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**Dependency Politics in a South African Bantustan: The National Party, Inkatha, and the Zulu People, 1975-1990**

**By**

**Joshua Shepley**

**A Major Research Paper  
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
through the Department of History  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts at the  
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**Windsor, Ontario, Canada**

**2023**

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Dependency Politics in a South African Bantustan: The National Party, Inkatha, and the Zulu  
People, 1975-1990

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## ABSTRACT

By the late 1980s, the apartheid structures of the racially segregated Republic of South Africa were fracturing. The ruling National Party's Bantustan system, whereby the living spaces of the majority African population were restricted to discrete zones according to their ethnic subgroup, had been failing for decades. In order to understand the outbreak of violence that took place in South Africa's townships in the midst of this breakdown of apartheid society, the relationships that developed within these Bantustans must first be addressed. The most consequential of these relationships developed within KwaZulu, the "homeland" of Zulu Africans, beginning in the early 1970s when Zulu leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi began to formulate his own cultural and political organization: Inkatha. As Inkatha gained national popularity as a liberation group within KwaZulu, it economically enmeshed itself with both the Afrikaner National Party as well as its own Zulu support base. This paper examines the township violence of the 1980s and 90s in eastern South Africa as a result of the economically interdependent relationship that formed between these three groups.

## **DEDICATION**

For my parents, Scott and Nicole, who made this possible, and for Sarah, who helped me every step of the way.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ANC - African National Congress

COSATU - Congress of African Trade Unions

IFP - Inkatha Freedom Party

NP - National Party

TRC - Truth and Reconciliation Commission

UDF - United Democratic Front

UWUSA - United Workers Union of South Africa

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Bantustan program of Southern Africa that began in earnest in the second half of the 20th century was the Afrikaner National Party's (NP) attempt to finally solve South Africa's "race problem."<sup>1</sup> As early as 1966, it was recognized that the Bantustan program, which tribally categorized the African population and relocated them to ethnically distinct reserves, was the supposed "final solution" to South Africa's "Native question."<sup>2</sup> While segregation based on race had emerged in South Africa decades previously, it was with the 1948 electoral victory of the NP that apartheid, or "apartness," began to be codified and made official. At the height of the program, there were ten Bantustans in South Africa. The program was morally bankrupt, while the Bantustans themselves perpetually teetered on financial bankruptcy. I will be focusing on one of these Bantustans — the only one dedicated to Zulu Africans: KwaZulu, on the eastern coast. I will analyze, firstly, the violent transitional period in KwaZulu as a result of the relationship between the area's three key groups, which are Inkatha, the apartheid central government, and African Zulus themselves. More importantly, I intend to demonstrate this intertwined relationship that centres around Inkatha was characterized primarily not by collaborationism or tribal co-option, but by the economic interdependence of all three parties.

Of course, an unequal social landscape was not unique to South Africa. But in this case, inequality was legally mandated and aggressively enforced, with massive amounts of

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<sup>1</sup> Using Persian naming customs, loosely translates to "Land of the Bantu," with "Bantu" referring to native, non-KhoiSan Africans.

<sup>2</sup>Anthony D'Amato, "The Bantustan Proposals for South-West Africa," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 4, no. 2 (1996): 187. References to Nazi Germany, such as "final solution," were common in discussions on South Africa. Many of the NP's early leaders were sympathetic to Nazi Germany, and so we can easily draw comparisons between the Nazi race policy and the NP's. Here, D'Amato was referring to Bantustans in South-West Africa (Namibia), then under the control of the NP.

bureaucratic energy being expended to cement this inequality in post-1948 South Africa.<sup>3</sup> Existing law, such as the Urban Areas Act of 1945, was reinforced with new legislation such as the Group Areas Act and the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951. Thembisa Waetjen points to these early years as when the apartheid program began to truly develop.<sup>4</sup> However, it was with the 1958 election of “Grand Apartheid’s” chief architect, Hendrik Verwoerd, that the segregated areas set aside for Africans began to be “conceptualized as nascent nation-states” with local governmental functions — these would become South Africa’s Bantustans.<sup>5</sup>

South Africa’s first official Bantustan was Transkei, the first of two Bantustans for Xhosa Africans. The reaction of the international community was immediately skeptical and pessimistic.<sup>6</sup> This pessimism was in spite of the NP’s best efforts to sell the Bantustan program as one of liberation. Verwoerd and Werner Eiselen, the men behind the 1953 Bantu Education Act, claimed that the program was part of the wider phenomenon of African decolonization, whereby South Africa would grant each African ethnic group their own area in which they could develop along their own lines, eventually gaining full independence.<sup>7</sup> Instead of seeing it this way, many commentators, foreign and domestic, saw the Bantustan program as a strategy to divide-and-conquer the African population. As whites were massively outnumbered by native Africans, preventing them from becoming a unified group was seen as an effective way to maintain minority rule — the state’s Bantustan program would create and enforce ethnic tribal

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph Lelyveld, *Move Your Shadow: South Africa, Black and White* (New York: Times Books, 1985), 82-85.

<sup>4</sup> Thembisa Waetjen, “The ‘Home’ in Homeland: Gender, National Space, and Inkatha’s Politics of Ethnicity,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22, no. 2 (1999): 657.

<sup>5</sup> Laurence Piper, “Nationalism without a Nation: the Rise and Fall of Zulu Nationalism in South Africa’s Transition to Democracy, 1975-99,” *Nations and Nationalism* 8, no. 1 (2002): 77.

<sup>6</sup> D’Amato, “Bantustan Proposals,” 177.

<sup>7</sup> Saul Dubow, “Racial Irredentism, Ethnogenesis, and White Supremacy in High-Apartheid South Africa,” *Kronos* no. 41 (2015): 243.

divisions. This also had the effect of dividing various anti-apartheid groups.<sup>8</sup> The NP was hyper-aware of the threat that could be posed from alliances across class and national lines. A fragmented “national consciousness” would ensure such alliances could not coalesce around the general anti-apartheid movement.<sup>9</sup>

In some circles within South Africa, the segregation of Africans to distinct geographic areas represented the natural order of things. There were apparently certain inherent differences between the European and African populations of South Africa (and, for that matter, between the mixed and Asian populations as well) that no amount of progress on the part of Africans could truly change.<sup>10</sup> Although there was a prominent debate between liberals and conservatives led by Phillip Tobias and J.D. Hofmeyr, respectively, on the relevance and legitimacy of the concept of “race,” there is no doubt that Verwoerd in the era of “High Apartheid” was able to convince many whites that separate development and the segregation of Africans to Bantustans was morally impeccable.

There are several reasons why KwaZulu is deserving of special attention, some of which will be explained briefly here and more in the historiography. As Southall explains, the goal of the Bantustans was not only to divide the African population into separate “tribes,” but also to establish, in each Bantustan, a collaborative and economically dependent petty bourgeois ruling class.<sup>11</sup> In KwaZulu, this ruling body was the Legislative Assembly (KLA), which was the product and focus of the apartheid government’s efforts at co-optation of the Zulu elite. The Chief

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<sup>8</sup> Sibusisiwe Dlamini, *Youth and Identity Politics in South Africa, 1990-1994* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 4.

<sup>9</sup> Roger Southall, “African Capitalism in Contemporary South Africa,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 7, no. 1 (1980): 39.

<sup>10</sup> Dubow, “Racial Irredentism,” 236.

<sup>11</sup> Southall, “African Capitalism,” 40.

Minister and individual in charge of the KLA was Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi, a Zulu of royal heritage and Chief of the Buthelezi clan.

Leaders such as Buthelezi, whose platform to a large degree rested on a brand of ethnic nationalism, were those to whom the Bantustan program appealed the most.<sup>12</sup> As will be shown in section three, the provision of a “homeland” for Zulus ensured both the political and economic security of the Zulu petty bourgeoisie, of which Buthelezi was the chief representative. In Nicholas Cope’s discussion of Zulu nationalism in the 1920s, he explains that the attempted co-optation of the Zulu elite was not a unique development in the period that this paper is concerned with.<sup>13</sup> There was, in fact, a decades-long history of alliances between conservative Zulus and the central state. In the 1970s, however, this political tradition took on a less direct, more ambiguous character. Buthelezi, unlike the Matanzima brothers who ruled over Transkei, was not an outright apartheid collaborator. He held a strange dual role — he was at once an active participant in the apartheid system, and simultaneously the leader of the largest domestic anti-apartheid black liberation group within South Africa: the Inkatha National Cultural Liberation Movement, founded by Buthelezi himself in 1975.

This dual role held by Buthelezi is the cause of much confusion in the literature concerning South Africa and especially KwaZulu and the Bantustans. But the overlap between the KwaZulu local government and Inkatha did not stop at Buthelezi — Oscar Dhlomo, too, served both as KwaZulu’s Minister of Education and as Inkatha’s Secretary General. In fact, the entirety of the cabinet members of KwaZulu were also, as a rule, members of Inkatha’s Central

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<sup>12</sup> Dlamini, *Youth*, 7.

<sup>13</sup> Nicholas Cope, “The Zulu Petit Bourgeoisie and Zulu Nationalism in the 1920s: Origins of Inkatha,” *JSAS* 16, no. 3 (1990): 431-451.

Committee.<sup>14</sup> Sibusisiwe Dlamini is more direct: it is, we are told, fair to say that the leadership of Inkatha and of the KLA were effectively the same body.<sup>15</sup> So, for the purposes of this paper, the KLA and Inkatha will be treated as the same group, and the terms will be used interchangeably.

One of the areas of concern which has attracted much attention in the history of apartheid South Africa is the process of the country's democratic transition. Beginning in 1990, the government of Frederik de Klerk negotiated an end to race-based minority rule in the country. This culminated in the 1994 electoral victory of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), a socialist political party which had been officially outlawed at the beginning of the 1960s and had been operating in exile for roughly thirty years. During this transitional period, the country, and especially KwaZulu, had been plagued with political violence which has often been characterized as "tribal."<sup>16</sup> The transition of South Africa took place during the global transition out of the Cold War, and the political landscape of the country from 1975 through 1990 must be understood in this context. As will be seen, many aspects of the relationship in question cannot be placed outside of the global conflict between capitalism and international communism, specifically in regards to Inkatha's relationship with both the NP and the ANC.

There is considerable literature dedicated to providing explanations for South Africa's violent transition, and in this realm, the politics of KwaZulu and Inkatha have figured prominently. However, what appears to be missing or incomplete is a detailed analysis of the

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<sup>14</sup> Gerhard Mare and Georgina Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and South Africa* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 85.

<sup>15</sup> Dlamini, *Youth*, 57.

<sup>16</sup> For a nuanced discussion of the role of "tribalism" in the political violence during the transition era, see Heribert Adam and Kogila Moodley, "Political Violence, 'Tribalism,' and Inkatha," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 30, no. 3 (1992): 485-510.

political environment in KwaZulu in the decades prior, which contributed to the breakdown of diplomacy once the ANC was unbanned and negotiations had opened. An analysis of this kind necessarily involves an account of the relationships that Inkatha held within KwaZulu beginning in 1975, which this paper intends to provide. Far from accepting the general notion that Inkatha acted purely as a collaborationist regime and that Zulus' participation in violence on Inkatha's behalf was tribally motivated, this paper will make the case that the interactions between these three groups were the result of unique and materially-motivated self-concern, and that previous analyses of this relationship which exclude or relegate economic or material concerns to a peripheral focus are, at best, incomplete.

## **CHAPTER 2: HISTORIOGRAPHY**

In describing the historical literature on this topic, there are two separate but linked historiographies that should be explained. The first and most broad of these is the general South African historiography which concerns, primarily, the origins of segregation and apartheid. The second and more specific historiography is that which concerns specifically the Bantustans and Inkatha. This narrower historiography is most important for understanding how and where this research fits into South African historical literature, and will be dealt with last.

