculated to discredit our struggle and bring ruin to our people… we advise the Poqo groups against embarking on adventurous and futile acts of terrorism.[46]

Circulated widely throughout the Transkei, this pamphlet reveals much about how the ANC approached its nationalist agenda and acts of violence during the period.

The ANC condemned Poqo violence – acts that, aside from the killing of the white family in early February, were not substantially different from the acts of *iKongo* less than three years earlier. In fact, in late 1962 and 1963, government officials were frequently unsure whether the violence they witnessed was *iKongo* or Poqo: "The position is not clear at this stage as to who was behind this movement and I suggest that until this has been finally established that it might be the 'Poqo' organization cannot be entirely discounted. The 'Hill' or the 'Congo' movement was very strong in the affected area during the disturbances in 1960."[47] Both *iKongo*

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[46] The People Accept the Challenge of the Nationalists – Our Political Line of Action." (CA 1/BUT 7/1/88, Folio C. 25).

[47] "Unrest Amaguntyana Trial Authority, Bizana," February 21, 1963 (CA 1/BIZ 6/48, Folio 9/6/6/). It is interesting to note that Mamdani, in his brief discussion of *iKongo*, links the movement directly to the PAC. This linkage is not

and Poqo insurgents doctored their bodies to protect themselves from malicious curses deployed by their targets. Additionally, both movements identified government appointed chiefs and headmen as the primary targets of their attacks.

Not only did the ANC not condemn *iKongo* as it had Poqo, the organization began, in the 1960s, to fold the narrative of *iKongo*'s resistance to Bantu Authorities into its own narrative of liberation and struggle against apartheid. If the movements were virtually indistinguishable from one another, why did the ANC not fold Poqo resistance, particularly in the Transkei, into its own narrative of resistance in the same way as it had done with *iKongo*?

Part of the answer to this question concerns the fact that Poqo was part of a rival organization that, like the ANC, aimed to liberate all of South Africa. Unlike *iKongo*, which had always remained committed to the liberation of a particular region within South Africa from Bantu Authorities and the creation of a nation within that region, the PAC aimed for the liberation of South Africa as a whole. Consequently, the ANC feared that if the PAC gained and maintained significant support in the rural areas where the ANC did not maintain a strong base, the ANC would "be outflanked."[48]

Additionally, like *iKongo*, Poqo insurgents did doctor themselves in the belief that the targets of their attack, like Matanzima, had access to the powers of sorcery. Unlike the ANC, which maintained a strict division between the supernatural and

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borne out either in the archival or spoken record. See Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, 194.

[48] McKinley, *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle*, 29.

the political, both Poqo and *iKongo* conceptualized the two as inextricably bound together. Finally, the attack on Europeans by Poqo exceeded levels of violence deemed acceptable by the ANC. The organization recognized that, in the wake of the Sharpeville massacre and rural disturbances throughout the country, passive protest was not effective against a government prepared to use extraordinary levels of force. The ANC refrained from directing violence against people, particularly civilians, preferring instead acts of sabotage against government installations. Despite fears that *iKongo* would begin to attack whites as part of its resistance to Bantu Authorities, there is no indication that the organization ever committed any acts of physical violence against the white population in the Transkei.[49] The few incidents during the *iKongo* insurgency in which whites were targeted generally involved individual traders who, in the eyes of many *iKongo* members, cheated Africans by inflating food prices

The combination of Poqo's use of extraordinary violence against the white population, the doctoring of its insurgents, and its embededness within the national structure of the PAC made it virtually impossible for the ANC to subsume the actions and goals of Poqo into its own narrative of liberation.[50] However, beginning in the early 1960s, the ANC slowly began the process of folding the narrative of *iKongo*'s

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[49] Confidential Memo from Magistrate of Bizana District (B.M. Warren) to Major V.D. Merwe, December 13, 1960 (CA 1/BIZ 6/48, Folio 9/6/18): "The Rebels have decided to take violent action on Friday 16 December 1960… indications are that it will be directed against the Europeans."

[50] Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, 295.

fight against Bantu Authorities and the apartheid state into its own narrative of resistance and liberation.