As for general apartheid historiography, there are three broad schools of thought, each containing smaller subdivisions. The oldest is the traditional Liberal school, represented by such scholars as Leonard Thompson, Maynard Swanson, Omer Cooper, and even the missionary John Philip who, in many ways, served as the original fount for 20th century Liberal ideology in South Africa. With regard to the chronology of apartheid, the Liberal school of thought tends to place the formative years at some point prior to the beginning of the twentieth century, and invariably before the Act of Union in 1910. As for the rationale for racial segregation, Liberals downplay

the role of economic necessity in favour of cultural determinism (racial and religious prejudices tend to figure prominently in Liberal analyses of apartheid). Thompson and Susan Ritner, for example, both produced works in the 1960s which placed responsibility for racial segregation squarely on Boer/Afrikaner cultural identity. And, particularly in Ritner's case, the efforts of the Dutch Reformed Church were central, the supposed vanguard of "Afrikanerdom" in both the sacred and profane realms. We are told that it was particular cultural pressures on Afrikaners which hardened Afrikaner nationalism and cultivated the ideology of "raase-apartheid."<sup>17</sup>

The Liberal school can be further broken down by era. As Alan Cobley presents in his 2001 article on historiographical trends in South Africa, the first iterations of Liberal scholarship were two sides of the same coin: the pro-settler tradition, which characterized the struggle in South Africa as between civilized Europeans and heathen savagery, and the "paternalist" tradition, which denounced the aggression of frontier settlers and which produced works highly sympathetic to the plight of the Africans (especially the native Khoi-San). The origins of both these schools can be dated back to the Sixth Frontier War between the native Xhosa and British settlers in 1834-1835.<sup>18</sup> In a claim that is representative of the paternalist tradition, John Philip remarked on the native Africans as "a people that in the course of less than a century were violently dispossessed of every portion of their territory, deprived of every means of improving their condition as individuals, and, under various pretexts, fixed by law in a state of hopeless

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<sup>17</sup> Two key works are Leonard Thompson, "Afrikaner Nationalist Historiography and the Policy of Apartheid," *The Journal of African History* 3, no. 1 (1962): 125-141, and Susan Ritner, "The Dutch Reformed Church and Apartheid," *Journal of Contemporary History* 2, no. 4 (1967): 17-37.

<sup>18</sup> Alan Cobley, "Does Social History Have a Future? The Ending of Apartheid and Recent Trends in South African Historiography," *JSAS* 27, no. 3 (2001): 613-614.



bondage.”<sup>19</sup> This subgroup of Liberal scholars, as Andrew Bank points out, was heavily influenced ideologically by the European Enlightenment.<sup>20</sup>

Emerging in the early twentieth century was the Africanist subdivision of the Liberal school. Heavily influenced by the work of Christian elite ethnographers and focusing more on the condition of the “Bantu,” this scholarship served mostly as a transitional phase into the most recent “liberal Africanist” school which became dominant in the 1960s.<sup>21</sup> This school, of which Leonard Thompson is perhaps the most prominent, is the most relevant incarnation of the Liberal school, and the one which the Marxist or “radical” school emerged as a critique of. This Marxist school of scholarship, from which this paper draws inspiration, emerged fully in the 1970s and 1980s, with the latter decade constituting the formative years of South Africa’s black social history-from-below.<sup>22</sup>

Eventually becoming the most dominant discursive ideology in South African historiography, the radical school criticized both the Liberal school’s focus on the pre-Union period as well as their culturally deterministic rationale for the origins of racial segregation. Rather than factors such as religion and ethnic prejudices, the radical school instead offers a rationale based on economic and material interest. Dan O’Meara, for example, effectively analyzes the Afrikaner Broederbond as a class force acting as the vanguard for the Afrikaner petty-bourgeoisie and those poor Afrikaner farmers who rightfully viewed themselves as the repeated victims of imperial British capitalism.<sup>23</sup> Martin Legassick points to the clearly

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<sup>19</sup> John Philip, *Researches in South Africa: Illustrating the Civil, Moral, and Religious Condition of the Native Tribes* (London: J. Duncan, Paternoster Row, 1828), 2.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew Bank, 261.

<sup>21</sup> Cobley, “Social History,” 614.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 613-615.

<sup>23</sup> Dan O’Meara, “The Afrikaner Broederbond 1927-1948: Class Vanguard of Afrikaner Nationalism,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 3, no. 2 (1977): 156-186.

enunciated goal of the South African Native Affairs Commission -- that is, the need for a dominant white society supported by cheap black labour. Indeed, “the birth of capitalist social relations in a colonial society” is what radical historians tend to bring into focus.<sup>24</sup> It should be noted that although shifts in colonial society cannot be ignored in relation to the formation of segregationist ideology and practice, this paper does not seek to reaffirm South Africa as a settler colonial state and place the Cold War-era trilateral economic relationship within that context. So, while the case can certainly be made that the NP-Inkatha-Zulu web represents a classic case of colonial co-option, it is not my intention to demonstrate this.

Due to the emphasis put on industrial and capitalist forces, radical scholars tend to find the origins of racial segregation after 1900. Rather than racial segregation being the natural outcome of collision between white and black peoples upon landing in Cape centuries prior, radicalists argue that the system was devised both to cure South Africa’s nascent issue of class conflict and to ensure the survival of the capitalist class.<sup>25</sup> Though this line of thinking closely aligns with my own research, there are issues associated with radical scholarship with regard to the specific historiography of the Bantustans. These will be addressed shortly.

Before addressing the historiography of the Bantustans, there is a third broad school of scholarship which requires brief attention: the Nationalist school, generally made up of Afrikaner scholars. While many Nationalists agree with Liberals on the chronological origin of segregation (Brian du Toit, for example, finds the origins of apartheid as far back as the first European

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<sup>24</sup> Martin Legassick, “British Hegemony and the Origins of Segregation in South Africa, 1901-1914,” in *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth Century South Africa*. eds. William Beinart & Saul Dubow (London: Routledge, 2013), 44-46.

<sup>25</sup> For two key arguments on the radicalist rationale for apartheid, see Shula Marks, “Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Apartheid,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 4, no. 2 (1978): 174, and Martin Legassick, “South Africa in Crisis: What Route to Democracy?” *African Affairs* 84, no. 337 (1985): 589.

landings<sup>26</sup>), there is significant daylight between them on the rationale. Liberal scholars tend to point to a particular ingrained racism within Boer or Afrikaner culture and religion. Nationalist historians such as Hermann Giliomee and Andre du Toit, unsurprisingly, take issue with this. They instead insist that apartheid was the result of a nationalist response to the unique Afrikaner experience and history of being repeatedly victimized by the British and, apparently, native Africans. Simply, the intended outcome was apparently not racism, but “political survival.”<sup>27</sup> Though Paul Maylam explains that generations of Nationalist scholars softened their crude racial positions after World War II, condescending and racially-tinged scholarship was being produced at least as late as 1976.<sup>28</sup> Further, when Afrikaner scholars react to the charge that the apartheid government undoubtedly had the trappings of an exploitative settler-colonial state, many point to the reality that the descendants of the Boers of southern Cape were themselves the victims of imperial British colonialism. It is further complicated by the assertion that during and before the Boers migrated northward, they were encountering native Africans, namely the Zulu, an ethnic group that had been migrating southward (i.e., neither group in question were native to the contested land).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Brian du Toit, “Consciousness, Identification, and Resistance in South Africa,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 21, no. 3 (1983): 366.

<sup>27</sup> Dubow, “Racial Irredentism,” 236-242. In this article, Dubow speaks on a question that Nationalist scholar Hermann Giliomee poses: “How does one square the absence of a racist ideology with a racist program?”

<sup>28</sup> A clear example is Knut Reese, “Independence for South Africa’s Bantustans and their Industrialization,” *Studia Diplomatica* 29, no. 4 (1976): 469-482. Here, Reese suggests that the lack of access to food is not the result of the Bantustans being afforded the poorest quality arable land, but rather the native Africans own unwillingness to modernize and their being accustomed to growing food only for subsistence purposes. Also, the lack of African sources in the pre-1990 historiography of South Africa is unsurprising, given that many African authors were dedicated to producing calls to action and short, simple publications meant to hit the streets of South Africa. As a result, much Black writing was ephemeral and designed for a categorically non-academic audience. For a discussion of this topic, see Margreet De Lange’s *The Muzzled Muse: Literature and Censorship in South Africa* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1997) as well as Christopher Merrett’s *A Culture of Censorship: Secrecy and Intellectual Repression in South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1994).

<sup>29</sup> Interpretations of the history of Afrikaner/Boer encounters with Zulu Africans go back at least to the 1930s, see Alan Hattersly, “Historical Revision: LVII — The Great Trek, 1835-7,” *History* 16, no. 61 (1931).

The narrower historiography that must now be discussed regards the scholarship on the Bantustans and Inkatha. Michael Sutcliffe and Paul Wellings offer a succinct description of the historiography on Inkatha: one category tends to emphasize the rapid growth and popular appeal of Inkatha, and put much weight behind the rhetoric of Buthelezi. Brian du Toit and John Brewer are two examples of this category of analysis, and du Toit's claim that Inkatha is "historically based, culturally justified, and democratically organized"<sup>30</sup> is characteristic of the overly-generous take on Inkatha's politics. The other category is generally more critical, and rather than discuss the "official" policies of Inkatha, it scrutinizes Inkatha in practice.<sup>31</sup> This latter category tends to consist of mostly radicalist scholars.

Laurence Piper presents a more recent analysis of the scholarship on Inkatha. Among scholars of the political left, there is a "tendency to reduce Inkatha to an apartheid satrap," while rightists often view Inkatha solely as "a Zulu nationalist project."<sup>32</sup> In reality, there is far more nuance involved in Inkatha's role as both an anti-apartheid organization and as a local governmental body whose existence is contingent on the will of the apartheid state. Piper sought to move beyond these two narrow black-and-white analyses, and so does this paper.

Though my analysis is most closely aligned ideologically with the radical school of interpretation, there are serious issues with their analyses in regards to Inkatha. Duncan Innes and Dan O'Meara, for instance, regard the Bantustan system as a scheme to sow division among the African proletariat.<sup>33</sup> This is a common and widely-accepted view, however the conclusion

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<sup>30</sup> Du Toit, "Consciousness," 366.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Sutcliffe and Paul Wellings, "Inkatha versus the Rest: Black Opposition in Durban's African Townships," *African Affairs* 87, no. 348 (1988): 325.

<sup>32</sup> Piper "Nationalism," 75.

<sup>33</sup> Duncan Innes and Dan O'Meara, "Class Formation and Ideology: The Transkei Region," *Review of African Political Economy* no. 7 (1976): 85.

that many radicals draw from this is that Inkatha was simply an extension of this program, existing only as a bulwark against African unity. The credit which radicals afford to socialist-leaning African groups, such as the ANC, is absent from their analyses of Inkatha, a categorically pro-capital group. Inkatha, we are told, was a collaborationist group which allied itself with the apartheid state and manipulated the tribal-minded Zulus, who are described as lumpenproletariat masses.<sup>34</sup> Rather than accepting a shallow analysis of this kind, Gerhard Mare looks to the particular regional economic conditions to explain Inkatha's formation.<sup>35</sup> In doing so, much of the radicalist literature on Inkatha becomes suspect. Heather Deegan explains that the rise in African resistance in the 1970s had much to do with the 1973-76 economic recession in South Africa.<sup>36</sup> It is my assertion that the formation of Inkatha in 1975, in the midst of this recession, is no coincidence. The relative lack of attention paid to the economic dimension and appeal of Inkatha's politics during its time as the governing body of KwaZulu is a gap in the discourse surrounding Inkatha that this paper intends to partially fill. Roger Southall and John Brewer had much to say about Inkatha's structure and function, and their disagreements will receive special attention in section five.

As a final note on the historiography of South Africa, it should be briefly mentioned that the divide-and-rule approach that radical scholars focus on was not new to the latter half of the twentieth century. Historical antecedents can be found at least as far back as the British colonial

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<sup>34</sup> The assertion that Zulus who participated in the transition violence of the late 1980s and early 1990s were "lumpenized" is characteristic of the radical school and something I take particular issue with in this paper. Radical works such as Legassick, "South Africa in Crisis," and Southall, "A Note on Inkatha Membership," *African Affairs* 85, no. 341 (1986) are both guilty of using this language in relation to Zulu violence.

<sup>35</sup> Gerhard Mare, "Versions of Resistance History in South Africa: The ANC Strand in Inkatha in the 1970s and 1980s," *Review of African Political Economy* 27, no. 83 (2000): 67.

<sup>36</sup> Heather Deegan, *The Politics of the New South Africa: Apartheid and After* (Harlow, England: Pearson Ltd., 2001), 43.

period, where this strategy was apparently a cornerstone. Further, co-option of the Zulu elite by segregationists also finds its roots in British policy, with separate development proponent G.H. Nicholls allying himself with petty bourgeois Zulu John Dube to create the first native reserves in South Africa. This is a main reason that the area of Natal/KwaZulu requires special attention. This eastern part of South Africa not only served as the basis and model of segregation, but the Bantustan system as a whole.<sup>37</sup>

### **CHAPTER 3: THE NATIONAL PARTY – INKATHA RELATIONSHIP**

The economically interdependent relationship which is the focus of this paper is best visualized as a straight line, with the apartheid state and local Zulus on either end, Inkatha connecting them in the middle. This dependence flows in both directions from Inkatha:

Apartheid state  $\longleftrightarrow$  Inkatha  $\longleftrightarrow$  Zulus living in KwaZulu

In this way, there is no direct dependence between Zulus and the central state; Inkatha, serving the role of local governmental body, was the middle man in all economic and material exchanges. This section will explain the first of these two relational dimensions: the interdependency between the apartheid state and the Inkatha organization. In doing so, the underlying goals of both groups also become less nebulous. The central state, concerned with stability and the looming threat of international sanction and disinvestment, sought to maintain black labour subordination while also maintaining legitimacy and amity with the West. Inkatha, most simply, sought to preserve their own petty bourgeois class power and provide economic improvements for both the rural and proletariat Zulus who formed the entirety of their base of

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<sup>37</sup> Marks, "The Ambiguities of Dependence: John L. Dube of Natal," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 1, no. 2 (1975), Marks, "Natal," and Cope, "Natal Petit Bourgeoisie," all discuss the early role that Natal and the Zulu petty bourgeoisie played in the formation of segregation and of the concept of African reserves.

support and which ensured their survival against the central state.<sup>38</sup> The remainder of this section will unpack these intertwining goals in greater detail.<sup>39</sup>

The dependency of Inkatha (and the KLA) upon the apartheid state will be addressed first. The most obvious aspect of this dependency is the fact that Inkatha's hold of local authority of KwaZulu existed only as long as Inkatha, as an organization, remained unbanned. The NP not only had a tendency to ban books and censor authors, but to outlaw entire groups, as they did with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the ANC. Inkatha leadership was fully aware that remaining amicable, or at least relatively cooperative, was vital to being able to successfully operate within South Africa: "Inkatha is carrying an oversized stick but treading so softly and diplomatically that this movement has survived when others have been banned. . . from the very beginning [Buthelezi] has insisted that these must be the ultimate aims."<sup>40</sup> By taking part in the Bantustan system and not seeking to disrupt the status quo in any violent way, Buthelezi was able to maintain Inkatha's dual position by continuing their anti-apartheid sentiment while functionally fulfilling the expectations of the NP leadership.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> As will be seen, the need to maintain or to appear to be maintaining popular support was a major theme in Inkatha's strategy.

<sup>39</sup> The kind of native elite co-option discussed in this paper is of course not unique to South Africa. An African analogy can be found in the Rwandan situation, where Belgian and German colonists enlisted the elite Tutsi pastoralists to control the majority Hutu (see Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 387-409), as well as in colonial Upper Canada (see Alan Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers, and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 2006); Alan Taylor, "Divided Ground: Upper Canada, New York, and the Iroquois Six Nations, 1783-1815," *Journal of the Early Republic* 22, no. 1 (2002): 55-75) with limited success. In the latter case, the chiefly elite were at times not useful as middle men, apparently because their relationship with their tribal "subjects" was not coercive by nature.

<sup>40</sup> Du Toit, "Consciousness," 388.

<sup>41</sup> Barbara Rogers, *Divide and Rule: South Africa's Bantustans* (London: International Defence & Aid Fund, 1980), 88. Here, Rogers is more critical of Inkatha's behavior, implying that the rhetoric of those like Buthelezi is insincere and purely politically calculated. While this implication is short-sighted, the balancing dynamic she outlines here is useful.

This participation was undoubtedly the main reason Inkatha was able to continue operations within South Africa, rather than appealing to the international community for asylum, as the ANC was forced to do.<sup>42</sup> Rather than direct confrontation, Buthelezi sought to alter the system of apartheid through a commitment to a fully negotiatory strategy. The strategy consisted of upholding the appearance of political moderation while ensuring the NP leadership that local stability would be maintained.<sup>43</sup> There was another tactical prong that Inkatha used, one which stemmed from the very benefits that Inkatha drew from its participation in the Bantustan program in the first place: economic power. Being in control of KwaZulu's resource distribution, Inkatha's petty bourgeois leadership sought to wield what economic and legislative power it had to entwine itself with capital forces — they invested, economically and politically. The efficacy of this strategy was not lost on Buthelezi, who in 1981, conveyed his tactics to American politicians in characteristically frank terms:

We have shares in business, we participate on the Board of the KwaZulu Development Corporation, and we are the cabinet of KwaZulu. This means that we are not as vulnerable as we might otherwise have been. . . We are in control of whether or not Government policy succeeds or fails, at least for the group that the Government regards as KwaZulu citizens.<sup>44</sup>

Oscar Dhlomo, the General Secretary of Inkatha's Central Committee, also remarked on this economic strategy. The “soft underbelly” of the economy, which relies on black labour, much of which Inkatha controlled, could be expertly exploited.<sup>45</sup> Inkatha's openness about their tactics suggests that the group at once meant to make themselves a necessity to the apartheid state, while also signalling that their strategy was not a purely collaborative one.

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<sup>42</sup> Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, 79.

<sup>43</sup> Sutcliffe and Wellings, “Inkatha versus the Rest,” 328-329.

<sup>44</sup> Quoted in Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, 82.

<sup>45</sup> Oscar Dhlomo, “The Strategy of Inkatha and its Critics,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 1-2 (1983): 55.



KwaZulu, like other Bantustans, was also reliant on the apartheid state for direct revenue injections into the local economy. Due to the lands that the Bantustans were granted, they, and especially KwaZulu, were at a considerable economic disadvantage. The Institute for Social Research at the University of Natal reported that 70% of KwaZulu's land could not be used for food cultivation.<sup>46</sup> Rapid soil erosion further threatened food security.<sup>47</sup> But excessive terrain slope and insufficient rainfall were not the only issue with the land — it was also devoid of mineral wealth. Gold, diamonds, and base metals were found almost exclusively in the majority of the country which was designated for whites. Factories, harbours, commercial farms, banks, and even paved roads were absent.<sup>48</sup> The quantity of land exacerbated the problem of poor quality: three KwaZulu districts had population densities of over 3,000 Zulus per square mile of arable land.<sup>49</sup> The chances of the citizens of KwaZulu being able to independently feed themselves, let alone prosper economically, were incredibly slim.

Because of this, the Bantustans were heavily subsidized. Roughly 75-80% of all Bantustan revenue came directly from the South African government.<sup>50</sup> The health services within the Bantustans were kept afloat by these state subsidies (though crippling economic conditions ensured that the general health in the Bantustans remained nothing less than a humanitarian crisis).<sup>51</sup> It was this utter dependence on central government funding which, according to Southall, necessitated the kind of collaboration that we see in many of the Bantustan

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<sup>46</sup> Rogers, *Divide and Rule*, 47. A similar estimate is given in V.B. Khapoya, "Bantustans in South Africa: The Role of the Multinational Corporations," *Journal of Eastern African Research & Development* 10, no. 1/2 (1980): 32.

<sup>47</sup> Eliphaz Mukonoweshuro, "Between Verwoerd and the ANC: Profiles of Contemporary Repression, Deprivation, and Poverty in South Africa's 'Bantustans,'" *Social Justice* 18, no. 1 (1991): 177.

<sup>48</sup> D'Amato, "Bantustan Proposals," 180.

<sup>49</sup> Rogers, *Divide and Rule*, 48.

<sup>50</sup> Rogers, *Divide and Rule*, 33 puts this number at 80%. Mukonoweshuro, "Between Verwoerd," 175 offers a slightly more conservative estimate of 75%.

<sup>51</sup> Mukonoweshuro, "Between Verwoerd," 181.

local governments.<sup>52</sup> Even with the best efforts of Buthelezi and Inkatha to improve the economic conditions of KwaZulu through investment and the courting of foreign business, only so much could be done without aid and approval from the central state. By 1980, it had already become clear that if black capital was to mobilize, it had to be done with the blessing of the NP leadership, and funds entering KwaZulu would inevitably be channeled through Pretoria.<sup>53</sup> Black entrepreneurialism did grow, if modestly, through the 1970s and 1980s, but the only stimulation for this kind of activity was provided by stipends and grants from white segregationists in the government.<sup>54</sup>

This aspect of dependency did not happen by accident. Though independence was the ostensible goal for each Bantustan, true independence was neither possible, given the poor allocation of land and capital resources mentioned above, nor desirable by the white government. The dependence of each Bantustan, both “independent” and “semi-independent,” was manufactured.<sup>55</sup> Since before the very first Bantustan was given autonomy in 1963, it was already clear that the capitalist class of South Africa was not going to lose control of their labour pool when black African were forcibly relocated — rather, they would simply be placed in a labour reservoir.<sup>56</sup> To borrow software programming terms, the dependency of black areas upon the apartheid state was a *feature* of the Bantustan program, not a bug.

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<sup>52</sup> Southall, “African Capitalism,” 69. Here, Southall also claims that a reason the Bantustan petty bourgeoisie needed to collaborate with the apartheid government was their utter alienation from mass support bases within the Bantustans that they ran. This was categorically not the case within KwaZulu, where Inkatha enjoyed wide, if sometimes nominal, popular support.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>54</sup> Deegan, *The Politics*, 37.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>56</sup> D’Amato, “Bantustan Proposals,” 188.

However, the central government were not the only actors who schemed, planned, and took advantage of the state of affairs devised by the NP. Understanding that achieving the final stage of “independence” would be a financially regressive move, Inkatha leadership, to the chagrin of the NP, vehemently opposed it. Buthelezi openly criticized the NP’s contradictory and confusing stance on “forcing” the Bantustans into “independence.” Of course, the version of independence that Pretoria desired was independence in name only, as the economy still depended greatly on labour migrancy from the Bantustans, and so any real independence that the Zulu nationalist movement may have desired was incompatible with the white governments plans. He also rebuked the government for removing a main trade port, Richards Bay Harbour, from KwaZulu jurisdiction.<sup>57</sup> Buthelezi, frequently a thorn in the NP’s side, was more comfortable voicing his disapproval with the government than most because he was less afraid of reprisal.

In 1978, after a brief falling out between the Mathanzima brothers of Transkei, the Bantustan saw a sharp decrease in financing from Pretoria.<sup>58</sup> The support which Buthelezi enjoyed from Inkatha and Zulus at large made a punitive move like this less possible for KwaZulu (though reductions did happen). With this security, Inkatha resisted government attempts to force “independence” for over a decade. Perhaps the most vocal advocate in the opposition of this plan, Buthelezi instead sought to entwine himself even closer with the central government; he sought to also make them dependent upon him.<sup>59</sup> The extent of this state dependence upon Buthelezi and Inkatha will now be addressed.

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<sup>57</sup> Rogers, *Divide and Rule*, 33, 94.

<sup>58</sup> Khapoya, “Bantustans in South Africa,” 43.

<sup>59</sup> Dlamini, *Youth*, 59. Dlamini speaks in this section on the efforts of the KwaZulu local government to incorporate itself within the larger South African state apparatus.

This dynamic of dependence was the result of both converging class and economic interests between Inkatha and the NP, as well as conscious and strategic economic policy. These overlapping interests crystallized in the mid-1970s and especially the early 1980s in response to both international and domestic developments in Cold War politics. After racial segregation ended officially in the United States, South Africa was seen as even more of a pariah in the international community. Now, the United States could criticize the apartheid state without the charge of hypocrisy, and South Africa stood more alone than ever (of course, racial discrimination found no end after the relevant legislation was passed in the United States, however the country could now convincingly advertise itself as a legally non-racial society). Conscious of condemnation, the 1970s saw South Africa undergo a process of “deracialization” so as to assuage the mounting international pressure and allay fears that South Africa simply would not change for the better. What this meant for South Africa’s segregationists was simply that the justifications for apartheid would be reformed, but practice would remain. Now, repression against those calling for the end of apartheid was not carried out simply because they were black, but because they were “communist.”<sup>60</sup>

In 1977, the South African Ministry of Defence issued a white paper detailing their so-called “total strategy,” the government’s official response to the supposed “total communist onslaught” taking place within South Africa and emanating from foreign powers.<sup>61</sup> Under this new strategy, all anti-government activity (importantly, this includes calls for international sanction and disinvestment) would be categorized as subversive communism, part of a concerted effort to disrupt capitalist South African society. The 1980s saw further development in this strategy. It is

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<sup>60</sup> Dubow, “Racial Irredentism,” 237.