Subsuming iKongo into the ANC: The Creation of a Peasant Vanguard

Unlike Poqo, *iKongo*'s vision of a society from racial discrimination and apartheid legislation was not completely at odds with that of the ANC. The Constitution of the Congo and the petition sent to the United Nations by the movement, both documents that received considerable attention in the press during the insurgency, were largely in-line with the ANC vision of a democratic nation. However, *iKongo*'s use of lexicons of the supernatural, particularly the recourse to ancestor, the doctoring of the insurgents, and the belief that government appointed chiefs and headmen drew their powers in part from the exercise of malicious magic, did fall outside of the secularist framework of the ANC. Rather than condemning or ignoring the contributions of *iKongo*, ANC operatives began, in the early 1960s, to transform the narrative of *iKongo* in order to render the movement compatible with the ANC's own narrative of resistance. As *iKongo* became part of this ANC narrative, any references to "Russians" or doctoring of warriors disappeared and *iKongo* insurgents became part of an ANC peasant vanguard.

The best-known example of how this transformation began to occur appears in Govan Mbeki's monograph, *South Africa: The Peasants Revolt*. This book, written between 1959 and 1963 and first published in 1964, aimed to examine how "the commoner lives and works under apartheid" with a particular focus on the

Nationalist Party's claims regarding self-governance in the Bantustans.[51] The very use of the term "peasant" indicates the degree to which Marxist socio-economic theory informed the work and, indeed, the ANC as a whole. Mbeki spent much of the monograph examining the motives behind the creation of Bantustans in the rural areas of South Africa, arguing that the plan of separate development constituted a fraud designed to enshrine white supremacy and condemn Africans to a life of grinding poverty.

The final chapters in this monograph turn to moments of peasant resistance against the policies associated with separate development. Mbeki asserted that the peasants of South Africa have a "long history of resistance to oppression" because "they know what it is to be crushed by the armed forces of the Whites."[52] The chapter, entitled "Resistance and Rebellion: The Peasants Rise," explores several cases of rural rebellion including the Witzieshoek shootings, the disturbances in Sukhukhuneland (Transvaal), and in Zululand. However, the vast majority of the chapter explores the "Congo movement." During the insurgency in Pondoland, Mbeki wrote a number of articles on the movement. These articles appeared in various ANC affiliated (or ANC sympathetic) newspapers with a wide-distribution throughout South Africa. Notable among these articles were a 1958 article in *Fighting Talk*, "Economic Boycott" and a 1961 article in the same newspaper,

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[51] Ruth First, foreword to *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt*, by Govan Mbeki, 14. It is worth noting that Ruth First was one of the founding members of the Congress of Democrats (the white wing of the Congress Alliance), an editor of *Fighting Talk* and, at the time of writing this foreword, the editor of *New Age*.

[52] Mbeki, *South Africa*, 111.

"Jackboot in Pondoland."[53] Mbeki worked as an ANC organizer in the region during this time. That experience combined with the material from these two articles formed the core of his research for the chapter in the 1964 monograph.

Mbeki's account of the development of the movement in the late 1950s and the basic narrative of the insurgency has proved an invaluable resource for scholars. It is striking, however, that Mbeki's account of the insurgency removes any mention of witchdoctors, the doctoring of warriors, or rumors of impending Russian invasions. Indeed, the extraordinary violence that characterized much of the movement between May 1960 and early February 1961 is virtually absent from the narrative. Mbeki mentions hut burning only in passing and is quick to underscore the fact that "those who waged the struggle against Bantu Authorities did not shed their humanity."[54] Murder and assault, specifically the murder of Chief Vukayibambe and Stanford Patekile, is almost entirely absent. Instead, Mbeki stresses forms of resistance approved by the ANC at the time of the insurgency: passive protest, economic boycott, refusal to pay taxes, and refusal to carry passes.[55]

Mbeki also stated that, while the insurgency had its origin in local grievances, the movement eventually "adopted the full programme of the African National

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[53] Govan Mbeki, "Economic Boycott,"" *Fighting Talk* 12, no. 2 (March, 1958); Govan Mbeki, "Jackboot in Pondoland," *Fighting Talk* 15, no. 1 (February, 1961).

[54] Mbeki, *South Africa*, 131.

[55] Ibid., 131-134.

Congress and its allies as embodied in the Freedom Charter."[56] This allowed him to explicitly link the actions of *iKongo* with the ANC:

> Consequently, the struggle in Pondoland became linked with the national struggle for liberation, and brought alive to the leadership of the ANC in a manner it had never done before the vital need for linking up the struggles of the peasants with those of the workers in the urban areas.[57]

There is no evidence in the archival record that *iKongo* ever discussed or accepted the principles of the Freedom Charter. Additionally, no interview subject ever mentioned the Freedom Charter when discussing the goals of *iKongo* and the course of the insurgency. Mbeki, along with other leaders of the ANC, would have recognized the value in linking *iKongo* with the ANC. Scholars generally agree that, during this period in particular, the ANC had an incredibly weak presence in rural areas throughout the country. Lodge argues that, "despite the evidence of a degree of sensitivity to rural tensions, Congress during the 1950s could do little to exploit them. Its organisational vulnerability apart, its social and ideological orientation during the 1950s helped to distance it from rural culture."[58] In 1960, the ANC found itself in a difficult position. As banned organization, its leaders faced the challenge of not only extending but also maintaining their existing base. Drawing a connection between *iKongo*, a movement that had attracted a considerable amount of support amongst the anti-apartheid community throughout South Africa, and its national platform would have appealed to ANC leaders. McKinley suggests that the

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[56] Ibid., 129.