<sup>61</sup> Deegan, *The Politics*, 61.

the opinion of the authors of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that the 1980s rise of neoliberalism in the West, associated with the elections of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher in the United States and Great Britain, respectively, represented a global shift in attitude back to the “obsession” with communism of the 1950s. This shift presented the NP with an opportunity: “in essence, the struggle to maintain white minority privilege was ‘repackaged’ as an effort to maintain so-called Western civilized values against the godless and evil forces of communism.”<sup>62</sup>

However, the NP was not the only organization which took advantage of this resurgence of “red scare” politics. In order to secure a more cooperative relationship with the government, Inkatha also played up its free enterprise stance. In doing so, Inkatha was able to fulfill two of the NP’s new goals: the government was now able to show to the world that it was willing to work with and give concessions to black South Africans, as well as prop up a black regime which, unlike the ANC and SACP, was vehemently anti-communist and strictly against disinvestment. Buthelezi leaned into this strategy aggressively: throughout the 1970s and 1980s, he allied himself with many experts and advisors in the industrial and business sectors (importantly, Walter Felgate was among these advisors), and developed and maintained close relations with big business (most notably, the Anglo-American Corporation).<sup>63</sup>

In 1985, he was especially vocal, getting airtime on the BBC, NBC, and the South African Broadcasting Corporation to articulate his pro-foreign investment stance to both a domestic and global community. He made speaking tours in England and the United States, making his views

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<sup>62</sup> Government of South Africa, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report Volume 1*. Presented to President Mandela in October 1998. Subheading “The Law and Ethnicity,” sections 55-56, page 37.

<sup>63</sup> Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, 46-48.

clear to foreign businessmen.<sup>64</sup> Buthelezi, in some media circles, received very agreeable, sometimes glowing, reactions to his rhetoric: in 1986 the *Los Angeles Times* said of Buthelezi, “He wants South Africa’s free enterprise system to continue, although many of his fellow blacks want a socialist state,” going on the claim that Buthelezi’s political vision appears to be the most realistic hope of peace in South Africa.<sup>65</sup> The year after Buthelezi made this media tour, Inkatha launched the United Workers’ Union of South Africa (UWUSA) as a response to the ANC-backed Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). UWUSA was launched with much fanfare and was designed to offer the workers of South Africa a union alternative which, unlike COSATU, would maintain an agreeable relationship with foreign capital and investment. It was also meant to show the NP that African unionism did not necessarily imply socialist tendencies. Most importantly, it was meant to disrupt COSATU and their working class support base.<sup>66</sup>

All of this effort on the part of Buthelezi to sell Inkatha as an unambiguously capitalist black liberation group was well-received. However repressive the central government had been since 1948, they had a tendency “to avoid brutalizing” even those black groups with whom they shared a class interest. Inkatha became one of those groups, and the NP sought with them now, more than ever, a “tactical alliance.”<sup>67</sup> There is no doubt that Buthelezi’s economic policy and stance on foreign capital made him uniquely attractive both to businessmen abroad and the Pretoria

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 103.

<sup>65</sup> Michael Parks, “‘The Time Has Come to Talk’: Zulu Leader’s South Africa Solution: Compromise,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 11, 1986. Also see William Claiborne, “Buthelezi Defiant at Zulu Ceremony,” *Washington Post*, September 29, 1986.

<sup>66</sup> Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, 53.

<sup>67</sup> Quotations from Lelyveld, *Move Your Shadow*, 89. Lelyveld outlines the government’s class alliance strategy, but does not explicitly reference Inkatha.

government. Being seen as the only popular, credible, and moderate black resistance leader, Buthelezi was courted by the central state for an alliance against communism.<sup>68</sup>

It was, however, not Buthelezi's plan simply to form a tactical alliance—the goal was to make himself and Inkatha *indispensable*. Since it had become obvious that change in South Africa would be negotiatory, Buthelezi wanted to be seen as a necessary partner in those negotiations.<sup>69</sup> By the mid-to-late 1980s, it had become counterproductive to remove, intimidate, or circumvent Buthelezi in his position. While participating in the Bantustan program had initially been a vulnerability on the part of Inkatha, it had by this time become an advantage, as Buthelezi enmeshed himself and Inkatha within not only regional KwaZulu politics, but the national politics of the central state. Due to a combination of being the most important and credible Bantustan Chief Minister, holding massive influence over Zulu Africans, and being a bulwark against the perceived forces of communism, the consultation of Buthelezi by the white power holders of South Africa was now a necessity.<sup>70</sup> The interdependence between Inkatha and the NP, which would eventually crumble by the end of the transition period, had crystallized.

Before closing this section, two caveats are necessary. As previously mentioned, this alliance did not imply “stooge-ist” collaborationism on the part of Inkatha. Buthelezi and NP leadership were frequently at odds over policy matters, especially under the presidency of P.W. Botha, who considered Buthelezi an independent actor, a world apart from the other easily-plied Bantustan leaders. Buthelezi categorically rejected government attempts to make KwaZulu “independent,” and in one instance claimed that Botha would “drown” without his cooperation

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<sup>68</sup> Adam and Moodley, “Political Violence,” 488; Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, 105.

<sup>69</sup> Piper, “Nationalism,” 83.

<sup>70</sup> Du Toit, “Consciousness,” 391; Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, 44.

and participation.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, Buthelezi had often “taunted and menaced the Pretoria government upon which he depended for his patronage.”<sup>72</sup>

Further, Inkatha’s stance on independence and economic policy should not be seen as pure political calculations. Buthelezi invariably couched these positions in pro-African rhetoric. He claimed that fragmenting the country by way of independent Bantustans was apparently “the surest way of destroying the South African nation.”<sup>73</sup> Further, his opposition to sanctions was justified through the claim that they would destroy the economy for the South Africa that he believed blacks would inevitably inherit: if racial apartheid was the “snake in the house,” the solution cannot be to burn the entire house down.<sup>74</sup> Since at least the early 1970s, he touted economic upliftment as a strategy for liberation. Politicking for the sake of politicking is useless if economic needs are not addressed, and sanctions would only serve to further cripple black communities. Whereas groups like the ANC called for complete disinvestment, Buthelezi saw increased investment as a valuable tool.<sup>75</sup> Regardless of whether these efforts were misguided, there is no reason to believe this sentiment was not genuine, and it was exactly this kind of populism that formed the basis of the interdependence between Inkatha and the Zulu people themselves. This interdependence will be the focus of the next section.

#### **CHAPTER 4: THE INKATHA – ZULU RELATIONSHIP**

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<sup>71</sup> Adam and Moodley, “Political Violence,” 491; Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power*, 156-7.

<sup>72</sup> Patrick Harries, “Imagery, Symbolism and Tradition in a South African Bantustan: Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Inkatha, and Zulu History,” *History and Theory* 32, no. 4 (1993): 114.

<sup>73</sup> Buthelezi, quoted in Eric Marsden, “Zulu Chief Condemns ‘black traitors’ at Soweto Rally,” *The Times*, January 29, 1978.

<sup>74</sup> Buthelezi, quoted in Michael Hornsby, “Zulu leader warns against sanctions; South Africa,” *The Times*, July 29, 1986.

<sup>75</sup> Southall, “African Capitalism,” 63.



The dependent relationship between Inkatha and the Zulu people has several overlaps with that between Inkatha and the NP. In both cases, each side is concerned with material improvement and economic survival, and both involve a degree of coercion exercised by the more heavily-armed partner in the admittedly lopsided power structure of the relationship. However, there is an important difference. Coercion on the part of the central government raises no eyebrows, as one expects repressive regimes to do exactly what repressive regimes do. However, intimidatory techniques exercised by a supposed liberation group upon their own people can raise doubts as to the legitimacy of that group's claims.<sup>76</sup> Despite this, the group's concern for the economic improvement of KwaZulu citizens is unquestionable. The original Inkatha movement of the 1920s was founded largely in response to similar economic circumstances.<sup>77</sup> When the movement was revived by Buthelezi in the 1970s, again, economic upliftment was a clear concern. As he said in a KLA government diary, "we should not stop to do anything to improve our economic situation. . .once we have a measure of economic power, our battle will be half won."<sup>78</sup> Buthelezi also made it clear to the KLA that the KwaZulu government should reject any NP policy which would result in the loss of control over resources in KwaZulu.<sup>79</sup> As will be seen, this concern of material improvement was not fully due to an altruistic attitude, but to a large degree was the result of the necessity on the part of Inkatha to outwardly appear as a group with a massive official and sentimental support base.

As mentioned above, Inkatha officials were aware that membership numbers were one of the strongest tools to be used against the possibility of being banned.<sup>80</sup> To accomplish this,

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<sup>76</sup> Legassick, "What Route," for example, references much of the coercive behavior of Inkatha as an organization.

<sup>77</sup> Cope, "The Zulu."

<sup>78</sup> Quoted in Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite*, 54-55.

<sup>79</sup> Dlamini, *Youth*, 52.

<sup>80</sup> Dhlomo, "The Strategy," 52.

Inkatha sought to ensure membership both by making it a prerequisite for acquiring certain material resources and by making Inkatha appealing to certain sectors of the Zulu population, especially those unconvinced of the socialist alternatives provided by the ANC. Whereas many other Bantustan governments were uninterested in the support of the working class citizens up until at least the mid-to-late 1970s, such as the Matanzima regime in Transkei, Buthelezi had always envisioned that stratum as key. He was the self-designated representative of both the regional and national black African petty bourgeoisie, actively pursuing a support base among both the urban proletariat and the rural peasantry.<sup>81</sup> The marginalization of Zulus who had been left to work the unproductive land in KwaZulu and those who had been proletarianized as a result of the migrant labour system resulted in their susceptibility to an organization which promised prompt economic improvements.<sup>82</sup> It was to these groups, hostel-dwellers in the townships and rural poor, that Inkatha pandered.

It has already been established that Inkatha promoted a policy that was firmly anti-communist and anti-violence. Whereas the ANC's culture of militancy and political idealism was attractive to many Africans, those that Inkatha aimed at winning over were largely apathetic towards it. In many ways, the ANC's culture was the culture of elite, educated, and relatively wealthier urban Africans. Their issues were political, whereas economic improvements were generally the concern of poorer African workers who had no time for what they perceived as

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<sup>81</sup> Innes and O'Meara, "Class Formation," 81-84.

<sup>82</sup> Martin Legassick and Harold Wolpe, "The Bantustans and Capital Accumulation in South Africa," *Review of African Political Economy* no. 7 (1976): 88-90; Patrick Harries, "Imagery," 113; Innes and O'Meara, "Class Formation."

utopianism.<sup>83</sup> This is why Inkatha pursued its aforementioned strategy of opposition to disinvestment:

It is the relative affluence and communal orientation of educated labour which allows these organizations [like the ANC] to see disinvestment as a matter of principle...whereas Inkatha, for example, with a support base among the urban working class and rural peasantry opposes disinvestment, seeing the issue as a material one which will adversely affect its members.<sup>84</sup>

This also serves as an explanation for why Inkatha pursued an agenda of immediate economic gain and avoided political extremism.

Buthelezi was not only aware of the material deprivation of the entirety of the Zulu working class, but also of the alienation of the migrant Zulus. His speeches directed at the hostel-dwelling Zulus reflect this: "I will never abandon you here...The whole of Inkatha supports you...You can call on Inkatha. Inkatha is your natural ally in the struggle for liberation; Inkatha is your political home."<sup>85</sup> To a large degree, this sentimental appeal to migrant Zulus who found themselves far from home was successful. Many of these workers ended up being officially or effectively affiliated with Inkatha, providing them with a key support base in urban areas. This also allowed Inkatha to represent themselves as a group whose politics do not resonate only within KwaZulu borders, but are in fact nationally popular. This support of Inkatha on the part of migrant Zulus will be discussed more in the section on township violence.

To fully understand Inkatha's rhetoric, it is worth returning to their relationship with the central government. The NP had actively tried to support Buthelezi, seeing him as the only black leader with a large following that could be trusted to negotiate. In turn, Buthelezi wanted to be

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<sup>83</sup> John Brewer, "Black Protest in South Africa's Crisis: A Comment on Legassick," *African Affairs* 85, no. 339 (1986): 289-292.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.