[57] Ibid., 129.

[58] Lodge, *Black Politics*, 290.

insurgency in Pondoland actually contributed to the development of *Umkhonto we Sizwe*.

> [Leaders] all from the region where the revolt took place… had been distressed to see the inability of the ANC to respond effectively to the peasants' request for arms. This uprising… led many in the leadership to see a growing gap between their pacifism and what they saw as the readiness of the masses to resort to violence.[59]

If the ANC wanted to establish a link that effectively subsumed *iKongo* under its nationalist umbrella, the elements of *iKongo* that did not fit the ANC nationalist platform, elements that contributed to the cosmopolitan nature of the movement, had to be effaced. The rumors of Russians, the doctoring of warriors against the bullets of the white man and the curses of other witch doctors, and the burning of collaborationist chiefs and headmen as witches could not be part of the narrative of resistance. In order to establish itself as a broad-based nationalist liberation movement, the ANC felt that it had to remain committed to a Western, secular vision of the nation. Consequently, in order to render *iKongo* commensurate with its own goals, Mbeki was among the first people within the ANC to privilege certain aspects of the movement over others.

Contemporary Memory of the Insurgency: The TRC and the ANC Memorialization of iKongo "Martyrs"

In the years following South Africa's first free elections in 1994, the ANC's vision of a unified and democratic South Africa in which all South Africans "without distinction of colour, race, sex, or belief" participate has emerged as the dominant

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[59] McKinley, *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle*, 28-29.

vision of the nation.[60] This vision of nation, informed by the template provided by the Western, secular nation state, permeates the majority of narratives concerning the struggle for liberation and continues to enfold the actions of *iKongo*.

Following the 1994 elections, the government convened the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) under the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act (No. 34 of 1995). The underlying principle of the TRC was the belief that the history of oppression in South Africa had created so deep a rupture that it was necessary "to establish the truth in relation to past events… in order to prevent a repetition of such acts in the future" and that the "well-being of all South African citizens require (d) reconciliation between the people of South Africa and the reconstruction of society".[61] The Commission, while acknowledging "violence has been the single most determining factor in South African political history," limited its scope of inquiry to the period between March 1, 1960 and October 8, 1990.[62]

The insurgency in Pondoland and its suppression fell within the scope of the TRC.[63] In March 1997, the Commission held a public hearing in Lusikisiki to investigate over two hundred statements of human rights violations relating to the suppression of the movement in 1960 and 1961. The report noted that it was

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[60] *Freedom Charter* (June 26, 1955). Excerpted from *Mandela, Tambo, and the African National Congress*, 82.

[61] "Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act 34 of 1995" (July 19, 1995) 2.

[62] Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report (1999): 1, 68.

[63] The TRC limited its scope to those events occurring after the Sharpeville massacre.

difficult to collect information about the movement because of the significant gap between its occurrence and the inquest. The Commission relied almost exclusively on the testimony of survivors and their descendants, although the report does not indicate how many people gave testimony.

Upon relating the basic narrative of the formation of *iKongo*, the Commission found that both *iKongo* members and security forces, "in the form of the SAP acting with support from the SADF," engaged in actions that amounted to "gross human rights violations," for which both parties were responsible.[64] The Commission additionally found that the majority of the insurgents "indicated allegiance to the ANC."[65] Finally, the Commission found that the term *iKongo* "appears to have been a corruption of 'Congress'" in a reference to the ANC.[66] Discussed earlier in this chapter, there is little to no evidence of an explicit connection between the ANC and *iKongo*. The TRC participated in the appropriation and embedding of *iKongo* in an ANC narrative of resistance.

Another element of interest with respect to the TRC's treatment of Pondoland and the insurgency concerns the intent of the TRC more generally. As Moon has suggested, the narrative of South African history and the atrocities of apartheid struggles between two impulses.[67] The first concerns the general

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[64] *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report* (1999) 3: 55.

[65] Ibid., 3: 52.