<sup>85</sup> Quoted in Waetjen, "The 'Home,' in Homeland," 664.

seen in this light in order to make it impossible for the government to dismiss him.<sup>86</sup> However, this posed a problem for Buthelezi. The more concessions that Inkatha received, the more they came to be seen as outright collaborators who had become an inextricable part of the structures of apartheid.<sup>87</sup> This is why Buthelezi needed his rhetorical tools and, at least on paper, sizable support among his constituency. As Buthelezi said himself, “my utility lies in my following.”<sup>88</sup>

Rhetoric was certainly an important tool for Inkatha, and most of their actions were couched in terms meant to assure Zulus of the economic benefit of such actions. This applied even to positions that Inkatha took that certainly appeared anti-labour. Buthelezi had frequently opposed worker strikes and walk-outs on the grounds that they are counterproductive, and that continuing to work would keep the Bantustan economy afloat and would be overall beneficial to the people of KwaZulu.<sup>89</sup> However, this was also meant to give the NP the appearance of stability in regards to black labour. Inkatha’s position on sanctions was also a part of this double-edged tactic of appealing to Zulus while also ingratiating themselves with the central government and business interests. Publicly, Buthelezi claimed that sanctions would ruin the economy which Africans would inherit through his leadership in the anti-apartheid struggle. Further, the brunt of sanctions and disinvestment would fall on the already severely economically insecure, rather than the intended target (i.e. wealthy white powerholders).<sup>90</sup>

While other popular groups such as the ANC played into the necessity of putting international financial pressure on the NP, the position of Inkatha and Buthelezi was not damaged by their stance against sanctions. For one, many whites who were theoretically anti-

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<sup>86</sup> Adam and Moodley, “Political Violence,” 488; Piper, “Nationalism,” 83.

<sup>87</sup> Waetjen, “The ‘Home’ in Homeland,” 659.

<sup>88</sup> Quoted in Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite*, 99.

<sup>89</sup> Dlamini, *Youth*, 62.

<sup>90</sup> Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite*, 101.

apartheid were also against sanctions that may damage their businesses or communities. More importantly, many Africans were relatively ambiguous toward the idea of sanctions. Zulu migrants and KwaZulu's rural poor were among those who had the most to lose from a potential economic downturn, and they understood that sanctions could only serve to increase unemployment.<sup>91</sup> These fears were articulated in Buthelezi's rhetoric. Of course, this was also attractive to corporate interests. When pressed on the Anglo-American Corporation's involvement with Buthelezi, Gavin Relly's response was frank: "You can't expect us to run away from the single black leader who says exactly what we think."<sup>92</sup>

While these policies did resonate to a certain degree among some of the most desperate Zulus, it is also true that Inkatha could not rely solely on rhetoric to secure mass membership and the membership fees which Inkatha extracted. As a result, membership with Inkatha was not entirely voluntary. With the local Bantustan government being in control of KwaZulu resources, Inkatha was able to use membership as a prerequisite to securing a variety of goods and services. While this was mainly an unofficial matter for most of the 1970s and 80s, a 1987 Act passed in KwaZulu was more blatant. Now, affiliation with Inkatha was an official prerequisite for any career in public service within KwaZulu.<sup>93</sup> This became a serious pressure point, as the KLA provided the most promising jobs, especially for Zulu post-secondary graduates.<sup>94</sup> So, while securing the sentimental and material support of vast numbers of Zulus became vital for Inkatha's survival, it was the class appeal of Inkatha's economic policy and the coercive control

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<sup>91</sup> Adam and Moodley, "Political Violence," 491; Mare, "Versions," 72-73.

<sup>92</sup> Quoted in Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite*, 83.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>94</sup> Rogers, *Divide and Rule*, 45; Mukonoweshuro, "Between Verwoerd," 173.

over resources which formed the basis for the dependence of KwaZulu citizens upon Buthelezi, Inkatha, and the KLA.

The dependence on the patronage of the local government was certainly felt most sharply by the most severely deprived Zulus. The illiterate and uneducated, who could not hope to secure a job within Inkatha or the KLA, were forced to rely on favours and concessions from their local leaders. Of course, this was the expectation in return for loyalty to and membership with Inkatha. In this transaction, Inkatha was able to sell itself as the representative for the country's largest African ethnic group, and KwaZulu citizens were able to find some degree of respite from their material poverty. And "thus emerged a classical system of clientelism and patrimony" within KwaZulu.<sup>95</sup> However, as with all Bantustans, there was an extremely limited amount of resources within KwaZulu that could be allocated. This created an environment in which competition for Inkatha-controlled resources increased over time, which therefore increased the influence which Inkatha could wield over its constituents.<sup>96</sup> Still, Inkatha had such a monopoly on these resources that it was possible to create a system where members of Inkatha could be favoured and non-members would be faced with restrictions on vital resources in an area where rural poverty was crippling.<sup>97</sup>

Aside from those who had their genuine concerns satisfied within Inkatha, the services used to ensure Inkatha membership included jobs, work permits, land, homes, and pensions. More niche resources such as trading licenses and membership within the Farmer's Association were also used as pressure points to secure membership.<sup>98</sup> The vast majority of land within the

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<sup>95</sup> Adam and Moodely, "Political Violence," 508.

<sup>96</sup> Doug Tilton, "Creating an 'Educated Workforce': Inkatha, Big Business, and Educational Reform in KwaZulu," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 18, no. 1 (1992): 174; Dlamini, *Youth*, 18.

<sup>97</sup> Dlamini, *Youth*, 57.

<sup>98</sup> Sutcliffe and Wellings, "Inkatha versus the Rest," 330; Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite*, 72.

Bantustans were controlled by the local governments, and in KwaZulu's case, it was the KLA and Inkatha which were then able to allocate the land as they saw fit. Needless to say, members of Inkatha with high favour were those most likely to be able to secure land for housing or businesses.<sup>99</sup> Walter Felgate, the aforementioned white advisor to Buthelezi, had much to say about this in his TRC inquiry. The interviewer, who also was aware of Inkatha's coercive tactics, observed: "Something which in my experience over the last 12 years that was all pervasive, from dealing with people...was that any number of people would come to us and say that their children were refused access or entry to schools, nurses were required to show proof of [Inkatha] membership to write exams, to obtain promotions, even to enter certain hospitals..."<sup>100</sup>

Felgate responded: "The debate really came to a head in the question of whether or not KwaZulu could continue supporting university students who were not in favour of the KwaZulu government...There certainly wasn't any official document, or any official decision ever made not to give housing to people who were non-KwaZulu, for example, but it did happen..."<sup>101</sup>

In the townships surrounding Durban, the pressure to join Inkatha in order to obtain good housing or career opportunities was felt even more acutely.<sup>102</sup> This also became an issue during the outbreak of violence in the 1980s, where township police forces became highly partisan, as the interviewer for the Felgate inquiry reveals: "Just one other observation...if you weren't [Inkatha], or non-ANC or UDF, you simply wouldn't get helped at that police station, generally speaking. Certainly from Pietermaritzburg region, where I come from, that was the experience of a lot of people that I worked with at that time." Felgate replied, "Oh yes, I think the police force

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<sup>99</sup> Mukonoweshuro, "Between Verwoerd," 177; Legassick and Wolpe, "The Bantustans," 88.

<sup>100</sup> Inquiry of Walter S. Felgate, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (1996), 37-38.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 38-39.

<sup>102</sup> Legassick, "South Africa in Crisis," 596.

trained them to look at the world in that kind of way...and to have this kind of anti-ANC, anti-UDF, anti-COSATU kind of outlook.”<sup>103</sup>

The area of education was apparently especially important for Buthelezi. Inkatha exerted much pressure on teachers to join Inkatha.<sup>104</sup> During the unrest in the transition period, the South African Teachers Union, an affiliate with the ANC, called for a national teacher boycott in order for them to air their grievances. However, the KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture (KDEC) vehemently opposed work stoppages, ordered KwaZulu teachers back to work, and insisted that any grievances that teachers may have had be instead taken up with the Natal African Teachers Union (NATU), which of course was an affiliate of Inkatha. All KDEC teachers were legally required to be NATU members.<sup>105</sup> Buthelezi also prided himself on accomplishments in education, especially for his supposed role in eliminating the Bantu Education Act (1953) in KwaZulu in 1978 and enforcing curricular reforms.<sup>106</sup> This was despite the fact that, according to Felgate, “he did not participate in the defiance campaign, he played no role in the campaign against bantu education.”<sup>107</sup> Regardless, this was used to further build support among Zulus and to justify Inkatha’s close relationship with the apartheid government.

Despite the fact that much of these policies were unofficial, their effects were widely known. As Chief E.T. Xolo, the Executive Councilor for Works, accurately predicted as early as 1976, “there will come a time when Inkatha will become such an important organization that

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<sup>103</sup> Inquiry of Walter S. Felgate, 39.

<sup>104</sup> Rogers, *Divide and Rule*, 80.

<sup>105</sup> Dlamini, *Youth*, 119.

<sup>106</sup> The Act gave the Department of Native Affairs and, later, the Department of Bantu Education control over the education of Black South African children. The curriculum focused on proselytizing and preparing African children for menial wage jobs in the labour market, with little to no scholarly focus. Having the KwaZulu government in control of the curriculum which educated Zulu youth was a clear benefit to Inkatha’s populist platform, as well as being able to claim that he dismantled a key piece of apartheid legislation.

<sup>107</sup> Inquiry of Walter S. Felgate, 14-15.



people who are not members thereof will find themselves in the cold.”<sup>108</sup> Even outside the Bantustan, it was understood that the power Inkatha exerted made dependency upon them non-negotiable. When the townships of KwaMashu and Umlazi were set to be incorporated into the KwaZulu Bantustan, there was outrage among the residents who understood that they would be “nudged” into joining Inkatha in order to secure any favourable treatment from the Bantustan administration.<sup>109</sup>

It is important to remember that outside of these coercive controls, there were a sizable group of Africans who genuinely relied on Inkatha’s brand of politics. However, this was not necessarily out of a deep commitment to or ideological affinity with Inkatha. Often, it was because the alternatives were unworkable. Especially for older residents of rural areas and townships, the radicalism of the ANC was simply unattractive. Aside from the general aversion to raucousness that older individuals may feel, the ANC and UDF’s call to make South Africa “ungovernable” by creating general chaos went against their best interest. These were individuals who had spent their lives investing personally and financially into the townships, and so Inkatha’s moderate, anti-violent rhetoric was a far more agreeable way to provide material improvement.<sup>110</sup> As for migrant hostel-dwelling Zulus, many felt that popular unions (i.e. COSATU) simply did not address their unique labour concerns. This was a group that was especially vulnerable to mobilization by unions which catered specifically to them, such as Inkatha’s UWUSA.<sup>111</sup> There were, in fact, relatively few constituencies, other than students, who were prepared for an open, prolonged, and armed confrontation with the apartheid state.<sup>112</sup>As

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<sup>108</sup> Quoted in Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite*, 72.

<sup>109</sup> Dlamini, *Youth*, 64.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>111</sup> Adam and Moodley, “Political Violence,” 506.

<sup>112</sup> Hermann Giliomee, “Democratization in South Africa,” *Political Science Quarterly* 110, no. 1 (1995): 85.

Mare and Hamilton point out, “for many, Buthelezi represented the *only option* of resistance to apartheid,”<sup>113</sup> (emphasis added).

While the focus of this paper is on the economic interdependence of Inkatha, the NP, and Zulus, it is important to note that the entirety of the Inkatha-Zulu relationship was not fully economic in nature. As will be discussed more in the chapter on township violence, there was a real cultural and ethnic appeal in Zulu affiliation with Inkatha. Inkatha often played up its ethnic character when all else appeared to fail. Appeals to Zulu culture and tradition were frequently used to galvanize support for Inkatha and to mobilize susceptible Zulus.<sup>114</sup> It was the severe economic hardships which made certain Zulus more open to cultural appeals, and the sense of dislocation brought about by forced relocation, migrant labour, and proletarianization created a demand for a new sense of stability.<sup>115</sup> This demand was capitalized on by Inkatha, who had been playing the cultural game since the group's inception. As Felgate explained, “there was a cultural revival which an oppressed people latched onto quite phenomenally.”<sup>116</sup>

Despite this, there is no doubt that ultimately, economic concerns were at the forefront for Africans in general. This had been clear since before Inkatha's revival in 1975. During the recession of 1973-76, there were widespread worker strikes. While these were occurring, many political ideologues claimed that the strikes were politically motivated actions by Africans against the system of capitalistic minority rule. However, when taking into account the actual actions and words of the protesters themselves, one finds that what they were fighting for was simply better working conditions and wages.<sup>117</sup> Further, as Legassick points out, the general

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<sup>113</sup> Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite*, 119.