[66] Ibid., ftnt 12, 52.

[67] Claire Moon, *Narrating Political Reconciliation: South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2008), 7.

structure of the narrative mode that tends towards the creation of homogeneity. In addition to creating a homogenous narrative, the TRC also had account for the plurality of experiences and viewpoints expressed by those who gave testimony. While constructing a narrative of the past that worked within a certain historical teleology in which the ANC had emerged as the victor over the apartheid state and the perpetrators of atrocity, the TRC subsequently constrained the testimony of both perpetrators and victims to fit a particular framework of reconciliation. Elevating reconciliation above retribution, victims of the many crimes committed during apartheid could not express their desire for retribution within the framework allowed by the Commission.[68] The Commission would, when faced with a victim who requested that her torturers be brought to justice, merely thank that person for participating in the process of national reconciliation.[69] The TRC had to create a unified narrative of South African history and apartheid atrocities in order to create a vision of a future in which South Africans could reconcile as a nation and move forward.

The experiences of *iKongo* insurgents were not necessarily commensurate with these objectives of the TRC. While the TRC was not explicitly aligned with the ANC as a political party, it did adhere in large part to the vision of nation imagined by the ANC. *iKongo* had articulated a national platform that did not completely fit with the vision of nation that, when apartheid fell and the ANC achieved an electoral majority, emerged as the dominant model of governance. The few testimonies

[68] Ibid., 90.

[69] Ibid., 90.

included in the TRC report regarding *iKongo* fall very much in line with the homogenizing goal of the ANC. Any sense of the alternative political vision articulated by members of *iKongo* disappear and rather than emerging as both active agents who fought and, in some cases, killed, in addition to undergoing torture during the emergency period, the men giving testimony to the TRC about the "Pondoland Disturbances" are coded as victims and only victims. The dynamism of *iKongo* as an insurgent movement with a distinct political and societal vision disappears due to the imperatives of the TRC.[70]

One year after the hearings in Lusikisiki, the Ngquza Hill Commemoration Committee, assisted by the Department of Sports, Arts, and Culture of the Eastern Cape, build and dedicated a monument to the eleven people killed on June 6, 1960 and to the twenty-three men executed for their part in the insurgency. Inscribed on the sides of the monument are the names of those thirty-four people killed. Several years later, the families of twenty-three men officially executed for crimes relating to the *iKongo* insurgency petitioned the South African government. In the petition, the families asked that the bodies of these men be exhumed from the prison cemetery in Pretoria and be reburied in Pondoland. The government agreed to this request and ordered that the men be buried as martyrs at Ngquza Hill. Nearly fifty years after the insurgency ended, the coffins of those *iKongo* insurgents executed for their acts of resistance were draped with the ANC flag and lowered into the ground near the monument commemorating the deaths of those killed on Ngquza hill. This

[70] Future research will examine in greater depth the ways in which the TRC sought to narrate the Pondoland insurgency. This will involve going through the testimony given in Lusikisiki in 1997. For the purposes of this dissertation, I have relied exclusively on the final report produced by the TRC.

last act served as a visual confirmation of the ANC appropriation of the resistance to Bantu Authorities in Pondoland.

The ANC dedicated extensive coverage to this event in its weekly publication *ANC Today*.[71] Twelve of the twenty-three men were buried several yards away from the monument on the anniversary of what the ANC referred to as the Ngquza Hill massacre (a turn of phrase that evokes the Sharpeville Massacre).[72] This reburial enshrined the *iKongo* insurgency within the ANC narrative of resistance in two ways. First, the shootings at Ngquza Hill are now part of a narrative of resistance that includes Sharpeville and Soweto. The protest at Ngquza Hill, which involved members of the same cells who, several weeks before had listened to Gambushe Baleni, the prominent witch doctor and leader of *iKongo*, promise "Russian" aid, is now described by the ANC as a moment of "popular resistance" that quickly developed to embrace the national demands of the liberation movement."[73]

Secondly, the fact that the twenty-three men who had died as "martyrs" had allegedly committed crimes involving extraordinary violence is completely absent from the ANC dedication. Rightly or wrongly, these men, forty-three years earlier, had doctored their bodies in order to protect themselves from malicious spirits and had then marched upon the kraals of men they saw as traitors to the nascent *iKongo*

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[71] "Pondoland Revolt: Martyrs Reburied at Site of 1960 Massacre," *ANC Today: Online Voice of the African National Congress*, 3, no. 22 (June 6-12, 2003).

[72] Although I believe that a total of twenty-six men were executed for crimes related to the insurgency, the government recognizes the executions of twenty-three.