<sup>114</sup> Sutcliffe and Wellings, “Inkatha versus the Rest,” 331-332.

<sup>115</sup> Harries, “Imagery,” 124.

<sup>116</sup> Inquiry of Walter S. Felgate, 47.

<sup>117</sup> Deegan, *The Politics*, 43-44.

struggle for liberation by the proletariat class is not for the sake of “good ideas” or ideology. They are for the sake of eliminating rampant unemployment, lack of housing, poverty wages, etc.<sup>118</sup> Though Legassick is, somewhat justifiably, highly critical of Inkatha and their motives, his same argument needs to be extended to Inkatha-supporting Zulus. It would be ridiculous to believe that all KwaZulu residents follow Inkatha because of the “nice ideas” of Zulu nationalism. Some significant portion must have felt that their material interests were best represented by Inkatha and Buthelezi.

To close this section, it is worthwhile to return to the idea of Inkatha’s “balancing act” of maintaining a working relationship with the NP while also securing high membership numbers. Inkatha certainly had issues in maintaining this balance, especially in times when the limited resources of the Bantustan were used to the full. When membership with Inkatha ceased to bring the promised material improvements, support for Buthelezi was seriously compromised.<sup>119</sup> So, Inkatha’s support, and therefore survival, depended on the ability of the group to, at least to a satisfactory degree, meet the material demands of its constituents. There had been times where Inkatha cut deals with the NP without the consultation or even consideration of KwaZulu citizens. There had also been instances of very real economic improvements within KwaZulu communities carried out by Inkatha leadership.<sup>120</sup> This is the perfect encapsulation of Inkatha’s tight-rope stance between dependence upon the apartheid state and dependence upon their Zulu supporters. The next section of this paper will zoom further into the themes dealt with in this section as well as section three, and will analyze the debate between Roger Southall and John Brewer on the function of Inkatha and the implications of their Zulu support base.

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<sup>118</sup> Legassick, “South Africa in Crisis,” 589.

<sup>119</sup> Mare and Hamilton, *An Appetite*, 155.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

## CHAPTER 5: THE SOUTHALL-BREWER DEBATE

Between 1981 and 1986, Roger Southall and John Brewer engaged in a short back-and-forth with a series of articles published in *African Affairs* (and one in the *Journal of Modern African Studies*). The two disagreed on a number of issues relevant to this paper, namely the degree and relevance of Inkatha membership and support, as well as the true nature of Inkatha as a political liberation organization. As Brewer points out, Southall undoubtedly has a more critical, class-based focus when discussing Inkatha, whereas Brewer appears to see more merit in the appeal of Inkatha's brand of populism, which is perhaps best described as a sort of pseudo-nationalism. This is suggested in Brewer's general acceptance of the empirical, albeit limited statistical data on Inkatha and their support base. Because their exchange is representative of much of the general debate surrounding Inkatha at the time, and because it has much bearing both on what has been discussed and what will be discussed in chapter 6, it is worth briefly exploring.

The first two articles, both authored by Southall, call into question the validity of Inkatha's record membership growth numbers, as well as the merits of the so-called Buthelezi Commission, which produced a study into potential governing alternatives to apartheid, ultimately recommending a kind of consociational government. Understandably, he also takes issue with Buthelezi's cooperation with the apartheid state, which Southall believes is symptomatic of his role as a representative of the African petty bourgeoisie: "Because of the acute financial dependence of the state upon the South African government, the material interests of the homeland petty bourgeoisie thus urge that it work closely with Pretoria."<sup>121</sup> In this way as

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<sup>121</sup> Southall, "Buthelezi, Inkatha, and the Politics of Compromise," *African Affairs* 80, no. 321 (1981): 458.

in others, Southall takes the same anti-Inkatha line as the ANC and the UDF, and unsurprisingly, he clearly favours the approaches of these more democratic groups.

Southall acknowledges the basic idea that the actions of Inkatha leadership in regards to cooperation with the state are guided by a pragmatic understanding of the South African condition.<sup>122</sup> What is missing from his analysis is an equally clear-eyed view of Inkatha's Zulu support base. While Inkatha may have the wherewithal to carry itself according to its material interest, Zulu supporters apparently are either being driven by tribal or ethnic allegiances, or have been sufficiently lumpenized so as to make them extremely malleable for Inkatha powerholders. Questioning the relevance of membership numbers for an organization which coerces its members, Southall suggests that perhaps Zulus are only joining Inkatha because the membership dues take the place of the tribal levies that they are so used to their chiefs extracting.<sup>123</sup> In Southall's later article, he suggests that Inkatha's particular appeal to unemployed rural Zulus may be indicative of Inkatha's exploitation of the lumpenproletariat masses within KwaZulu, using their resentment toward the comparatively more well-off township residents (who happen to tend to be ANC or UDF supporters) to leverage support.<sup>124</sup> As will be seen in the next chapter, there is some truth to what Southall implies here, but it is marred by his stubborn denial of the agency of Inkatha supporters as a whole.

Southall's views on Inkatha's non-violent platform are equally frustrating. While they both rightly point out Inkatha's double standard for using violence against the state versus against competing political groups,<sup>125</sup> Southall is too quick to dismiss the constituencies that

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<sup>122</sup> Southall, "Buthelezi," 463.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 457.

<sup>124</sup> Southall, "A Note," 588.

<sup>125</sup> John Brewer, "The Membership of Inkatha and KwaMashu," *African Affairs* 84, no. 334 (1985): 112.

supported peaceful resistance. Calling it a “prescription for paralysis,” the principle of non-violence is apparently defeatist and deterministic, and an unworkable foundation for all groups (like the ANC) who had, since the writing of these articles, taken up arms in open revolt against the state.<sup>126</sup> Southall does acknowledge that the disdain for political violence is, in part, a symptom of Inkatha’s reliance upon the state, but fails to recognize the dependency of Inkatha upon its constituents (and vice versa) which demands a degree of political moderation. He questions the degree to which those who profess a commitment to non-violence are sincere in their beliefs, suggesting that the popularity of the idea “may well indicate an abstract preference for such a strategy, rather than an absolute commitment linked to an assessment of realistic probabilities.”<sup>127</sup> So, Zulus who supported Inkatha because of the groups ostensible desire for stability and peaceful transition were either insincere or were simply confused about the state of affairs in South Africa.

Brewer takes a more open approach to Inkatha than Southall. Believing that Southall, like many others, had succumbed to the tendency of ascribing motives and attitudes to individuals based on their socio-economic status or the political role of the group to which they belong, Brewer believes Southall is operating under clearly partisan political motives.<sup>128</sup> For Brewer, this information should be derived from what empirical evidence exists on the subject. In the case of Inkatha this information was limited, and so Brewer is less hasty to jump to conclusions, unlike Southall who believed that Inkatha’s urban support was unsustainable and sure to crumble — this prediction was simply not supported by the evidence at the time.

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<sup>126</sup> Southall, “Consociationalism in South Africa: The Buthelezi Commission and Beyond,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 21, no. 1 (1983): 102.

<sup>127</sup> Southall, “A Note,” 584.

<sup>128</sup> Brewer, “The Membership,” 111.

Brewer instead sees stronger foundations in Inkatha's urban support, specifically in the KwaMashu township, in which the relevant surveying had taken place. Inkatha was supposedly enjoying mass support from all economic strata, but especially the urban proletariat. Likely to the annoyance of Southall, Brewer also claimed that Inkatha had a "distinctly proletarian character" which ensured its appeal to the working poor.<sup>129</sup> Further, the migrant workers who formed Inkatha's link between the Zulu "homeland" and the distant townships generally cited material, economic reasons for joining Inkatha, not any kind of ethnic solidarity or sentimental tribal allegiance.<sup>130</sup> For Brewer, this was enough to tentatively claim that Inkatha's economic policies form the foundations of their support base, not cultural feelings, charismatic leadership, or petty bourgeois manipulation of lumpen elements.

But Southall views these populist credentials as a smokescreen for Inkatha's petty bourgeois status. He is right, to a degree. As part of the interconnectivity of the dependent relationship which is the subject of this paper, Inkatha as the middle-man is forced to be Janus-faced. Apparently desiring simply to elucidate the "social forces Inkatha represents," Southall gets himself tangled up in more specific assertions about Inkatha's relationship with its Zulu supporters. Brewer provides an example: Southall identifies Inkatha's aversion to violent action as a key indicator of the group's petty bourgeois status and as a factor which alienates it from the working class. In reality, according to the statistics Brewer provides, "the rejection of political violence was manifested throughout the sample as a whole. . .with 91.8 per cent being opposed to its use. The opposition to the use of political violence was even greater among Inkatha

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<sup>129</sup> Brewer, "The Membership," 122.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 124-126.

members.”<sup>131</sup> Southall was either unwilling or unable to accept that some large portion of even the most destitute Africans were genuinely in favour of a peaceful transition of society.

In response to Brewer’s claim that his analysis of Inkatha’s urban support is “entirely erroneous,”<sup>132</sup> Southall asserts that Brewer’s supposed empirical evidence tells us nothing, as it relies on the loose definition of membership that Inkatha provides and the conflation of official “membership” with actual support for the group’s policies.<sup>133</sup> As has been established earlier in this paper, Inkatha did indeed use a degree of coercion to secure membership numbers, which as Brewer rightly points out, are “vital to Buthelezi’s bargaining position with the state. . .”<sup>134</sup> Brewer acknowledges this coercion, and more importantly, so did most Inkatha members (at least, according to Brewer’s data). If the relevant survey data is to be believed, Inkatha supporters realized that membership was necessary in order to receive favourable employment and housing, yet they identified with and supported Inkatha’s goals regardless.<sup>135</sup> Aside from this, Southall also believes that membership numbers are questionable, since non-payment of member fees do not result in loss of membership (despite the fact that Buthelezi’s had said elsewhere that the poor should give only according to their means).<sup>136</sup> This too is flimsy according to Brewer, as Southall himself points out that Inkatha appeals particularly well to the unemployed and so-called “lumpenized.”<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid, 131.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 134.

<sup>133</sup> Southall, “A Note,” 580.

<sup>134</sup> Brewer, “The Membership,” 135.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>136</sup> Southall, “A Note,” 580.

<sup>137</sup> John Brewer, “Inkatha Membership in KwaMashu: A Rejoinder to Southall,” *African Affairs* 85, no. 341 (1986): 589.



By 1986, when the last two articles were published, the debate had somewhat devolved into personal slights and disagreements over how much can be gleaned from statistical data and raw numbers. Southall accuses Brewer's research of being "a thinly veiled attempt to undermine my own approach to Inkatha," and of serving to boost the credentials of Inkatha.<sup>138</sup> Brewer accuses Southall of critiquing the political *implications* of the data rather than the design of the research itself, and of seeking only to discredit Inkatha as an opponent of the ANC and UDF, whom Southall aligns with ideologically.<sup>139</sup> In reality, both sides of this debate are representative of the general radicalist-liberal debate in South African historiography. Radicals with their class-based approach (aforementioned double standards aside) see Inkatha as a co-opted petty bourgeois state apparatus which could not possibly sustain a mass following, where liberals see more merit in non-violent and non-socialist methods of social change, and tend to emphasize Inkatha's mass appeal. In 1985, Brewer cited Inkatha's 700,000 strong membership numbers as a reason for why Inkatha must be taken seriously, just as Brian du Toit did two years earlier (although, happily, Brewer does not fawn over the character of Buthelezi as du Toit does).<sup>140</sup> Regardless, this debate is important in understanding the kinds of arguments and misunderstandings there existed surrounding the role, appeal, and nature of Inkatha in the early to mid-1980s, when the South African political scene was becoming more grim and the outbreak of violence threatened to develop into civil war.

For our purposes, the most important point from this debate is the discussion of the nature of Inkatha's urban support, specifically among migrant hostel-dwellers in the townships. Despite Southall's prediction that Buthelezi's urban support would crumble, Inkatha membership instead

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<sup>138</sup> Southall, "A Note," 578.

<sup>139</sup> Brewer, "Inkatha Membership," 590-591.

<sup>140</sup> Brewer, "The Membership," 111.

became one of many distinguishing factors among urban Africans, and as Brewer pointed out, Inkatha would become a main actor in the outbreak of township violence, despite the group's peaceful rhetoric.<sup>141</sup> In this debate, we find references to the seeds of division which broke apart the urban, African proletariat. Forebodingly, Southall claimed that the announced formation of UWUSA to compete with COSATU “can only divide workers. . .”<sup>142</sup> These divisions will be the subject of the next section.