[73] Pondoland Revolt: Martyrs Reburied at Site of 1960 Massacre," *ANC Today: Online Voice of the African National Congress*, 3, no. 22 (June 6-12, 2003).

nation. Upon arriving at these kraals, they had inflicted the same kinds of violence upon these traitors as had traditionally been inflicted upon the bodies of imputed witches and sorcerers. Designed to purify a society polluted by influence of malicious spirits, this violence worked in tandem with, not against, *iKongo*'s conception of its new nation-state.

This alternative understanding of nationalism, this rural cosmopolitanism, was not, and is not, commensurate with the ANC's program of nationalism. The ANC leadership realized that certain elements of *iKongo*'s articulation of politics and society did fit with that of the ANC. Rather than condemning the movement, as it did in the case of Poqo, the ANC stressed the similarities between itself and *iKongo* and de-emphasized, to the point of erasure, the elements that did not fit its Western, secular template.

Integrating and embedding *iKongo* into an ANC narrative has been relatively easy because of the nature of *iKongo*'s rural cosmopolitanism. The only elements of the movements demonstration of rural cosmopolitanism that has left a readily identifiable trace are precisely those documents that are commensurate with the ANC vision of nation: the constitution and the petition to the United States. There are no explicit written records in which the invocations of ancestors or the killings of collaborationist chiefs as sorcerers are explicitly explained. Subsequently, it has been easy for the ANC to stress the components of *iKongo*'s struggle that correspond to their own while discarding those components that do not correspond.

Conclusion

The insurgency in Pondoland marked a significant moment of resistance to the implementation of apartheid in rural South Africa. *iKongo* attempted to create a nation that was at once embedded within familiar concepts of the supernatural, and at the same time, called upon a rights based discourse that located its origins in the Western concept of the nation state. While the ANC maintained a peripheral presence in the region in the years leading up to and during the insurgency, there is no evidence that the ANC exerted any significant influence within the leadership of the movement or amongst the many people who counted themselves members of *iKongo*.

Towards the end of the insurgency, as the South African government moved to suppress the movement, the ANC began a process of appropriating and subsuming the movement under the umbrella of its own program. The ANC, aware of the fact that its base in the rural areas remained particularly weak, seized upon the similarities between *iKongo* and its own political platform in order to draw the movement into an ANC narrative of resistance to apartheid. This narrative stressed that, while *iKongo* was initially a movement motivated by "local concerns," its members saw the advantages of being affiliated with a national organization like the ANC and, at some point, had adopted the Freedom Charter.

As a result, the unique nature of *iKongo* and its political and social vision is now buried in the archives and memories of those few participants still living. The invocations of ancestors and the doctoring of warriors against malicious spirits and the innovative ways in which these acts contributed to the creation of a nation

grounded in the language of rights and sovereignty is largely forgotten. Many South Africans today do not know that *iKongo* even existed. If people do possess some knowledge of the insurgency, that knowledge exists within the context of ANC resistance.

The South African police and military succeeded, through detention and torture, in physically suppressing the movement. The memory of *iKongo*, of what it was and what it attempted to achieve, has suffered a similar fate. While the ANC did not act maliciously, its attempts to build a rural base by subsuming *iKongo* have effectively contributed to the erasure of this movement from the history of anti-apartheid struggle. Additionally, the goals of the TRC in promoting the creation of national unity and a spirit of reconciliation in the years following the end of apartheid has effectively effaced the dynamism of *iKongo* by rendering the insurgents as victims, and victims alone, of apartheid.

Conclusion

For a brief moment, *iKongo*'s members imagined and enacted a unique political society. They wrote a constitution, petitioned the United Nations for recognition of their sovereignty and sought to purify a land corrupted by the malevolent influence of traitorous chiefs and headmen.

Much of the literature on cosmopolitanism focuses on the actions of an urban elite. Rural actors, frequently coded as "peasants," emerge as conservative of their traditions in the face of an encroaching capitalist state. Many scholars have consequently understood rural resistance as a means by which peasants attempted to either maintain the status quo or return to a kind of tradition in the face of modernizing forces. This literature, heavily influenced by Marxist theory in addition to different strains of development and modernization theory, adheres to and supports the sharp distinction between urban and rural dwellers.

As I continued to work on establishing a narrative of *iKongo*'s insurgency, I became increasingly convinced that the distinction between the urban elite as cosmopolitan and the largely uneducated peasant as the anti-cosmopolitan was considerably more porous than many assumed it to be. Rural cosmopolitanism grapples with and brings together the seemingly incommensurate categories of the peasant and the cosmopolitan. Discussed at length in the Introduction and Chapter Two, *iKongo* insurgents did incorporate elements typically associated with the nation state and did request that the United Nations, as a transnational governing body, recognize their sovereignty. In these ways, they saw themselves as constituting a nation. At the same time, insurgents appealed to their ancestors and

invoked lexicons of sorcery as part of an effort to purify a world polluted by the malevolent intent of pro-Bantu Authorities chiefs and headmen. This navigation between the worlds of the secular nation and that of the supernatural constituted a moment of rural cosmopolitanism in which *iKongo* insurgents sought recognition as a nation from those outside their immediate world (i.e. the United Nations) while simultaneously employing familiar lexicons in order to regain a sense of social and political stability.

This interpretation of *iKongo* offers a new perspective not only on the narrative of the insurgency itself but also with respect to the general study of rural/peasant resistance. Cosmopolitanism does not necessarily require the absolute and unconditional acceptance of all that is "modern." Rather, cosmopolitanism entails a sustained engagement with different approaches to politics and society. It is, at its core, a creative act in which people bring into conversation a multiplicity of different concepts, experiences, and perspectives.

The rural cosmopolitanism demonstrated by *iKongo* insurgents constituted a considerable threat to the South African state. Recognizing the law-making character of the movement and anxious about the potential for a resistance movement like Mau Mau in Kenya to emerge in South Africa, state officials embarked on a program of counter-insurgency. In the final months of 1960, the government passed Proclamations 400 and 413 that declared a state of emergency throughout the Transkei. Under the terms of the Proclamations 400 and 413, the police and military were allowed to detain, for indefinite periods of time, Africans suspected of participating in the insurgency. During the suppression of the

insurgency, officials employed techniques such as screening first implemented by the British colonial government in Malaysia and Kenya. These emergency regulations, which I have argued constituted a state of exception in which the extraordinary nature inherent to the declaration of an emergency became ordinary, instituted a regime of surveillance that remained in effect until the final days of apartheid in the late 1980s.

iKongo's promise of political independence threatened not only the apartheid state but also the ANC. The rural cosmopolitanism enacted by *iKongo* led to its eventual incorporation into an ANC narrative of resistance. The ANC, while stating that it did not seek to adopt wholesale any particular political vision or practice, did remain committed to that of the secular nation state. *iKongo* did integrate elements of this vision of the nation state into its own platform but its simultaneous invocation of the supernatural made it impossible to identify the movement solely in nationalist terms. However, recognizing the need to increase its rural base and acknowledging the popularity of the movement among rural Africans, the ANC identified those components of *iKongo* commensurate with their nationalist vision, and began to subsume the narrative of *iKongo* into its own narrative of liberation politics. Govan Mbeki's work *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt* marks the beginning of this process in which the *iKongo* insurgent became a member of the ANC's peasant vanguard.

Over the next fifty years, both the ANC and, most recently the TRC, increasingly subsumed *iKongo* into what has become a homogenous narrative of resistance. This narrative of resistance assumes the eventual victory of the ANC. As

a result, all accounts of resistance and atrocities committed by representatives of the apartheid state must conform to this particular narrative in which the ANC and its particular vision of united South Africa emerges as the inevitable victor.

The consequences of this incorporation of particular elements of *iKongo* into a historical narrative dedicated to recounting the actions of the ANC in the resistance to apartheid are profound. Rather than celebrating the unique and cosmopolitan vision of these rural insurgents, the public narratives articulated by both the ANC and the TRC seek to create and exalt a unified South African past, present, and future, fold *iKongo* into a homogeneous narrative of resistance. Even within this homogeneous narrative, *iKongo* is not clearly present. When *iKongo* does appear, it is as either a movement dedicated to the ANC cause of resistance in which those who died are described as martyrs for the cause or in which the participants in the insurgency emerge as victims of a state that employed torture.

While many of the participants in *iKongo* have passed away, they have related their memories of the movement to their family members. Especially in the years following the end of apartheid, as South Africa has confronted its history and attempted to determine its present and future identify, relatives of former *iKongo* participants have demanded that the state recognize the existence of the movement. While the state, dominated by the ANC, has constructed a memorial to those killed at Ngquza Hill and reburied the men executed for crimes committed during the insurgency, there is no acknowledgement of the fact that this was a movement with no explicit affiliation to the ANC.