## **CHAPTER 6: TOWNSHIP VIOLENCE AND THE SUNDERING OF THE AFRICAN PROLETARIAT**

Beginning in the mid-1980s, violent outbursts became a major daily concern for those living in the KwaZulu/Natal and Witwatersrand areas in eastern South Africa. This period only increased the general concern that apartheid South Africa was headed toward a violent civil war, however the majority of the violence was not waged against white powerholders. Rather, it was between two competing liberation organizations, unified in their rejection of apartheid but ideologically incompatible: Buthelezi's Inkatha and the ANC/UDF Bloc. As the ANC garnered more international support and domestic recognition, Buthelezi became increasingly desperate to maintain Inkatha's legitimacy. Disregarding their longstanding lip service to non-violence, Inkatha showed an eagerness to resort to armed conflict when their political survival was at risk. The NP also developed a stronger interest in disrupting ANC activities by force, as the international campaign to isolate South Africa's economy, a strategy championed by most

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>142</sup> Southall, “A Note,” 588.

socialist groups, was gaining more traction. This was bad for both the NP and the pro-free market leadership of Inkatha.<sup>143</sup>

This mutual antagonism toward the ANC and UDF resulted in a new dynamic forming in the relationship between Inkatha and the NP, and during this period, the collaborationist nature of the relationship was at its most flagrant. Together, militants from both Inkatha and the NP undertook to destabilize ANC activists and sympathizers. So-called “black-on-black” violence was at an all-time high in the Natal region, and attacks on ANC people by squads of Inkatha people, and vice versa, were common occurrences.<sup>144</sup> Government agents had a significant role to play in this violence: Inkatha militants and vigilantes were supplied by security forces with funds, equipment, weapons, and transportation to facilitate these (sometimes) politically motivated attacks.<sup>145</sup> The two groups even worked hand-in-hand to put down riots and revolts within KwaZulu/Natal and the townships surrounding Durban.<sup>146</sup> Again, Inkatha was willing to use violence not *against* the government, but on the government’s behalf.

The mutual benefits of this unofficial arrangement are obvious. Inkatha’s targeting of ANC opponents, with whom Inkatha people had developed a deep resentment that will be explained later in this section, became far more efficient. Often, the logistics of these attacks were handled by the security forces, and Inkatha assailants had little retribution to fear, at least in areas with a significant Inkatha presence and sympathetic security officials. From the state’s point of view, being able to disguise political persecution of radicals as “everyday” African

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<sup>143</sup> Gary Kynoch, “Reassessing Transition Violence: Voices from South Africa’s Township Wars, 1990-4,” *African Affairs* 112, no. 447 (2013): 287.

<sup>144</sup> Deegan, *The Politics*, 62.

<sup>145</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, Volume 2, Chapter 4 (1996); Adam and Moodley, “Political Violence,” 489; Deegan, *The Politics*, 62; Kynoch, “Reassessing,” 287.

<sup>146</sup> Dlamini, *Youth* 68.

violence was a boon. The state could confidently condemn the violence to the international community while facilitating that very violence from behind the curtain.<sup>147</sup> Being ostensibly uninvolved with the attacks allowed the government to avoid even more condemnation from the developed world and to continue with its facade of “reform.” Despite calls for the South African government to curb the bloodshed, cooperation between Inkatha and the police forces continued into the 1990s. As Schlemmer explains, it was neither a natural nor a welcome transition for the police to suddenly begin protecting the very people (i.e. ANC and UDF supporters) they had been trained to persecute for decades.<sup>148</sup>

One of the clearest examples of this collusion was brought to light in the 1996 TRC hearing of Frank Bennetts, a member of the South African Police and riot unit. Bennetts was questioned about an unusual, loose paramilitary group operating in the mid-1980s out of the Durban township of Chesterville, known simply as the “A-Team.” Chesterville had a significant presence of both Inkatha and ANC/UDF supporters, and it is known that the A-Team, consisting of Inkatha people, committed several atrocities against the township’s more leftwing residents. The aggression was mutual: according to Bennetts, the A-Team likely began as a loose grouping of Inkatha supporters “who became targets [of ANC supporters] and who banded together for their own protection.”<sup>149</sup>

Regardless of how the group began, it is clear that government law enforcement was not impartial in the conflict. The riot team offered the members protection from ANC attacks, prioritizing calls from areas known to be dominated by A-Team members and offering escorts, and supplying arms and ammunition. While Bennetts could not confirm whether the security

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<sup>147</sup> Deegan, *The Politics*, 62-63.

<sup>148</sup> Lawrence Schlemmer, “Blood River,” *The New Republic*, 1992.

<sup>149</sup> Inquiry of Frank Sandy Bennetts, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (1996), 66.

forces also bankrolled the A-Team, it appears almost certain: “I believe they would not have existed for very long without any sort of outside assistance. Financially, they were not very sound.”<sup>150</sup> In return, the A-Team served as informants and offered their services in repressing supposed leftist activity.<sup>151</sup> The partisan nature of the violence is confirmed in the TRC inquiry of Themba Zimo, a man involved with the Inkatha-tied Khumalo family, who had applied for amnesty from the Commission. When asked about the conflict, he flatly said: “In our area there were only IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party, the name Inkatha rebranded to during the transition period) people residing there. If you were an ANC member you would be killed or you would have to leave the area.”<sup>152</sup>

The ANC and UDF’s resentment toward Inkatha for the group’s collaboration with the government is likely what led to much of the hostility. For years, leftist groups had opposed the Bantustan system that gave Inkatha its powerbase. Throughout the 1980s, the UDF sought to cause mass disruption across the townships in order to make them “ungovernable,” as well as to destroy all manner of government structures, including the Bantustans. Eventually, the demand to dismantle the Bantustans became a prerequisite to government negotiations for both the ANC and UDF, among others.<sup>153</sup> Needless to say, this made the aims of Inkatha and the ANC-UDF Bloc mutually exclusive, as the KwaZulu Bantustan structure served as the Zulu petty bourgeoisie’s source of security and tether to the central state. According to Schlemmer, between 1985 and 1992, there had been around 11,000 politically motivated deaths and hundreds of

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 12-13.

<sup>152</sup> Inquiry of Themba Zimo, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (1996), 47.

<sup>153</sup> Dlamini, *Youth*, 11; Mukonoweshuro, “Between Verwoerd,” 175.

instances of “necklacing,” a method of execution where a tire is placed around the victims neck and lit on fire.<sup>154</sup>

Violence grew as the decade approached its end. Then in 1990, something happened that doomed the interdependent relationship between the NP and Inkatha: in an effort to grant concessions to the most strident of apartheid’s critics, the ANC and other opposition groups were unbanned by de Klerk’s government.<sup>155</sup> After the ANC ceased to be *officially* repressed by the government, they became a more attractive and viable political option for democracy-minded South Africans. It also meant that they were now a realistic partner in potential negotiations with the NP to end or modify apartheid, a role that Inkatha had previously dominated. Inkatha’s powerbase had been undermined and the local leadership role that the Bantustan system granted to the chiefs, like Buthelezi, began to dissolve. The spectre of a democratic ANC government raised the question of land reform: a socialist government would likely mean either state ownership or mass redistribution, either of which would cripple Inkatha and the Zulu petty bourgeoisie’s financial base.<sup>156</sup>

Also troubling to Inkatha were the ANC’s increased demands for the dismantling of not only the Bantustans, but the migrant hostels as well, the latter of which the ANC claimed served as a kind of military headquarters for Inkatha warbands.<sup>157</sup> This, combined with the fact that the ANC was now a potentially major player in negotiations, convinced Inkatha that increased violence was perhaps necessary to retain their political and economic status. In reality, the

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<sup>154</sup> Schlemmer, “Blood River,” 1992.

<sup>155</sup> Although Buthelezi had long been one of the most vocal advocates of releasing Mandela and critic of the banning of political parties, it is clear that the ANC’s inability to operate officially within South Africa was a benefit to Inkatha.

<sup>156</sup> Mukonoweshuro, “Between Verwoerd,” 172-177; Piper, “Nationalism,” 76.

<sup>157</sup> Russell Geekie (ed.), “ANC Pulls out of Negotiations, But for How Long?” *Africa Report* 37, no. 4 (1992).

hostels were locations set up for single male migrant workers coming from the Bantustans to work in urban factories. After Inkatha launched as an official political party in the summer of 1990, a massive outburst of violence erupted across the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging region (now known as Gauteng). During the chaos, nearly all of the hostels in the region, of which there were over 200, were seized by Inkatha supporting Zulus.<sup>158</sup>

The years 1991 and 1992 brought new scandals for the NP and Inkatha, and increased tension between Inkatha and the ANC. In 1991, an anonymous (at the time) source leaked documents to South African journalist David Beresford. The documents came from the South African security forces, and revealed that Inkatha had indeed been funded directly by state money. This revelation prompted the state to distance themselves from Inkatha in an effort to convince the world of their impartiality.<sup>159</sup> However, this only confirmed what many had long feared. In 1992, intergroup violence reached a boiling point in Boipatong, an African township in the province of Gauteng. In the summer of that year, hundreds of Zulu migrants left the KwaMadlala hostel and attacked areas of Boipatong, near Johannesburg. Over 40 individuals were murdered by the legion of Zulu hostel dwellers, including children.<sup>160</sup>

In the wake of the massacre, a committee known as the Goldstone Commission was able to convincingly link the attackers in Boipatong to a secret police unit known to facilitate partisan violence. The head of the South African government at the time, Frederik de Klerk, came under even more pressure to crack down on state-sponsored vigilantism.<sup>161</sup> In many ways, this was the

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<sup>158</sup> Timothy Gibbs, "Inkatha's Young Militants: Reconsidering Political Violence in South Africa," *Africa* 87, no. 2 (2017): 377.

<sup>159</sup> "Inkathagate: How Buthelezi's Cover was Blown," *Mail & Guardian*, April 21, 2010, <https://mg.co.za/article/2010-04-21-inkathagate-how-buthelezis-cover-was-blown/>; Piper, "Nationalism," 83.

<sup>160</sup> Schlemmer, "Blood River."

<sup>161</sup> Geekie, "ANC,"; Deegan, *The Politics*, 79-80.

culmination of the divide between the two opposing liberation groups: Inkatha, largely supported by ethnic Zulus, on the one hand, and the ANC, supported by a plurality of South African ethnicities, but largely depicted as being a Xhosa organization, on the other. It was certainly due, in part, to the reality that the ANC was now a legalized competitor for black political and economic power, and the fact that Inkatha's bargaining position with the state was now in jeopardy. It was also the result of the increasing divisions between groups of proletarianized Africans. These divisions were fundamental to Inkatha's interdependent relationship with the Zulu people.

Radical scholars have long pointed out that the Bantustan system was designed, in part, to create fissures between different segments of the African proletariat.<sup>162</sup> This plan was successful and had massive repercussions in the 1980s and 1990s. Even before the major conflicts began, Inkatha and the ANC-aligned groups had been divided along geographical lines — ANC sympathizers were seen as youthful and urbanized, dwelling in the many townships that surrounded South Africa's major cities, whereas Inkatha supporters were predominantly rural, loitering in the unproductive agricultural zones of their KwaZulu "homeland."<sup>163</sup> However, during this period, political organizations became fundamental in identity formation for disaffected Africans. This began to blur the lines, as it was no longer simply a geographical divide, but a political one: Schlemmer's 1991 study on the Witwatersrand found that only 5% of

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<sup>162</sup> Innes & O'Meara, "Class Formation," 85. Ethnic divisions had existed between Zulu and Xhosa people since the pre-colonial era of Zulu martial expansion, however the divisions this paper are concerned with begin only after the republic's industrial era when Africans were proletarianized, and come fully into focus in the early to mid-1980s. These divisions appear to be just barely influenced by ethnicity, and according to Adam and Moodly (1992, 500), both portions of the African proletariat had coexisted among each other for decades before competition ruptured the relationship.

<sup>163</sup> Piper, "Nationalism," 76.



township residents were Inkatha supporters, whereas over 70% of hostel dwellers were.<sup>164</sup>

Competition for limited job prospects pitted the two desperate groups against each other, with deadly consequences.