I return to my conversation with the woman who remembered the day that the police came to arrest her brother on suspicion of being involved with *iKongo*. She attended the TRC hearings in Lusikisiki in 1997 during which members of the community gave evidence about the suppression of the movement. She remembered that the Commission seemed to be primarily concerned with the suppression and not with the movement itself. The vision of *iKongo* seems to have held no interest to the "outsiders." Although I asked her about her thoughts on the fact that no one seemed to care about what had happened in Bizana and Lusikisiki, she merely shrugged. She seemed resigned to the fact that whatever *iKongo* had accomplished, or attempted to accomplish, was of no consequence to anyone outside the community.

The post World War II period was a time great possibility with respect to the articulation of alternatives to colonial rule throughout Africa and indeed the colonial world. The insurgencies discussed in this study, Mau Mau and *iKongo*, were only two among many. Colonized peoples across the worlds advanced many different ideas about what freedom might look like. Historical writing tends to privilege those movements that advanced a political vision that generally corresponded to those political visions of the metropole itself. Those movements that did not "win" their struggles against the colonial states either disappear from the historical record or stand as examples of the conflict between "tradition" and "modernity."

Rather than continuing within this particular trajectory, particularly as it relates to the study of rural insurgency in the colonial world, rural cosmopolitanism allows for a more nuanced approach to understanding the ways in which colonized

peoples outside the urban areas critiqued and fought against the colonial state. Additionally, examining the reaction of the colonial state to these movements contributes to a more general analysis of the ways in which the state utilizes the law as part of its attempts to maintain control over its population. This study has argued that the extension of emergency regulations in the Transkei during the suppression of *iKongo* constituted a state of exception in which the law mandated its own suspension and that, as the emergency regulations were extended year after, this state of exception became routine. While Carl Schmitt invoked the example of the Nazi state and Giorgio Agamben that of post 9/11 America in their respective discussions of states of exception, the potential for the study of the state of exception in the colonial world is striking.

The colonial state sought to present itself as a strong state in which power was, to invoke Frederick Cooper, arterial. However, the state was never quite as powerful as its presentation implied.[1] Its actual power, particularly with respect to the majority of its colonized population, was tenuous at best. In this context, it would indeed be interesting to examine the entirety of colonial governance as constituting a state of exception in which law mandated the permanent institution of extraordinary measures in an attempt to maintain a degree of control.

The study of the South African state's suppression of *iKongo* is a first attempt to work with this particular understanding of the colonial state. The state of emergency extended in 1960 continued until 1977 when the Transkei achieved "independence." However, even during this period, the majority of the regulations

[1] Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

instituted under Proclamation 400 remained in effect. The state of emergency became, over a period of nearly thirty years, the way in which ordinary governance occurred.

While crime, disease, and poverty impact all segments of South African society, the conditions created by the state of exception continue to exert a considerable influence on the everyday lives of Africans living in the former Transkei. Subjected to considerable limitations on who could enter and exit the territory and what kinds of industry could or could not locate within its boundaries, the cycle of debt begun in the early years of the twentieth century continued to increase. Seventy-two percent of the population (approximately seven million) in the Eastern Cape now lives below the poverty line. Indeed, Ntabankulu, in Eastern Pondoland, reported a poverty rate of eight-five percent making it the poorest district in all of South Africa.[2] Additionally, due in part to the staggering level of impoverishment, the majority of the nine percent of the population in the Eastern Cape currently living with HIV or AIDS does not have access to any anti-retroviral treatments.[3]

iKongo's insurgency in Eastern Pondoland and surrounding districts in the Transkei marked an incredible moment of political creativity in South African history. Neither content to work within the system mandated by the South African

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[2] "Fact Sheet: Poverty in South Africa," Human Sciences Research Council (July 26, 2004), 2. The poverty income line is based on a household of four persons. Any income of R1,290/month or below constitutes an income falling below the poverty line.

[3] South African National HIV Prevalence Incidence Behaviour and Communication Survey (2005), 79.

state nor willing to adopt the platform of the ANC, *iKongo* insurgents created for a brief moment a political society that defies easy categorization. As rural cosmopolitans, they engaged with the colonial state in ways that prompt us to reconsider the approaches we take to political imagination and resistance in the colonial world.

Appendix A: Map of Transkei[1]

[1] Reproduced from Crais, *The Politics of Evil*, 54.

Appendix B

The Constitution of the Congo

The laws of the Congo are as follows:

Obey the Congo.

1. Cases must not be taken to the sub-Chiefs.
2. Cases are dealt with by Congo
3. Murder cases are to be taken to Town.
4. We must not go to Bota because we told them that we do not want him together with his sub-Chiefs.
5. Lands and Kraal sites are to be given to Congo
6. We do not want Bantu Authorities
7. A supporter of Bantu Authorities who wants to be a Congo must pay the sum of 25.3.6.
8. A person who does not join the Congo will be called a jendevu and must pay 5.3.6. When he does not pay it we must see to him.
9. When a Chief wants to join the Congo [he] must pay 25.3.6.
10. When a woman does not want to get married to a man, the lobolo must be returned to the man.
11. When a person assaults another he must pay 10 cash.
12. Gavini is prohibited to the Congo.
13. Dances are closed by the Congo.
14. Parties are closed.
15. Congo meetings will be opened by prayer and closed by prayer. Respect Congo.
16. Chief indunas must collect monies from their people, whoever does not pay the money, the Induna must bring him to the Congo. Don't be afraid of anything.

Appendix C

Example of Screening Records

District	**Number of Persons Screened**
Engcobo and Cala	1,069
Kentani and Idutywa	1,315
Willowvale	1,404
Tsolo	273

Appendix D

Execution Records

Archival Series and Case Number	District	Victim and Date of Crime	Persons Sentenced to Death	Execution Date
GSC 1/2/1/936: Case Number 370 of 1961	Lusikisiki	Gideon Mgu; December 3, 1960	Mtoleni Mfuyo; Kwatla Nota;Nwayi Singxesa;Gavu Zadunge; Kekani Gudlulwayo	August 24, 1961
GSC 1/2/1/937: Case Number 371 of 1961	Bizana	Murder of "3 Bantu Males" (identified as sub-headmen); December 14, 1960	Yiva Voyoyo; Zelibanzi Kewtshuba; Manjelwa Mncoco	March 28 and 29, 1962
GSC 1/2/1/938 Case Number 372 of 1961	Bizana	Victim Unspecified; March 24, 1960	Dilisha Maqutswana; Lyhlu Nqukwe; Siqobolo Mjijwa; Makalimpongo Ntshangula	Sometime in March 1962
GSC 1/2/1/939-940: Case Number 376 of 19610	Flagstaff	Sub-Chief Vukayibambe and 2 others; November 20, 1960	Voxwana Mapamela; Maduse Sanlobe; Masipalati Nkomo; Samani Mpambaniso; Wilson Ngobe; Mcenjulwa Ngwevu; Shadrack George	March 21, 1962
GSC 1/2/1/941-943: Case Number 377 of 1961	Bizana	Stanford Nomagqwateka na; December 4, 1960	Barnabas Maqawana; Douglas Maqawana; Mamsatu Ndayimane; Marelane Ndovela; Majola Shusha; Ntswenca Mkokelwa	July 6, 1962

Bibliography

Cape Archives (Cape Town)

District/Magistrate Records
1/BIZ 1/1/14
1/BIZ 6/47
1/BIZ 6/48
1/BIZ 6/64
1/BUT 7/1/88
1/COF 9/1/44
1/COF 9/1/86
1/ECO 6/1/1
1/ECO 6/1/2
1/ECO 6/1/28
1/ECO 6/1/29
1/ECO 6/1/98
1/EDL 1/1/1/35
1/EDL 6/1/34
1/EDL 6/1/35
1/FSF 1/1/1/38
1/FSF 6/47
1/KNT 7/1/40
1/LSK 1/1/15
1/LSK 1/1/16
1/MFE 8/1/14
1/MTF 1/1/1/220
1/MTF 7/1/17
1/MTF 7/1/35
1/QBU 1/1/1/37
1/QBU 7/1/70
1/TSO 5/1/52
1/TSO 5/1/59
1/UTA 6/1/30

Cape Magistrate of the Transkei (CMT)
CMT 3/89
CMT 3/609
CMT 3/1054
CMT 3/1385
CMT 3/1386
CMT 3/1451
CMT 3/1452
CMT 3/1453
CMT 3/1454
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CMT 3/1468
CMT 3/1470
CMT 3/1471
CMT 3/1472
CMT 3/1473
CMT 3/1475
CMT 3/1477
CMT 3/1478
CMT 3/1479
CMT 3/1480
CMT 3/1481
CMT 3/1482
CMT 3/1483
CMT 3/1532

Grahamstown Supreme Court (GSC)
GSC 1/2/1/797
GSC 1/2/1/798
GSC 1/2/1/805
GSC 1/2/1/811
GSC 1/2/1/912
GSC 1/2/1/917
GSC 1/2/1/920
GSC 1/2/1/927
GSC 1/2/1/931
GSC 1/2/1/936
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GSC 1/2/1/939
GSC 1/2/1/940
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