For years, township ANC-supporting Xhosa looked down upon migrant hostel-dwelling Zulus, who they believed were backward, illiterate, and old-fashioned, whereas they themselves were educated, urban, and modern.<sup>165</sup> According to Brewer, the ANC and their sympathizers “epitomized modernity in black politics.”<sup>166</sup> The hostel dwellers also looked down upon the township youth, seeing them as haughty and disrespectful toward both their heritage and their elders. To them, tribal affiliation and traditionalism were not things to be ashamed of. These tensions only exacerbated political partisanship: “most of [Inkatha’s] members live in single men’s hostels, far from their rural homes, and develop a solidarity in opposition to the township youths, most of whom support the ANC.”<sup>167</sup> However, it is crucial to understand that the primary cause of the violence was not cultural or political, but rather economic, as Tony Karon explains: “the legacy of apartheid has created an urban context in which hundreds of thousands of desperately poor people compete for the allocation of scarce resources.”<sup>168</sup> Further, international corporate pressure on South Africa combined with the “crumbling” apartheid structures of the mid-1980s to produce a steep decline in factory work that heightened competition and left the hostels filled with unemployed, angry men looking to assign blame for their condition.<sup>169</sup> In this way, the struggles of the people themselves mirror the struggle between the political groups that

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<sup>164</sup> Dlamini, *Youth*, 5; Adam & Moodley, “Political Violence,” 489-490; Kynoch, “Reassessing,” 291.

<sup>165</sup> Dlamini, *Youth*, 182; Adam & Moodley, “Political Violence,” 503.

<sup>166</sup> Brewer, “Membership,” 132.

<sup>167</sup> Schlemmer, “Blood River,” 1992.

<sup>168</sup> Quoted in Adam & Moodley, “Political Violence,” 502.

<sup>169</sup> Gibbs, “Inkatha’s,” 370.

they coalesced around — Inkatha and the ANC were also competing for finite politico-economic resources, though the more materially secure ANC supporters were far more ideologically driven.

These tensions in the townships served as recruiting vehicles for Inkatha, who desperately needed presence in urban areas in order to contend with the ANC on a national, negotiatory level. The idea was reinforced that migrants in the hostels were merely sojourners, whose real homes were in KwaZulu, with Inkatha. Their dire economic status in relation to the ANC-supporting township folk made appeals to Zulu identity and political partisanship far more palatable.<sup>170</sup> Interviews with hostel migrants in the mid-2000s reveal the success of this strategy: “... I am not sure what IFP was fighting for, but during the violence I was an IFP person ... in my room I had the big photo of Buthelezi because we were told that IFP could protect us.”<sup>171</sup>

Many hostel dwellers believed that joining up with Inkatha meant the preservation of the hostels, their homes and tethers to scarce sources of income, which the ANC had wanted to destroy. Crucially, although it has been established that ANC supporters were generally far more ideological in their motivations, they too feared the destruction or seizure of their township homes by Zulu warbands.<sup>172</sup> Even Brewer admits of the leftist liberation groups: “It would be wrong to suggest in South Africa that this is a kind of post-materialism and that there are no material interests involved in the moral form of protest associated with Black educated labour.”<sup>173</sup> Regardless of ideology or relative economic position, it seems clear that political affiliation was a secondary concern to survival and material security.

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<sup>170</sup> Adam & Moodley, “Political Violence,” 506.

<sup>171</sup> Quoted in Kynoch, “Reassessing,” 301.

<sup>172</sup> Kynoch, “Reassessing,” 294; Adam & Moodley, “Political Violence,” 505-506.

<sup>173</sup> Brewer, “Black Protest,” 290-291.

So, before the first *truly* democratic election in South Africa's history took place in 1994, the African proletariat had been sundered. After African workers became increasingly categorized as ethnically Zulu, illiterate, traditionalist, and supporters of Inkatha in the case of migrants, and ethnically Xhosa, educated, modern, and supporters of the ANC and UDF in the case of township folk, what began as a geographical divide became a racial, generational, political, and most importantly, economic divide. It is unsurprising that this state of affairs led to a dramatic increase in ethnic violence as the foundations of race apartheid began to splinter and give way. The two population groups seemed poised for violence in the first place. Beleaguered migrant Zulus were far from their family and homes with a collapsing social structure within their hostels, and were eager to teach the arrogant township youth a lesson. Many Xhosa who had joined the ANC, on the other hand, did so in large part to participate in an armed revolt, and were disillusioned by the ANC's decision to negotiate with the government, suspending revolutionary activity.<sup>174</sup> It did not take much convincing for these individuals to turn their rage toward their other enemies: Inkatha and their Zulu support base.

Before closing this section, the discursive context of the township violence during the 1980s and 1990s should be reaffirmed. The dominant narrative has long been that Inkatha were the clear aggressors in the confrontations, especially after the Boipatong massacre. This is due both to the prolific radical scholars who wrote and reported sympathetically about the ANC, and to the fact that the ANC made concerted efforts to dominate the national and international media reporting on the violence. In reality, both factions engaged in offensive and retaliatory violence and were opportunistic fighters. Further, although the violence was veiled and expressed as part of a clearly political or intertribal conflict, the preconditions that primed the townships for

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<sup>174</sup> Schlemmer, "Blood River," 1992.

bloodshed have undoubtedly economic bases. The long-suffering migrant Zulus carried the political banner of Inkatha only insofar as it served as a guarantor, however symbolically, of their economic survival and as a countermeasure against falling even further through the creases of the South African apartheid economy.<sup>175</sup>

## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

The intergroup violence that erupted in South Africa's townships and hostels in the transition period has been described as political, and even tribal in nature. Some radical writers have seen it as a matter of class struggle: the ANC embodying the revolutionary proletariat on the one hand, and the Inkatha petty bourgeoisie on the other. Inkatha is said to have used their Zulu attack dogs to stifle revolutionary action, placing the proletariat and the even worse off Zulu lumpenproletariat in direct contest. The lumpenized are said to be the "social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society," who "sell their services to the bourgeoisie, who use them as strikebreakers, labor spies, and fighters against the workers in times of revolution."<sup>176</sup> Given what has been described of the events of the transition period elsewhere in this paper, it may be tempting to see this particular interpretation as accurate. What is missing, however, is the agency of Zulus themselves. In reality, I argue, the violence of the last several years of apartheid was the result of the economically interdependent relationship of three core groups, the seeds of which had been planted in the early 1970s, when Buthelezi's new iteration of Inkatha began to be conceptualized.

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<sup>175</sup> Waetjen, "The 'Home' in Homeland," 659; Gibbs, "Inkatha's," 370-375; Kynoch, "Reassessing," 285-300.

<sup>176</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (London: Penguin, 2002), 231; Bertell Ollman, "Marx's Use of 'Class,'" *American Journal of Sociology* 73, no. 5 (1968): 575.

In the case of Inkatha and Zulus, the idea of collaboration is key. Among black liberation groups, the divergence is due to the means, not the end.<sup>177</sup> In other words, the end of apartheid is a given, but how the goal was to be achieved is contentious. So the question must be asked: What degree of collaboration is acceptable? Buthelezi, for example, had accused other Bantustan leaders of being collaborationist for accepting the NP's plan for "independence," while Buthelezi was accused of collaborationism by leftists for taking part *in any way* in the government's plans.<sup>178</sup> One wonders if these radicals would consider the ANC's own participation in negotiations as collaborationism, or if they are indeed immune to all accusations. In any case, one must recognize the unstable ground on which they walk when making accusations of collaboration. Laura Evans' research offers us a comparison point: When the Ciskei Bantustan absorbed administrative duties for the surrounding townships in the 1970s, the large numbers of Xhosa who joined up with the administration did not view their participation as "antithetical to African nationalist policies," nor did they even consider it to be collaboration as such.<sup>179</sup> It was simply an economic calculation to better their lot while retaining their stance on apartheid. White MPs of the apartheid government offer another example. Parliamentarians throughout the course of negotiations all had a calculation to make: how secure were their pensions, and at what point could they retire? Indeed, many white MPs chose to exit politics altogether rather than participate in a potentially African-led government.<sup>180</sup> Regardless of motivation, if we can afford

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<sup>177</sup> Philip Frankel, "The Politics of Poverty: Political Competition in Soweto," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 14, no. 2 (1980): 209.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, 208.

<sup>179</sup> Laura Evans, "Resettlement and the Making of the Ciskei Bantustan, South Africa, c. 1960-1976," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 40, no. 1 (2014): 37.

<sup>180</sup> John Matisonn, "South Africa's Transition to a Non-Racial Democracy," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 16, no. 2 (1992): 114.

certain groups agency in terms of their economic self-interest, we must offer Zulus the same concession regardless of political affiliation or action.

The economic character of the NP-Inkatha-Zulu relationship has been discussed at length earlier in this paper, but it is worth reaffirming its role in the violence in the townships. Throughout the 1970s, Buthelezi had made attempts to gain and maintain a foothold of support in urban areas, especially in Soweto, the largest of South Africa's townships.<sup>181</sup> If Inkatha was ever to succeed in carving out a place for themselves in the national political space, it was necessary to become more than a regional, ethnic, and rural organization. It was only in the mid-1980s that this urban support began to slip away, which coincided perfectly with both the establishment of COSATU and the outbreak of intergroup violence. The brand of Buthelezi rested on the perception that he facilitated material improvement for Inkatha's members, and having mass numbers of poor workers flock to an opposition trade union made for incredibly poor optics. To this day, the Mangosuthu Buthelezi museum in Ulundi boasts economic development as one of the Zulu leader's crowning achievements.<sup>182</sup> It is clear, then, that popular support was a necessity that translated into the continued financial security of the Zulu petty bourgeoisie, and the only reason that is readily apparent that Buthelezi worked on behalf of Zulus was to the extent that it secured, at least nominally, high levels of Inkatha growth and membership. This was the cornerstone of the interdependent relationship that bound the NP, Inkatha, and Zulus together, and the threat of its destruction was a primary factor in the wars in the urban areas.

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<sup>181</sup> Frankel, "The Politics of Poverty," 211.

<sup>182</sup> Bongani Ngqulunga, "The Changing Face of Zulu Nationalism: The Transformation of Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Politics and Public Image," *Politikon* 47, no. 3 (2020): 293.

It is also worth noting that the narrative surrounding ANC-Inkatha competition, which has often been one of popular socialists versus stooge capitalists, was obsolete by the 1994 elections. A “systematic ideological conversion” took place within the ANC structure that transformed the once-socialist group into a liberal party that embodied “capitalist class interests.”<sup>183</sup> Disillusioned leftists lamented at the failure of the ANC to institute sweeping socialist reforms and to nationalize industry. The same radical writers who operated as mouthpieces for the ANC were some of their sharpest critics in the immediate post-apartheid era.<sup>184</sup> Meanwhile, it was Inkatha that remained a group chiefly concerned with the underclass.

To close, we should return to the topic of South Africa’s historiography, discussed in the second section of this paper. When compared with the scholarship that was produced during the apartheid years, there is a marked dearth of critical scholarship post-TRC. To many, the completion and publication of the TRC was the “end” of history in South Africa — the new nation must instead look to its future. The desire to simply forget such a painful past, especially the incredibly tumultuous few years before apartheid’s final death-agony, is understandable, but scholars have been warning of this since at least 1994. In that year, Shula Marks made a desperate plea for the persistence of critical historical work on the country, and to not abandon the discipline fully, in favour of contemporary politics. However, in the following years, South African historical scholarship steadily eroded, causing significant alarm to historians in that field.<sup>185</sup> Gerhard Mare, too, warned against this unsettling trend: if South Africa is unable to seriously reckon with its past, any peace that the TRC establishes will rest upon a fragile

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<sup>183</sup> Deegan, *The Politics*, 203; Mare, “Versions,” 66.

<sup>184</sup> Knud Andresen, “A ‘Negotiated Revolution’? Trade Unions and Companies in South Africa in the 1980s,” in *Worlds of Labour Turned Upside Down: Revolutions and Labour Relations in Global Historical Perspective*, eds. Pepijn Brandon, Peyman Jafari, & Stefan Müller (Leiden: Brill, 2020): 287-298.

<sup>185</sup> Cobley, “Social History,” 617.

foundation.<sup>186</sup> This concept is understandably harder for the perpetrators of apartheid, many of whom struggle with the notion of admitting to the atrocities. Before the TRC was published, de Klerk fought every step toward the report's publication, which, before it was edited, had accused South Africa's last Afrikaner president of crimes against humanity. White South Africans in general accused the commission of reopening the nation's "old wounds."<sup>187</sup> Of course, they had not yet closed at all. For many older South Africans, for whom apartheid is in living memory, they still have not.

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<sup>186</sup> Mare, "Versions," 63.

<sup>187</sup> Lynne Duke, "New Era, Old Baggage Converge in de Klerk," *Washington Post*, July 16, 1997.



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